**NECCPA Meeting Notes for 26 September 2022**



The meeting was held on zoom. Chapter President Linda Giampa called the meeting to order at about 12:30. About 35 members attended.

Also present was Bret Seferian, MTA Representative

1. **Help Wanted!** – Linda indicated that the chapter has some open positions. One is the DCE Grievance Coordinator; the other is a chapter Strategic Action Coordinator. The latter job relates to getting members to participate in the political process and also to inform the membership about legislation that affects the union and its members.
2. **Meetings –** For now, member meetings will be virtual. Live meetings are very challenging and even if meetings were live, there would still need to be a zoom option and hook-ups for both campuses.

There will be some meet and greet type meetings to allow new members to become more acquainted with the union. They are scheduled for Tuesday 11/1 10:00-12:00 in Dimitry L244 on the Lawrence campus and in Haverhill on Wednesday 11/2 9:00-11:00 in Spurk C204.

1. **Day Contract Negotiations** – Bret Seferian discussed negotiations for the Day Contract covering professional staff and faculty. He indicated that 2-2½% salary increases for fiscal years 2022 and 2023 were being discussed. Then the contract would be renegotiated for the period beginning July 1, 2023 (FY 24). This would put this contract in line with other higher ed contracts, including the MCCC DCE contract. Details about a change in the law (“Section 26”) passed in the recent session of the legislature are still being ironed out, but apparently would allow (but not require) members of the Day unit to teach evenings and weekends. This is currently prohibited as the law had not allowed state funds to finance evening, weekend and summer courses.

When asked why it is important for the Day contract to be negotiated at the same time as other contracts, Bret responded that it gives greater leverage if all of the unions work together. The MCCC negotiating team is still pushing for higher increases, though Bret did not seem optimistic, given the guidelines on higher ed increases coming apparently from the governor’s office.

Linda added that the low salaries prevent the college from attracting staff. The minimal salary increases are galling considering the state his now running a considerable surplus.

1. **E-7s and Personnel Files** – Linda reminded the meeting that professional staff need to be sure that their E-7s (job descriptions) are up to date as of July 1, 2022 and that they receive their evaluations on time. Also everyone should check their personnel files once per year. There is much turnover in Human Resources these days and much may have fallen through the cracks.
2. **Work to Rule** – Discussion ensued about the possibilities of the chapter going on Work to Rule, given the slow pace of contract negotiations and the minimal salary increases being offered. This means that members would do only the teaching or professional staff duties assigned to them with only minimal college service. Members would not volunteer for work outside of normal duties or work hours. So far, the state MCCC has not pursued this, but the discussion indicated that NECC members may not want to wait for the state to take action.

Members also indicated that the salary increase caps were not real, since other institutions in the state system (U Mass, for example) have seen bonuses, reclassifications, etc. Bret and Linda recommended that members attend the bargaining session coming up on October 5 as observers on zoom.

Discussion ensued about Navigate progress reports. These are being requested for Early College students, athletes, PACE, SOAR and present quite a substantial workload for faculty; a workload that did exist a few years ago, when the last contract was negotiated. Given the lack of appreciation implicit in the contract negotiations, it is hard for faculty to make this extra effort.

The sense of the meeting was that it is probably best to work in solidarity with the state MCCC on Work to Rule, though management should understand that Work to Rule is a real possibility. If there is no contract by the next chapter meeting at the end of October, there would need to be more discussion of Work to Rule. However, the effectiveness of Work to Rule beginning in November was questioned.

Discussion ensued about more senior faculty taking the leadership on any action so that non-tenured faculty do not jeopardize their careers.

1. **Office Hours** – Tom Greene, Grievance Coordinator discussed recent controversies over faculty office hours. The Day Contract, he said, requires 4 office hours per week on 4 different days. However, many members have course reductions or extra preps that bring the number of office hours down to 3 or even 2. The question under discussion is whether the contract requires a member to hold office hours on days when the member is not required to teach in person. More discussion with management is planned. Tom advised anyone whose dean is requiring an office hour on a day when the member has no teaching duties to let him know.

Members commented that it was a foolish rule to require live office hours if all of one’s teaching load is on-line. This is especially true given that students who are on-line are not demanding live office hours; they prefer them on-line.

1. **Synchronous Classes** – A member inquired whether the contract prohibited the offering of Synchronous on-line classes. These involve a mandatory meeting on zoom. Tom replied that there is nothing in the contract prohibiting them. They would be covered under the Distance Ed Agreement. It is up to management as to what mode classes are offered. Their decision would probably be made on their perception of student demand.
2. **Fair Share Amendment** – Bret reminded the group that there is a referendum question (Question 1) on a Massachusetts constitutional amendment that would tax incomes of over $1 million at a higher rate than the standard rate. The funds raised through the increase (estimated at about $2 billion annually) would be designated for education and transportation. Bret asked that members consider joining a phone bank effort to help get a yes vote on this question at the November 8 state election.

Meeting was adjourned at about 1:30. Next meeting is scheduled for Monday 24 October 2022.

Respectfully submitted

Stephen Russell, Ph.D.

NECCPA Secretary