

President's Message

Talking Pain

Before their January 14th meeting, the PASSHE Board of Governors held a "financial workshop." This discussion began with a notion that the Board should hold tuition down in this time of economic crisis, with it being posited aloud that a 2% increase might be the most our potential students could bear.

The response to this was a roundtable discussion by the University Presidents about how the recent revenue shortfalls, between appropriations and tuition increases below what was needed the Chancellor's office says these amount to \$200 million this decade, have hurt the institutions. I thought you would all like to hear some of what they said.

Dr. Angelo Armenti (Cal) went first, as he frequently does in these situations as the senior-most president. Dr. Armenti said that the system schools were "starved for funds" and said that they had

made great progress in faculty productivity. But he said these cuts had meant that management had left "positions vacant" and he wondered if there weren't limits to gains in efficiency. Then he told an anecdote: a scientist decided to prove that a donkey could live without food. So the scientist cut the donkey's ration in half, the donkey went on. The scientist cut it in half again, the donkey went on. The scientist kept doing this until one day they were down to the last small ration to cut and the donkey fell over dead. Dr. Armenti equated the PASSHE schools with the starving donkey in this story.

Dr. Tony Atwater (IUP) spoke next, reiterating some of Dr. Armenti's points, but mentioning that the cuts led to a "reduction in sections of core courses" and that there was a powerful "cumulative impact of cuts over time."

Then Dr. Fran McNairy

(Millersville) added her voice, starting where Dr. Atwater went on the reduction of core courses. She said, "We've become dependent on adjuncts & quality has suffered...I have 46 positions and I will not be filling 20!" until she knew she had the funding.

Dr. Neal Soltz (Bloom) chipped in that he was new but understood that the "fat cutting" had had an impact on instruction at BU. He said that this system was the "leanest by far of any system I've ever worked for" and cited the lack of assistant or associate deans at his institution to prove it.

After that, Dr. Joseph Grunenwald (Clarion) indicated he had 7 frozen positions.

When asked how they dealt with this loss of positions, Dr. Robert Smith (SRU) told of his snow removal crew out that morning, working extra shifts.



Steve Hicks

Dr. William Ruup (Ship) spoke of leap-frogging empty positions; "you shift around the ones you don't fill, never having a full contingent." He said that you could keep empty positions open for a few weeks, but, if six months, people notice.

Dr. Keith Miller (LHU) hit a couple powerful points. "We have to prioritize, and make opportunistic cuts – strategic ones – we can't offer some general ed courses we did 10 years ago, because

positions have not been filled."

As you can see, the Board got the message that the universities have scraped down to the bone and the current cuts were beginning to hurt, with quality concerns near to them. It made for an ominous tone for the rest of the meeting, but the Board seemed to have a new awareness for the current status on campuses.

Steve Hicks

APSCUF launching 'Frontline Faculty' initiative

APSCUF is launching an initiative for faculty members of all ranks and of all disciplines who are engaged in research that could affect state policy.

APSCUF hopes to develop its own network of expertise from APSCUF membership to bring our faculty's efforts to the attention of state government officials.

There is the possibility that a faculty member could be asked to offer his/her expert testimony either locally or in Harrisburg. However, forming this network is contingent upon faculty volunteers.

If you would like to be added to the APSCUF database of faculty experts, please email Julie Melnichak, Director of Public Policy Research, at jmelnichak@apscuf.org with your name, contact information, campus and department information, and area of research/expertise. You will only be contacted upon a legislative research request specific to your area of policy.

If you are a faculty member who is a member of APSCUF and you are engaged in research that is regarding a subject of public interest and you would like your research to come the attention of appropriate state officials, the APSCUF Legislative Department (upon request) can act as a clearinghouse for interested faculty.

The APSCUF Governmental Relations Department can provide interested faculty with the relevant contact information for legislators and/or their staff, providing information regarding House and Senate committee meetings and state agency meetings that are open to the public, and directing them to available public resources and references, if available.

Please note that APSCUF's legislative priorities and initiatives, including lobbying and public policy research, are contingent upon APSCUF's Legislative Committee priorities, and APSCUF cannot assist in direct lobbying or research for any

legislative or policy initiatives that the Legislative Committee has not approved. Any political positions or statements from the faculty member are strictly his/her own and are not necessarily endorsed by APSCUF.

APSCUF provides this opportunity to assist junior faculty in the tenure process and to build relations between APSCUF membership and Pennsylvania public officials.

We encourage all faculty regardless of research endeavors to get to know their local legislators in their districts. Regardless of the union's lobbying contingency in Harrisburg, nothing is more powerful to legislators than hearing directly from their own local constituents.

A list of APSCUF's legislative and policy priorities can be found at www.apscuf.org on the Legislative Page for union members to discuss with their local legislators.

Sign up to be one of APSCUF's "Frontline Faculty!"

INSIDE APSCUF



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PASSHE Health Care Management Program

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APSCUF
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Health Report

Phase Two of Healthy U now in effect



Through all the twists and turns with Phase One, one theme from the members was constant – please keep it simple. Here's a summary of Phase Two requirements for all members.

WHO: THOSE WHO COMPLETED PHASE ONE

Deadline: May 15, 2009 (to log-in the date of exam)

Requirement: Physical/Gyn Exam Only (accepted date requirement dictated by current age) no preventive tests are required. Those under the PPO please refer to the preventive schedule to view what may be eligible and discuss with your physician. Those under the Comprehensive Indemnity please be aware preventive tests are not eligible under this plan.

* Those currently under age 50 – input your latest/next physical exam date, must be from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2009

* Those currently age 50 and over – input your latest/next physical exam date, must be from July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009

* Eligible females, over the age of 19, may use the date of annual gyn exam as long as it occurred or will occur with the a date of service between July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009 (new hires may need to contact Highmark Blue Shield if the gyn date is in the range but prior to hiring date).

Steps:

www.highmarkblueshield.com

log-in - user ID and password

click - "Your Health" tab

click - "Lifestyle Returns"

click - "Assess Your Health"

Select - "Preventive Exam"

Enter the date of physical or gyn exam per age frequency (listed above)

For assistance, contact Highmark Blue Shield at 1-866-727-4935.

Make sure you print a copy of the screens that indicate you have successfully completed the requirement. You can view your "tick marks" by logging back into www.highmarkblueshield.com, enter your ID and password, click "Your Health" tab, click "Lifestyle Returns," scroll down to review the "Get Started" and "Assess Your Health" sections under the "Completed" column to see if the tick marks show – if the "Chart View" indicates that you have not completed the necessary requirement(s) you should contact Highmark Blue Shield at 1-866-727-4935. If the "Chart View" indicates completion, make a copy for your records.

HEALTHY U CONTRIBUTION PERIOD:

July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010

The additional amount that non participants are required to pay will increase to 10% from 5%.

DID YOU KNOW:

Prior to APSCUF,

*** faculty paid the entire cost for Blue Cross/Blue Shield coverage.**

*** every faculty member wrote a check in advance to maintain Blue Cross/Blue Shield coverage in the summer months.**

*** faculty had no life insurance coverage.**

*** faculty had no health and welfare benefits.**

*** faculty had no protection against claims, judgments or lawsuits that might arise out of the ordinary course of employment.**

APSCUF - It Pays to Belong!

WHO: THOSE WHO DID NOT COMPLETE PHASE ONE

Deadline: May 15, 2009

Requirement: Pledge (member only – pledge must be accepted prior to the other requirements for both member and spouse/same-sex domestic partner), questionnaire and physical/gyn exam (member and spouse/same-sex domestic partner)

Steps:

www.highmarkblueshield.com

click - "Register Now" (first time users only – will need Highmark ID insurance card) , or

Log-in – user ID and password

click - "Your Health" tab

click - "Lifestyle Returns"

Scroll down to the "Get Started" section

Click "Take the Pledge" (member only) and accept the pledge

Click "Wellness Profile" (this is the questionnaire member and spouse/DP both must complete and it takes appropriately 30-40 minutes to complete)

At this point, you may return to the Lifestyle Return page and click on "Preventive Exam" or you can log-out and re-enter the site at a later time using the steps below:

www.highmarkblueshield.com

log-in with your user name and password

click "Your Health" tab

click "Lifestyle Returns"

click "Assess Your Health"

Select "Preventive Exam"

Enter the date of physical or gyn exam per age frequency (listed below)

Physical/Gyn Exam Only (accepted date requirement dictated by current age) no preventive tests are required. Those under the PPO please refer to the preventive schedule to view what may be eligible and discuss with your physician. Those under the Comprehensive Indemnity please be aware preventive tests are not eligible under this plan.

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Health & Welfare Fund sends letter to members

Faculty members should have received a letter from the PA Faculty Health and Welfare Fund in January. The intent of these letters was to notify members and their dependents if they are eligible for a vision examination in calendar year 2009.

It is the Trustees' view that vision examinations often identify disease in its most early stage – thus, early identification of disease saves lives and prevents more serious illnesses if treatment is sought.

Please remember as of January 1, 2009, the PA Faculty Health and Welfare Fund implemented a \$50.00 annual deductible on the dental services. The deductible is limited to no more than three annual deductibles per family.

February 1, 2009, was the effective date for the other changes to the dental program. These changes are reflected in the dental plan description at www.pafac.com, including the schedule of maximum dental reimbursements.

Not only have some of the reimbursement levels changed and other dental services been added or deleted, but changes have also been made to the plan's limitations and exclusions. It is extremely important for members and dependents to take advantage of the Fund's \$500.00 pretreatment review process so that members aren't surprised to learn of the Fund's limits of coverage after the services have been incurred.

APSCUF Leadership Profile

ESU's Benn cares deeply for APSCUF, quality education

Like many APSCUF leaders, State APSCUF Executive Council member Allan Benn became active in the organization due to the influence of a colleague.

In Benn's case, former East Stroudsburg professor and APSCUF activist Jim Leiding was instrumental in steering Benn to an APSCUF career.

"A great guy and tireless APSCUF leader, Jim got me involved in 1990," Benn related.

"He showed me that collaboration with management could be a very good thing."

On the serious side, Benn simply stated, "APSCUF improves education. That's good work."

A Distinguished Professor of English at ESU and chair of APSCUF's Personnel Committee, Benn credits Leiding and two other ESU colleagues with being the most influential APSCUF members of his union career.

"Jim Leiding stands out, obviously," he said. "Also, Nancy VanArsdale, leader of the Chapter Presidents, and Ken Mash, current State Meet and Discuss Chair, have influenced me."

"New faculty bring fresh perspectives. Also, they're generally the ones who feel most vulnerable in their jobs. In short, APSCUF needs them and they need APSCUF."

Benn wonders if union members fully understand where they would be were it not for APSCUF - especially in the ongoing economic disaster befalling the state and nation.

"As revenue gets scarcer, appropriations will shrink and negotiations will be difficult -- to put it mildly," Benn said.

"Increasingly, one of the most toxic responses by



Allan Benn

"Raising class sizes hurts students, hurts faculty, and event hurts the institutions, as it makes retention of excellent new hires difficult. It is counter-productive. This is the kind of issue that APSCUF should fight for."

Benn pointed to a summer school agreement that Leiding crafted, a document that spawned expanded summer programs.

"That agreement helped students immensely and brought millions of dollars to the school," Benn noted.

When asked what drives him to be an APSCUF leader, Benn first joked that sometimes he wonders and his wife wonders even more.

Regarding VanArsdale and Mash, Benn noted a unique twist as far as APSCUF influence.

"I helped get both (VanArsdale and Mash) involved in APSCUF, but now I feel as though they often mentor me. Certainly, their energy, passion, and smarts are inspiring."

It's always vital for an organization like APSCUF to have young members become active, a fact not lost on Benn.

management to economic pressure is to increase class sizes. PASSHE's use of the term 'faculty productivity' is Orwellian. I'm not speaking only of the harm of auditorium-style lectures, although examples of that type of abuse are often truly nightmarish. We must also fight the 'creep' upward of enrollment ceilings."

Benn related that the enrollment for Composition has commonly crept up to 28 -

-- a full 50% above what national organizations recommend.

While noting the a decline in student literacy, Benn asked, "Is raising class size a **productive** way to combat that?"

"Raising class sizes hurts students, hurts faculty, and even hurts the institutions, as it makes retention of excellent new hires difficult. It is **counter-productive**. This is the kind of issue that APSCUF should fight for."

Benn noted that the current economic climate has negatively affected APSCUF's financial situation.

"The deepening recession has also hurt APSCUF's cash reserves, and as tenure track hiring slows, dues revenue will shrink," he observed.

"In the past five years or so, our diminished compensation and increasing workload have reduced retention of new faculty alarmingly. Replacements have a lower salary and pay lower dues. Yes, the proposed dues increase is justified."

Benn sees challenges to our universities and to education as major challenges for APSCUF.

"As joblessness increases, so will pressure to prioritize vocational programs. We must passionately defend the larger needs of our students and the larger mission of public education to produce literate and thoughtful individuals who love learning and know how to do it well. After all, that's the best vocational training there is."

Guidelines presented for State APSCUF Scholarship Program

APSCUF's Special Services Committee is pleased to present the 2009 APSCUF State Scholarship Program. Please note that a few revisions have been made to the guidelines this year. The changes are noted in bold.

2009 APSCUF State Scholarship Program Guidelines and Requirements

1. State APSCUF Scholarship eligibility rules: Must be a family member of an APSCUF/APSCURF member in good standing or an APSCUF staff member. For the purposes of this program, family member is defined as spouse, child, parent, parent in-law, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, **step-child**, domestic partner and any children who may be born to or adopted by one of the persons in a partnership or for whom one of the persons is the primary caregiver or

financially responsible, nieces, nephews and grandchildren.

2. An eligible applicant must be enrolled at one of the fourteen (14) state-owned universities.

3. Scholarship will be awarded to an eligible applicant for the pursuit of either an undergraduate degree or graduate degree. For an undergraduate degree, the applicant must have completed and passed 30 credits with at least a 2.75 GPA. For a graduate degree, the applicant must have completed and passed nine (9) credits with at least a 3.0 GPA. All of the above stated credits must have been obtained at one of the fourteen (14) state-owned universities (no outside transfers).

4. Transcripts must accompany the application with the

stated Grade Point Average of all completed credits.

5. Essay must accompany the application. **Please note: This year's applicants can choose between one of two topics for their essay. The choices are as follows: "How has the union movement benefitted or influenced the rights and working conditions of the American worker?" or "What are your views on public service in the context of your professional future?" (500 words, typed and double-spaced).**

6. Must obtain reference letters from two different **full dues paying APSCUF/APSCURF members**. Membership confirmation can be verified at the local APSCUF office.

7. State APSCUF Scholarship award will only be presented once to an eligible

applicant in his/her higher education career. *One (1) \$3,000 State APSCUF Scholarship will be presented in August, 2009.*

8. State APSCUF's Special Services Committee will review, evaluate and select the winner from all eligible applications/essays received. In no case shall an APSCUF Special Services Committee member take part in the consideration of an applicant if that applicant is a part of the Committee member's family as defined above or if a Committee member submits a reference letter on behalf of an applicant.

9. Completed application, essay and written reference letters, must be forwarded to: State APSCUF Scholarship Program, C/O Director for Membership Services PO Box 11995 Harrisburg PA 17108.

All materials must be clearly postmarked by a recognized postal service no later than March 6, 2009. A complete application packet can be downloaded from www.apscuf.org or obtained at the local campus APSCUF office.

APSCUF Newsletter

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APSCUF's Walters, Cumings appear on live 'Union Edge' radio program

Charles Showalter, nationally recognized as the former president of the Homeland Security Council and a tireless labor advocate and lobbyist, brought his "Union Edge" radio show to Harrisburg recently, and two APSCUF members were guests on the program.

State APSCUF Vice President Amy Walters (Slippery Rock) and State Public Relations Committee member Rick Cumings (California) talked with Showalter about the problems facing PASSHE faculty, students, and universities.

The program provided an excellent opportunity for Walters and Cumings to highlight the outstanding faculty and coaches at the 14 PASSHE universities.

The APSCUF representatives noted that PASSHE's students are APSCUF's top priority.

"APSCUF stands for quality -- teaching is foremost, followed by research and service," Walters noted.

With current local and national media and legislative contacts, Showalter is building "The Union Edge" into a powerful force within the labor movement.

"The Union Edge Talk Radio Show is here to educate the general public on the positive influences that unions and their allies provide working families and the general public," Showalter said.

The Union Edge can be heard in the Pittsburgh area from 12-1 p.m on 770 AM.



State APSCUF Vice President Amy Walters (left) is interviewed by radio host Charles Showalter (right). California faculty member Rick Cumings was also interviewed and appears in the photo.

Reminder: 2009-2010 academic year will feature pay date adjustment

As many faculty members know, periodically, PASSHE adjusts the first pay date of the academic year. This will be happening again at the beginning of the 2009-2010 academic year.

Faculty members will be placed on the payroll on August 29, 2009, and will receive their first paychecks on September 25, 2009.

Faculty will still receive 26 or 20 pays for the academic year; their first pay will, however, be delayed by two weeks for the fall 2009 semester.

The reason for the payroll adjustment, or payless pay date, is that each year faculty members are placed on the payroll at least one day earlier in the calendar year than the previous year.

In leap years, faculty members are actually placed on the payroll two days earlier in the calendar year.

PASSHE's payroll adjustment situation results from a very simple fact caused by the

difference in the PASSHE payroll system and the calendar year.

Faculty members receive either 20 or 26 pays for an academic year. However, 26 biweekly pays account for only 364 days of a year. Thus, as each year passes, faculty members' first day on the payroll for the new academic year moves forward one day (two days in leap years).

To prevent faculty members from going on the payroll much too early for the fall semester and to avoid the situation in which faculty would go off the payroll in the spring much too soon, it is necessary every so often to move the starting date for the first fall pay two weeks later; thus faculty members have what may appear to be a "payless payday."

PASSHE's payroll adjustment last occurred at the beginning of the 2001-2002 academic year. The adjustment prior to the 2001-2002

academic year was made in the 1992-1993 academic year.

PASSHE asserts, and APSCUF has verified, that this pay adjustment was made late and should have been made in the 1989-1990 academic year.

In an effort to correct this issue and to reduce the need for double payroll deductions, PASSHE proposed making the payroll adjustment in the 2009-2010 academic year.

Double payroll deductions will still occur for healthcare as it is deducted on a fiscal year basis. APSCUF was successful in securing PASSHE's agreement that the double healthcare deduction will be spread over a faculty member's entire academic year's pay instead of in the first pay of the fall 2009 semester.

It is important to your financial well-being that you begin planning now for the 14-day period that faculty members will not receive a paycheck.

Special Services information available 24/7 via the web

In an effort to save costs, the Special Services Committee eliminated the spring membership mailing. Special Services mailings are only distributed in the fall of each year. All the Special Services information can be accessed in the Members Only section on APSCUF's web site and this information is updated as needed.

Active and retired faculty and coaches are encouraged to contact their local APSCUF office to register their email address and passwords to gain access into the MEMBERS ONLY WEB SITE.

The Special Service Committee has placed all APSCUF account information as well as direct links and contacts in its section in the MOS so members can have access to this information 24/7.

The process is simple: Contact your local APSCUF Office Manager and give her your email address, as well as a password. This information will be forwarded to State APSCUF — it takes approximately 24 hours once the information is received for the member to be able to access the MOS site.

Members need to be aware that when clicking on the Special Services link, they may need to go to the drop down box entitled "Show Topics" and click on "all" to view the entire list.

APSCUF invites essays for 'Whitepapers' project

APSCUF recognizes the efforts of members for the causes of shared governance, fair compensation for work and advocacy, both for the union and for students. That effort also can come in the form of scholarly work on both historical conditions and current events that affect the careers of people who perform labor in an academic environment.

APSCUF is initiating a project to highlight this scholarly work. The project is called "Whitepapers" to suggest that the work is authoritative and oriented toward solving problems in the academic workplace. This project will publish "Whitepapers" on the APSCUF website. Abstracts will be published in the APSCUF Newsletter. Select articles may be released to the media and on CD.

To this end, APSCUF would like to invite its members to submit original research and scholarly essays of interest to academic labor.

This may include, but is not limited to, such issues as:

- o The Benefits of Academic Unionization
- o Tenure, Promotion, and Evaluation
- o Workload, Productivity, and Class Size
- o Publication, Intellectual Property, and Information Security
- o Political, Legal, and Legislative Matters
- o Hiring Practices
- o Funding Practices
- o Distance Education

We hope to publish new material with some regularity. The next deadline for submission is March 10, 2009. Please submit completed papers including: a) author(s), b) affiliation, c) email address, d) title of abstract e) body of abstract for consideration to:

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