

P-fac NEWS

Serving the Part-time teaching community at Columbia College

March, 2000

Report from the IEA RA

John Stevenson

The annual Representative Assembly of the Illinois Education Association (IEA), our union's state organization, took place March 9-11. Elected representatives from *P-fac* were Jack Behrend, Joe Laiacona and John Stevenson, who joined more than a thousand other delegates in Rosemont for two and a half days of speeches, debates, votes, dinners, etc.

The IEA (like the NEA nationally) represents mainly K-12 teachers, along with growing numbers of ESPs at these schools (Educational Support Personnel: teacher's aides, custodians, etc.). Thus the great preponderance of the issues at the Assembly related to the Illinois public school system. The numbers of people in higher education who are represented by the IEA is growing, though, and some proposals brought before the body did pertain more directly to our situation. Specifically, two proposed bylaw changes had to do with giving members in higher education greater representation in IEA executive bodies; one of these was passed and the other was voted down.

Another change in the bylaws proposed to the assembly applies directly to us: this was a resolution to add a lower-tiered dues level for part-time faculty in higher education. This requires a bit of explanation. Currently we pay \$120 annual dues, some of which goes to the IEA and some to the NEA. But this is a temporary and ad hoc arrangement, a special dispensation, so to speak. As the official dues structure stands now, we would be considered half-time employees, and thus would pay half of full-time dues. Dues for full-timers in higher education are currently \$431/year, so without our "special dispensation" we'd be paying \$215.50. So much for background.

The proposed bylaw amendment was put forward by Barbara Dayton from Oakton Community College and our own Joe Laiacona, who are the two part-time faculty on the IEA Higher Education Council.

It would have set the dues for part-timers at a much lower amount, pegged to about one percent of a part-timer's average salary. The rationale for such a change is of course that in the absence of parity, part-timers receive a very small percentage of a full-timer's salary, and that if the IEA is to organize part-timers, there must be a reasonable and realistic dues structure in place.

The amendment was put forward and debated for a while on the floor of the RA, but it was decided to withdraw the motion before it was put to a vote, since it was clear that it had virtually no chance of passing this year. The principal argument against it was that, without a congruent change at the national level, this would result in the IEA's getting almost nothing, or perhaps even losing money, on dues from part-timers, because the IEA would still have to hand over the full amount of national dues for each member to the NEA. The plan is to try to effect a change in dues structure first at the national level (at the NEA RA this summer), then come back and propose a change at the state level (at the IEA RA next spring).

(If you find all this a bit confusing, you're not alone!)

For those of us who represented you at the RA, the value of the experience lay not only in speaking up on behalf of part-timers, but in the opportunity to make connections, to get to know the people and observe the operations of the union with which we have affiliated ourselves. We found members who were friendly, inclusive, and who displayed a real concern and involvement in both their schools and their union – good people, and a good organization to be part of.

Copies of the program book from the RA (including all resolutions and bylaw changes), and of the budget which was approved, are available in the *P-fac* office for perusal. Call 773-281-0975 to make an appointment to look at either or both.

Roosevelt Part-timers Win Union Vote!

Part-time faculty at Roosevelt University cast their ballots in early March, and when they were counted at the National Labor Relations Board office on March 13, there were 155 in favor of a union, with only 30 opposed. That's an 84% "yes" vote, greater even than our 80% landslide at Columbia two years ago!

Doubtless the Columbia example helped the organizing drive at Roosevelt, and certainly the fact that they now have a union will help in our future bargaining. The more part-timers are organized in the Chicago area (and nationwide), the better it will be for all of us.

Welcome to our colleagues down the street, who will be affiliated, as we are, with the IEA-NEA.

Our Delegates to NEA RA

The union with which we are affiliated, the National Education Association (NEA) will hold its annual Representative Assembly (RA) this summer. *P-fac* is allotted two delegates, and members received ballots for this election recently. The votes have been tallied and our representatives are Joe Laiacona and Helene Smith-Romer. Alternates are Arnie Raiff and John Stevenson.

Volunteering at the NEA RA

This year's national Representative Assembly will be held right here in Chicago, July 3-6. Volunteers are needed for various functions at the RA: ushering, assisting handicapped delegates, staffing the information and message centers, and many others. Volunteers will be recompensed for meals, travel (up to \$46.50 per day), and for lodging

(if volunteering for two or more days). Some volunteers will be needed as early as June 29; most will be needed July 1-6.

This would be a good opportunity to get a sense of our national union: to meet our fellow teachers and unionists from around the country, and to observe the workings of the union at the national level.

For more information, and for a volunteer application form (on which you can indicate date[s] of availability and position preference) call the P-fac hotline: 773-281-0975.

Community College Part-timers Need the Right to Organize

Christopher Thale

Most part-time faculty in Illinois, believe it or not, don't have the legal right to form a union in order to bargain with their administrators.

We at Columbia organized and bargained under rules set by the National Labor Relations Board. The rules of this federal agency cover private colleges and other institutions.

But at public colleges, the rules are set by the State of Illinois, and currently state law recognizes no such rights for part-time faculty.

It's a long story, but changing a single word in existing law would allow part-time faculty in community colleges the basic

right to organize and to bargain. A bill to do just that has been introduced in the current session of the legislature. It is HB2581 and it deserves the support of all of us.

The people affected are fellow part-time faculty. And if our colleagues throughout the region are organized, that will transform the environment in which our next negotiations are conducted. We at Columbia will have a much easier time striking a favorable bargain.

If you haven't already, write or call or e-mail your state senator and state representative. Tell them to restore one of the most basic of human rights to part-time faculty in Illinois by supporting this bill to amend the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Act. You should have already received a preprinted postcard for this purpose; a personal message is more effective.

And whatever you do, do it quickly. There is not much time left in the current legislative session.

Expanding the Bargaining Unit

Earlier this semester P-fac mailed petition cards to those part-timers not currently in the bargaining unit in an effort to collect enough signatures to gain an agreement to include all part-timers in P-fac. We are now following that up with phone calls to those who haven't signed.

The union hopes to gather signatures from more than 50% of the eligible part-timers and arrive at an agreement with the college administration for their inclusion. Short of that, 30% of those eligible need to sign cards in order for the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to hold another certification election.

Inclusion of all part-timers would alleviate much of the confusion as to who is in the unit and who isn't, as well as allow non-unit part-timers to gain new benefits and to bargain collectively.

So – thanks to all of you non-bargaining-unit folks who have returned the cards; and those who haven't yet – sign those cards and return them as soon as possible! For more information call P-fac at 773-281-0975.

Are You in the Bargaining Unit?

If you are in the bargaining unit you are covered by all provisions of the contract between P-fac and Columbia, and your minimum pay for a 3-credit course is \$2050 as of this semester.

The bargaining unit includes: (1) all employed as part-time faculty for at least two complete consecutive semesters who have taught a total of eight credit hours or more (excluding one- and two-credit courses), and (2) all who have been employed as part-time faculty for at least three complete semesters out of five complete consecutive semesters and who have taught at least three credit hours during each of those semesters. This means all of you who teach a course every fall year after year, but don't teach in the spring. Summer semesters do not count in determining this.

Excluded from the bargaining unit are: part-time faculty who are also grad students or full-time staff at Columbia, those teaching non-credit courses, and a few others.

Who is my P-fac Departmental Representative?

Department	Last Name	First Name	Phone
Academic Computing	Laiacona	Joseph	(773) 281-0417
Academic Computing	Smith-Romer	Helene	(773) 465-8029
Art and Design	Floriano	Lynn	(847) 675-8340
Art and Design	LeBourgeois	Marie Louise	(773) 271-0667
Art and Design	Lince	Richard	(773) 334-2203
Art and Design	Lomperis	Judy	(708) 383-8718
Art and Design	Ritchard	Brian	(312) 440-1904
Dance	Shanahan	Molly	(773) 743-8014
Dance Therapy	Nehren	Alyson Syrek	(773) 248-2336
Educational Studies	Pond	Alexandra	(773) 274-3092
English	Carli	Vittorio	(708) 599-6193
Fiction Writing	Raiff	Arnold	(773) 279-1349
Fiction Writing	Strong-Dowd	Susan	(773) 866-9578
Film and Video	Behrend	Jack	(773) 989-9848
Film and Video	Bobrow	Rachel	(773) 665-5601
Film and Video	Donoghue	Peter	(773) 348-8999
Interpreter Training	Gratzke	Vicki	(847) 925-8704
Journalism	Booth	Bonnie	(773) 539-5391
Liberal Education	Khleif	Baheej	(847) 836-1608
Liberal Education	Kopp	Fred	(312) 666-9608
Liberal Education	Stevenson	John	(773) 743-3728
Liberal Education	Variakojis	Danguole	(773) 776-4668
Management	Bron	Robert	(773) 764-9111
Marketing Comm	Kraus	Herbert M	(773) 472-1587
Photography	Chilsen	Elizabeth	(708) 763-3004
Photography	Standbridge	Mikelle	(312) 409-0322
Science and Math	Arieti	David	(847) 677-9174
Science and Math	Odom	Linda	(773) 274-3636
Science and Math	Ross	Elaine	(630) 833-5273
Science Institute	Antonio	Thomas	(773) 973-3368
Sound	Chisholm	Malcolm	(773) 525-0180
Television	Glader	Bill	(847) 866-9860
Music	Coulson	Bette	(773) 588-6243
Theater	Nolan	Clare	(773) 472-9518

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For more information call our hotline: 773-281-0975 WEBSITE: WWW.PFAC.ORG EMAIL: INFO@PFAC.ORG We are always looking for feedback and contributions. Editor: John Stevenson; designer: Jeanne Reilly P-FAC IEA/NEA