

Presidential

POV

AS YOU MAY KNOW, we are in the last remaining months of our collective bargaining agreement with the district.

Negotiations have moved rather slowly—among others, issues such as faculty evaluations, counselor contracts, coaching stipends, and increasing part-time office hours have been harder to settle than expected.

Next on our list of negotiation items are wages and part-time equity issues. PFT has worked with administration to increase TRC facilitator release time, based on increased load, and to secure automatic step increases on the 25-step schedule for part-timers; unfortunately, due to technical issues at the district, this issue continues to be unresolved. We've been pressing the district negotiation team to schedule more meetings—time's tight, and it's in both sides' interest to get a fair settlement sooner rather than later.

But negotiations aren't PFT's sole focus. PFT has been supportive of the efforts of state legislators and of its parent union, the California Federation of Teachers (CFT), to bring more transparency to the accreditation process. The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior and Community Colleges (ACCJC) has come under considerable pressure from the state chancellor's own task force and the board of governors. The federal accrediting agency NACIQI has also recommended ACCJC change its ways (see NACIQI Report, page 3). ACCJC is now in an odd transition



CoA instructors Wayne Fung (far left, Auto Tech) and Carla Pegues (Dental Assisting) were among eight district faculty members awarded tenure last month. Helping celebrate are (from Prof. Pegues's left) Alameda mainstays Rufino Ramos (Auto Tech), interim VPSS William Watson, and PFT President Ed Jaramillo.

period before a final determination on its status is made. PFT will update faculty on ACCJC's status and a potential move to a new accreditor, even as it continues to encourage the colleges' efforts to meet existing accreditation standards.

PFT has also been working with CFT to organize and sign up new members and increase COPE membership. Our organizers and staff have used grant funding to identify non-members and encourage current members to be more involved with the union. The effort was made all the more urgent by *Friedrichs vs. CTA*, a Supreme Court case unlikely to go away after a recent 4-4 decision left a lower court's ruling in place, preserving public-sector union rights for the time being.

The recent death of the arch-conservative Antonin Scalia, which led to the split verdict in *Friedrichs*, is unlikely to bring about a court more favorably inclined toward working folks anytime soon. While union-

adverse rulings are less of a threat in the near term, no dramatic change is expected this year, as the Republican Senate continues to block President Obama's nomination to the court.

Proposition 30 renewal is scheduled for the November election. Executive council members and organizers and volunteers will be assisting in gathering signatures to get this crucial proposition placed on the ballot. The renewal would extend Prop 30 for a decade, continuing the "millionaires' tax" that has brought needed stability and fairness to the state's budget. Prop 30 has brought significant revenue to school districts across California, greatly benefiting our programs and students.

Please follow future PFT communications for more details on your local chapter meetings, general membership meetings, negotiations, and other important news.

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Peralta Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 1603 represents over 1,000 teachers, counselors, librarians, and nurses at the College of Alameda, Berkeley City College, Laney College, and Merritt College. PFT is an affiliate of the California Federation of Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO. AFT represents more than 1.5 million members nationwide.

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PFT gets part-time evals on track at Laney

Grievance Summary

Jennifer Shanoski

PFT Grievance Officer

OUR UNION strives to resolve conflicts prior to filing grievances. When efforts to head off a problem come up short, Article 19 outlines the grievance procedures.

The first step in the process is to work with the college/district administration to reach an informal resolution. A formal, written grievance is filed when such a resolution cannot be found.

The grievance proceeds from the college president to the VC of Human Resources to the chancellor, moving up if an agreement cannot be reached at each step. If PFT and the chancellor can't work things out, the union can bring the grievance to arbitration.

The spring 2016 semester has brought resolution to a number of issues.

The three grievances discussed in the last edition of the *Peralta Teacher* have all been resolved:

- 1. Shoddy Evaluation at Laney College:** A long-term faculty member was correctly placed in the preferred hiring pool despite the college's attempts to rush through an incomplete and negative evaluation.
- 2. Base Loads Eroded at Laney College:** Base load calculations provide a basis for part-time faculty assignments and are central to the workings of the preferred hiring pool. PFT has worked out a system with the district to establish base loads: Faculty loads 60 days prior to the start of the semester are compared with those at the census date; the larger of the two is used to calculate the base load for that semester. Base loads are now published on the district and PFT websites for part-time faculty. We

encourage part-timers to check their base loads every semester so that any mistakes can be corrected before any problems occur.

- 3. Part-time Faculty Evaluations at Laney College:** A continuing problem over the last two years, Laney College failed to evaluate 75% of its part-time faculty again by the end of the fall 2015 semester. According to a Step 3 grievance resolution, all faculty who had taught 6 out of 10 semesters and did not have completed evaluations on record were automatically placed in the preferred hiring pool. In hopes that the situation improves by the end of the spring 2016 semester, a new grievance has not been filed.

In addition to resolving the issues described above, PFT has been working on other important faculty issues, including:

- 1. Clarification of the district's policies and procedures for investigations.**
- 2. Ensuring that tenure-track faculty are appropriately forwarded for tenure after receiving positive evaluations throughout their probationary period.**
- 3. Securing full-time status for part-time faculty who are loaded above 67% for three semesters or more.**
- 4. Working with district HR to ensure that part-time faculty are automatically moved up the salary steps each time they've completed 30 units of teaching.**

We hope that the lack of any outstanding grievances points to a more productive relationship between PFT and administration across the district. 

NACIQI Report

Jennifer Shanoski

PFT Grievance Officer

BACK IN DECEMBER, I had the privilege of attending the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) hearing in Washington, D.C. NACIQI is a committee that advises to the Department of Education regarding the accreditors charged with ensuring the quality of education across the country. At this hearing, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC)—the outfit that accredits Peralta—was being discussed.

ACCJC has been sanctioned by the Dept. of Education for violating fifteen different standards. The DoE has decried ACCJC's reliance on vague and unevenly applied standards, its focus on governance structures rather than quality of education, and its promotion

of a culture of fear. At the NACIQI hearing, a staff report was presented that held that ACCJC had not corrected its deficiencies and should be given a year to come into compliance.

ACCJC officers responded defensively to the staff report, and then the floor was opened up for public comment. Dozens of faculty members, students, board members, union activists, and concerned community members spoke out regarding their experiences with ACCJC. For good reason, most of the attention was focused on City College of San Francisco: ACCJC moved in 2012 to disaccredit California's largest public institution of higher learning. Still, the meeting was notable for the inclusion of representatives from other concerned individuals; it seemed to many in the room, including many of the NACIQI members, that the culture of fear surrounding ACCJC had evolved into a clear need to stand up to the agency.

On December 17, while the delegation met with congressional representatives to ask for support in removing ACCJC from the list of accredited accrediting agencies, NACIQI voted to give ACCJC six months to come into compliance. This reduction in time was seen as a huge win for fair accreditation and a step in the direction toward removal of ACCJC.

The California Board of Governors will be reviewing a plan from Brice Harris, Chancellor of the California Community Colleges, to authorize a new accrediting agency. This, combined with the next hearing of NACIQI, may mean that a new sheriff is coming to town. It is important that faculty take a central role in shaping the guidelines for accreditation and that those guidelines are clear, measurable, and support student success above all else. 



PFT Grievance Officer Jennifer Shanoski (back row, second from right) joined a CFT delegation in Washington, D.C., at a December meeting of the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity, the body that oversees accreditation matters for the U.S. Dept. of Education. Dr. Shanoski, who teaches chemistry at Merritt and leads its assessment efforts, testified about the need to reform the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges.

CFT Convention

By Ed Jaramillo

PFT President

HAD THE HONOR and privilege to lead a delegation of 15 elected Peralta faculty members to the California Federation of Teachers Convention March 11-13 in San Francisco.

After the first morning session, union delegates from around the state rallied outside the conference hotel in support of Local 2121, the faculty union that recently voted to authorize a strike at City College of San Francisco. ACCJC sanctions have been used to explain the City College administration's refusal to offer the faculty any type of reasonable salary proposal.

Rainy weather partially cleared after the rally, and protestors proceeded to the office of Jeff Sloan, attorney and chief negotiator for City College

administration. More than 250 California union members participated in the rally. PFT was represented by Kimberly King, faculty member from Laney College, and yours truly. About 20 union members participated in a well-rehearsed and -planned act of civil disobedience by blocking the main office door. Police cited those who participated in the door-blocking and released them that afternoon.

Afternoon workshops offered a wide variety of subject areas: fighting the *Friedrichs* Supreme Court case, supporting faculty in the classroom, activating labor, and promoting racial equity, among many other social and labor issues. A common theme was organizing and empowering members to become more involved in their locals.

Saturday's session began with a panel discussion, Building Power, that

detailed the successes and challenges of internal organizing. Narrated by union leaders from throughout the state—and one federation leader from Texas—the panel emphasized the importance of internal organizing, particularly in light of legal actions like the now-muted *Friedrichs*.

The CFT Communications Awards were announced early Saturday. PFT's comm team grabbed third place for Best Four-page Newsletter for Locals with over 1,000 Members (you've got a prize-winner in your hot little hands right now!) and a second for Best One-page Bulletin (PFT's decorated e-publication, PCCD Board Watch).

CFT President Joshua Pechthalt gave an upbeat state of the union address, recounting CFT's successes and charting our path forward. Later, AFT President Randi Weingarten marked the national's 100th anniversary with an inspiring speech that reflected on past victories and looked forward to more in the future. 

Negotiations Update

By Rick Greenspan

PFT Chief Negotiator

What's "on the table" this time?

Our current three-year contract expires in June. So while we normally discuss wages and benefits every year, we have a large number of topics and articles under discussion this spring in addition to money.

Interest Based Bargaining

Some of the topics are being discussed using "Interest Based Bargaining," with the help of a state mediator. So far, those sessions have focused on "how to best meet our students' counseling needs" and on our evaluation handbook for contract and part-time faculty.

Other ("non-IBB") issues

Numerous other issues are being considered without the state mediator.

They include:

- ▶ Article 30H (Part-time rehire pool)
- ▶ Part-timers working 15 equated hours (and more) but not being paid as long-term subs
- ▶ PFT and faculty rights when the district initiates an investigation
- ▶ Rights of grant-funded faculty hired under multiple one-year contracts
- ▶ New rules regarding faculty training (and rights) involving harassment accusations and laws

Show us the money!

Of course, the elephant in the room is wages and benefits, and the news from Sacramento isn't great in that regard. In January, Governor Brown proposed a COLA for community colleges of less than one-half percent. Meanwhile, we all know that Peralta isn't growing. Faced with missing our state enrollment target last year, Peralta "borrowed" students from this year's summer session. And it looks like we'll need to do that again in 2016-17, just to secure our base funding from the state.

On the other hand, the district has become very good at "finding" money to pay for new contractors and new administrative positions.

- ▶ \$450,000 added in March to Ferrilli Information Group's contract for overhauling and managing Peralta's Information Technology systems
- ▶ \$200,000 (also awarded last month) to the Collaborative Brain Trust to develop educational master plans for our colleges
- ▶ Creation of a new position at the District Office for Eñora Webb, former President of Laney College
- ▶ Hiring a Special Assistant to the Chancellor (Chief of Staff) last fall
- ▶ Two additional deans are currently being hired at the College of Alameda (Dean of Research and CTE Dean)

The bottom line is that, despite its recent spending spree on consultants and administrators, the district has yet to find a single dime to offer to faculty to raise wages, increase benefits, increase part-time office hours, or fill the new steps in our 25-step part-time salary schedule. 