

MSP Chronicle

The Massachusetts Society of Professors | Representing Faculty & Librarians on the UMass Amherst Campus



From the President's Desk

By Eve Weinbaum, MSP President

Welcome to the fall semester! I hope your summer was restful and rejuvenating – and I hope this academic year will be engaging for everyone.

The MSP had a busy summer. July 1st has come and gone, our current contract has expired and we have not yet signed a new contract. By the end of the summer, the administration still had not responded to our salary proposal, which the union put forward in March. We discussed many topics during countless hours of negotiations over the past year, but we are still waiting to reach agreement on our most important issues:

- Clear language that peer review and faculty governance take precedence in personnel decisions
- Opportunities for professional improvement leave for non-tenure-track faculty
- Opportunities for service roles in the workload of all full-time faculty
- Salary increases to cover the cost of living and health insurance
- A fair and transparent anomaly process to address salary inequities among faculty and librarians
- Basic rights and minimum salaries for CPE instructors

The MSP is working with the other unions that represent UMass faculty and staff on all four campuses, and we are planning actions to put pressure on both the Governor's office and the UMass President's office to settle good contracts. We will need your help to demonstrate that our members deserve a speedy and fair resolution.

We were heartened by several developments this summer – including the appointment of a new interim provost – demonstrating that when we stand up for each other and fight together, we win. The past year was filled with

turmoil, as more of our colleagues, especially individuals from under-represented groups, were denied tenure despite positive recommendations at every level of the internal and external peer review process. The MSP fought back. More than a hundred of you showed up for grievance hearings and supported your colleagues who were treated unfairly. About 150 faculty and librarians attended our emergency meeting in the spring, discussing the possibility of direct actions to ensure that faculty governance is respected. The MSP created



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the Peer Review and Faculty Governance Task Force, and almost 50 of us joined this committee. We met several times this summer, informed the administration of our concerns, requested specific data so that we could analyze patterns among tenure and promotion denials, and began to plan a public campaign for this fall. In July, we were pleased to hear about the changes in the upper administration. We hope that Provost McCarthy will be a champion of faculty governance and peer review going forward.

This fall, the MSP will be making a concerted effort to reach out to our members and non-members in every college, department, and

library across campus. We want to hear from you and your colleagues about what matters to you, and we want all faculty and librarians to know what the union can do. We have shown that when we stick together and stand up for our rights, UMass wins. ■



MSP activists at the MSP Retreat in August 2017.

**SAVE
the
DATE**

MSP New Member Reception,
84 McClellan St., Amherst,
Sep. 28, 4-6 PM

Personnel Committee
Workshops,
Campus Center 904-908,
Sep. 27 & 28, noon- 2 PM

MSP Grant applications due
November 1, 2017

Have an upcoming event
enhancing MSP's mission you
would like MSP to announce?
Contact the MSP office at:
msp@external.umass.edu
(413) 545-2206

Bargaining Update - Collective Action Brings Results

By Mickey Gallagher, MTA

The University and State College administrations have finally received authorization to negotiate salary and other economic provisions after more than 11 months at the bargaining table and a statewide coordinated filing of bad faith bargaining charges.

The MSP filed charges with the Massachusetts Department of Labor Relations after more than 6 months of the University administrations across all University campuses as well as the administration for the Massachusetts State College system refusing to put any economic proposals on the table because they lacked authorization from the President's office. When pressed, the President's office stated it was seeking authorization from the Massachusetts Office of Administration and Finance to make a salary offer.

The charges filed allege the University has violated M.G.L.150(E) (Massachusetts Labor Law) by its failure to have representatives at the bargaining table who have the authority to bargain. The parties at the bargaining table have a right to expect those on the other side have the authority to put forward proposals and respond with counter proposals. All University bargaining units, including the MSP, put forward salary and other economic proposals this past March. Since

that time there has been no response from the University except to state they were not authorized to make any salary or other economic proposals.

MTA coordinated the efforts of all University bargaining units, inclusive of those at UMass Boston; Lowell; and Dartmouth, as well as the MTA bargaining units in the State College system that represent faculty and professional staff.

Higher education bargaining units have not been alone in this struggle. All state employee unions have been engaged in a variety of actions to get the state to engage in good faith bargaining. The MSP, joined by all other MTA higher education bargaining units, continue to work with the State

Employee Union Coalition to share information and plan bargaining strategies to assure our members secure the best possible collective bargaining agreements.

During this fall semester we fully expect bargaining will intensify as we attempt to finalize a successor agreement retroactive to July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2020. This effort will most likely require coordinated efforts across the state's bargaining units. The MSP will keep you posted about these efforts and the activities you can engage in to assure a just agreement – **it's an All-In effort.** ■



Annual Evaluation of Part-Time Faculty

By Lori Reardon, MSP Staff

Last June, the Provost's office sent out a notice concerning AFR deadlines for this academic year. Unfortunately the notice included language that has led to some confusion about whether or not part-time (less than 50% FTE) faculty are required to be evaluated annually or not. We wish to clarify for our members that ALL bargaining-unit faculty, regardless of FTE, must be evaluated annually by their department personnel committees and relevant academic administrative officials. While the MSP contract does allow for an instrument other than the AFR to be used for these part-timers (see Article 33.2 of the MSP contract for detailed information), it does not make the annual review optional.

Librarians (both full and part-time) are reviewed annually and must use the AREL (Annual Report and Evaluation for Librarians) form.

Topics such as these are regularly discussed at MSP's annual Personnel Committee workshops. This year's workshops will be held on September 27th and 28th, noon-2 p.m., Campus Center 904-08. Invitations to attend will go out to members very soon and we hope that your department's PC will be able to send a representative. ■

MTA's Legislative Agenda

By Max Page, Professor of Architecture and MTA Board member

Last year we won a landslide victory on Question 2, the charter school ballot question. That was on its own a victory for public schools. But it also stunned the political establishment and gave us new momentum to win on some of our other priorities. In December 2016, the MTA Board passed its two-year legislative agenda, which included several items that should be of special interest to MSP members.

I am vice-chair of the Government Relations Committee (GRC), the MTA committee led by members which

roughly 80% of all Massachusetts families. This last piece has been a priority of PHENOM, the Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts, which MSP helped found and continues to support.

With our coalition partners in the Raise UP Massachusetts (raiseupma.org) coalition, we've also been fighting for three important initiatives to invest in public education (pre-K through higher education), all of which will be decided in 2018. First is the **Fair Share Amendment**, a



so, we have to gather 100,000 signatures by the middle of November. MSP will be asking members to gather signatures to place these two issues before the voters and lay down two more building blocks of a more just Commonwealth.

Please write to mpage@umass.edu if you have any questions. ■

You can learn about the *MTA's legislative agenda* here:
<https://massteacher.org/current-initiatives/legislative-action>

You can learn about *Raise Up Massachusetts* agenda here:
<http://raiseupma.org/>

develops the legislation that we prioritize on Beacon Hill. This year the GRC received near unanimous support for our proposals and quickly found a receptive audience in the legislature. Most of our bills have been sponsored by more than half of the 200-person legislature. That doesn't guarantee victory, but it signals the strength of our ideas and our political clout.

One of our four piece of legislation is a bill that contains several key goals for public higher education. First, it calls for expanding the number for full-time faculty and staff, by creating a trust fund for faculty and staff hiring. Second, it improves pay and benefits for our adjunct colleagues, by requiring that they be offered health insurance, access to state pensions, and pay parity. Finally, the bill calls for the creation of the Finish Line Grant, providing one tuition-and-fee-free year at any public campus for students with a family income under \$130,000, encompassing

constitutional amendment that will be on the ballot in November 2018 and could bring upwards of \$2 billion in tax revenues, dedicated to public schools (K through UMass), affordable public higher education, and roads, bridges and public transportation. Second is legislation to **raise the minimum wage** gradually from \$11 to \$15. The Raise Up Massachusetts coalition was behind bringing the minimum wage to the \$11 level; this is the next step toward greater economic justice for all workers. Finally, the coalition is fighting for **paid family and medical leave**, something that MSP members have won at the bargaining table, but which most workers in the Commonwealth do not have.

In the cases of the minimum wage bill and paid family and medical leave, the coalition has filed ballot initiatives (for the November 2018 election) in order to advance the legislation if the legislature fails to act on them before the end of the legislative session in July 2018. But to do



At the March for Public Education in May, 2017.
 Top: The Weinbaum-Page family marching.
 Bottom: Amherst contingent on the Boston Common.



Labor Coalition News

By Eve Weinbaum, MSP President

MSP is part of several coalitions including the UMass Amherst Labor Coalition, the coalition of unions on all four UMass campuses, and the coalition of state employees. Through these coalitions, we are able to build statewide power to make progress on a number of issues.

The UMass unions weighed in with support for the Safe Communities Act, which would protect immigrants in Massachusetts from unjust attacks. MSP is working with the Pioneer Valley Workers Center, together with GEO, USA, and PSU, to organize a training for faculty, staff, and students interested in the sanctuary movement. Please join us on October 15 to learn more about mobilizing around immigrants' rights.

Recently the coalition protested proposed cuts to PVTa bus service, specifically the M40 express route from Northampton, which many UMass faculty, staff, and students ride every day. We advocated for our state legislators to fully fund PVTa, and for our administration to subsidize bus service in order to limit traffic problems, free up campus parking, and minimize harmful emissions.

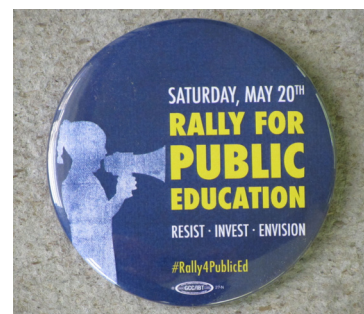
The MSP testified at the UMass Board of Trustees meeting on July 17 in Worcester. We asked the trustees to make a public statement in support of the Fair Share Amendment, which will tax incomes over \$1 million per year and bring in \$2.2 billion dedicated to public transportation

and public education. MSP and MTA have worked hard for this constitutional amendment, which will be on the ballot for the November 2018 election.

Congratulations to our colleague Dean Robinson, who was just elected to the National Education Association Board of Directors. The NEA is our parent union (see the sidebar on page 5 for more on all of these acronyms) and represents 3.2 million educators around the U.S. Dean will serve a three-year term, and he will also serve on the MTA Board of Directors, as an MTA Annual Meeting Delegate, and as a delegate at the NEA Representative Assembly each year. We are thrilled to have Dean representing our interests at the state and national levels. ■



MSP members on the Boston Common during the March for Public Education, May 2017.



THE MSP PUZZLE

The puzzle for the previous issue asked you to determine what the next number in the sequence 12, 1, 2, 15, ? is. The intended answer was 18. Assigning A = 1, B = 2, etc. leads to the letter sequence LABO, and of course the obvious next letter is R, letter number 18. Two clever alternate answers used a more mathematical approach to get the value 40 as next in sequence. This answer was judged to be correct, and Steve B. was the gift card winner. Send a note to MSPpuzzle@gmail.com if you would like to know the method used to arrive at this answer.

This issue's challenge is more of a treasure hunt. It's simple: identify the campus location of the image at right. Send a description of the location to MSPpuzzle@gmail.com by midnight, October 1, 2017. The first entry correctly identifying the location will win a \$25 gift card. Decision of the judge is final. Open to all MSP members. You can't win unless you enter!



What's Coming This Semester

By Emily Steelhammer, MSP Staff

New Faculty and Librarian Reception

The MSP is thrilled to welcome another diverse and exciting group of new faculty and librarians to campus this year. On Thursday September 28th from 4pm-6pm, President Eve Weinbaum will host MSP's new faculty and librarian reception. If you are a new faculty member or librarian we hope you can join us at this social to meet union leaders and other new employees. Please RSVP at [msp@external.umass.edu](mailto:mvp@external.umass.edu)

MSP Workshops

Be on the lookout for 3 great workshops MSP is offering this semester:

PC Workshops

- Wed. 9/27 – Noon-2 pm, CC 904-08
- Thurs. 9/28 – Noon-2 pm, CC 904-08

Tenure Workshops

- Wed. 10/25 – Noon-2 pm, CC 904-08
- Thurs. 10/26 – Noon-2 pm, CC 804-08

Senior Lecturer Promotion Workshop

- Wed. 11/15 – Noon-2 p.m., CC 178
- Thurs. 11/30 – Noon-2 pm, CC 804-08

Information on the workshops and requests for RSVPs will be emailed out prior to each workshop. Please let the MSP office know if you are interested in attending.

Immigrants' Rights Rapid Response Training

In response to the rhetoric and policies coming from Washington, DC, the MSP, in coalition with the other campus unions and the Pioneer Valley Workers Center, will be holding a rapid response training on Sunday October 15th. The Pioneer Valley Workers Center will teach us how to build our own campus-wide rapid response network so that we can act when there is an urgent need to protect our immigrant faculty, students and staff from unfair interrogation, detention, or deportation. Please contact the MSP office to sign up for the training or to get involved in our ongoing immigrants' rights campaign. ■

All of Those Acronyms

Acronym (n) 1. a word formed from the initial letters or groups of letters of words in a set phrase or series of words and pronounced as a separate word, as Wac from *Women's Army Corps*, OPEC from *Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries*, or loran from *long-range navigation*; 2. a set of initials representing a name, organization, or the like, with each letter pronounced separately; an initialism. (source: Thesaurus.com)

We all know that MSP stands for Massachusetts Society of Professors, and we all use this acronym routinely. (See the banner at the top of this page, for example). But what of some of those other acronyms that are freely thrown around at MSP meetings and events? Here are four that directly relate to your union affiliation:

FSU stands for the Faculty Staff Union at UMass Boston. The FSU is our "sibling" unit. The MSP and FSU came into existence at the same time, before UMass was a 5-campus system.

JCC stands for the Joint Coordinating Committee. It sounds like what it is. The JCC is the umbrella organization that is the official entity with which the administration (those of Amherst and Boston) enter into contracts. The JCC has officers made up of MSP and FSU members.

MTA stands for the Massachusetts Teachers Association, which is the largest union (and also the largest organization) in Massachusetts. MSP and FSU are some of the many higher ed locals that affiliate with MTA, as do most of the K-12 locals.

NEA stands for the National Education Association. MTA affiliates with NEA, meaning that MSP also affiliates with NEA, meaning that MSP members are affiliates of all three. ■



Tom Roeper makes a point as Eve Weinbaum takes notes at the April 2017 MSP General Assembly.



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