

NEWS

Classes Shuffled & Chopped

The P-fac office has been flooded with calls from part-time faculty members who lost classes this semester. Some faculty lost classes due to low enrollment, although classes with 7 or 10 people, which would have rolled in the past, were cancelled this semester. Some instructors lost classes due to uncertain or mystical reasons. Reports of classes cancelled, and then new classes opening up, also arose. In these cases, some new classes were staffed with new hires.

The way in which many instructors' classes were yanked is of great concern. Calls were made to some instructors a mere week before the start of the semester. Some instructors were not directly told that their classes were cancelled—they simply found out through Oasis.

In many departments, instructors were told to add new students to their classes above the cap. So in essence, students from the cancelled classes were often stuffed into already full classes. This inconvenienced students as well as instructors. What does this add up to? Big savings for the College. But at what educational cost?

The College claims "poor" but it pulled in an extra 23 million last year. The College says enrollment is down, but its numbers are only down 2% from the same time last year. So the question remains: Why have so many classes been chopped?

What Are We Bargaining For?

P-fac and the College have begun talks to negotiate a new contract. What you are probably wondering is: What does P-fac plan to bargain for? And how does it affect me? No surprises here—it's job security. We want to prevent the game of musical chairs that many departments seem to play the week or two before classes start. We want to prevent experienced teachers with good records from losing classes to fresh hires. We want to

provide continuity of instruction for our students, in order to keep quality of education high, and we want senior unit members to be able to teach their preferred number of credit hours. We also want to improve the evaluation system, streamline the grievance process, and improve teaching conditions (which, after all, are students' learning conditions). Listed below are just *some* of the issues that P-fac is negotiating in this contract. We will be looking for your support and feedback throughout these next few months, so stay with us, in voices and in spirits, and MAKE SURE to attend our general meeting and open house Saturday, February 27 between 1 and 4 pm on the 8th floor of 600 S. Michigan. Again, here are those issues:

- What can we do to ensure that experienced teachers with good teaching records do not lose classes to newer hires?
- What can we do to provide continuity of instruction?
- What can we do so that unit members with seniority can be assured of continuing employment?
- What can we do to create a multi-stage, progressive discipline process?
- How can the discipline process be changed to make decisions that are perceived by all sides to have been fairly arrived at?
- What can we do to modify the present evaluation system of part-time faculty so that the part-time faculty members are aware of the criteria being applied and the method of application?
- What can we do to improve the remediation process?
- What can we do to ensure that part-time faculty can participate in the shared governance of the college?
- What can we do to ensure that part-time faculty is compensated fairly for their work?
- What can we do to ensure that working conditions enhance students' education?
- What can we do to ensure that all part-time faculty members have access to necessary working space and educational tools?

NEWS

Money Talks

The College has sent out several emails lamenting the financial woes of the College due to the state of the economy and lower student enrollments. In the past year they've frozen staff salaries and cut budgets across different schools.

But the part-time faculty got an annual raise because it was part of our contract. This has caused some resentment in various parts of the College.

It's good to take a few minutes to look at the situation dispassionately.

We are averaging roughly \$4000 per three-credit course. The College would like to pay \$2000. That's what they are paying new hires, and what we would all likely earn without a union. Since P-fac is more than a thousand members strong, our union is costing the College somewhere in the ballpark of \$2000 per course taught. Many of us teach 4 or more courses a year, so 2000×4 courses \times 1000 teachers is over 8 million dollars a year the College could save if there were no union!

On the other hand, we teach 70% of the classes and our total pay is only 7% of the College's total income. The College raises tuition about 5% a year, which generates a cool \$10 million in new money. This year they are spending the money on increased student support (\$3.5 million) and hiring 40 new full-time faculty (\$4 million) who, as of this Spring, have been bumping part-time instructors from classes they have traditionally taught, especially in New Millennium Studies. This wouldn't be such a big deal if the full-time hires were promoted from within our own ranks, but let's be real: the College has repeatedly gone out of its way to recruit new hires from outside the bargaining unit. If the College's coffers were empty, the administration could have saved \$3 million alone just by assigning these classes to the part-time faculty members who had already been teaching them. But the College continues to hire full-time faculty who cost about \$100,000 per year, including benefits, to teach classes that part-time faculty could teach for the \$25,000 per year (six classes) that they pay us.

Our modest pay raises cost the College less than \$1 million a year. You'd think they would be grateful.

P-fac General Meeting

& Open House

Saturday

February 27

1 –4 pm

600 S. Michigan 8th floor
(Faculty Center)

Food & Wine!

Meet & Greet!

**Do you have questions
about the new contract?**

Job security?

Class assignments?

P-fac NEWS

P-fac IEA/NEA

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We are always looking for feedback and contributions! Please email us with articles or ideas.