

AFT Faculty Guild 1521  
Adjunct Faculty Meeting  
March 8, 2012 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Attendance: Darron Elrington; May DuBois; Doug Blechner; Betty Jacobs; Jack Fujimoto; Genai Enciso Givhan; Kenneth Tiara; Bruce Anders; Lorenzo Ybarra; Evelyn Liskin; Olga Shewfelt.

After introductions, Olga briefly discussed the Governor's 12-Point Plan on STRS. She noted that the proposed changes will have to go through a legislative process. Most proposed changes would affect new hires more than current employees or retired employees. The union is set to fight for those who are already vested in their pensions. She reminded the group of Carl Friedlander's strategy of a few years ago to forego 1.2% of a raise to fund a GASB account.

The District Budget Committee met Tuesday (3/6). The colleges are being asked to plan for a 5% cut. The Preliminary Budget is due in two weeks. The cutting plan is inspired by a fear that the governor's tax initiative will not pass, in November. This would mean cuts in programs. Olga stated that we must participate in the politics of this issue by getting people to vote for the tax initiative. The CFT has endorsed the "millionaire's tax". AFT 1521 also has endorsed this measure, the full title of which is "Millionaire's Tax to Restore Funding for Education and Essential Services Act of 2012".

The Accreditation Team will be on campus next week. The Team has permission to walk into any class, unannounced. The Team also has access to online classes.

Minutes of 2/16 were reviewed and approved.

Olga raised the question: What shall an instructor do when s/he feels threatened by a student? In a case where one's personal safety or that of others is perceived to be at risk, then s/he should call the Sheriff, promptly at X 4314 or 4315. The full number should be keyed into the Instructor's cell phone. An Incident Report will be filed with the Sheriff's Office. This process differs from the college's policy of progressive discipline, in the case of non-threatening occasions, such as a student disrupting a class. West has had two incidents in which Instructors have perceived a threat to themselves by a student. Olga has worked on these incidents and has spoken with the LACCD legal counsel, asking, What are the LACCD policies in place on threats to faculty. And what are the operational aspects? In response, when learned that the threshold is whether a threat actually exists. If so, to address imminent harm, the college has the ability to suspend the threatening student, while the student has the right to a hearing, subsequently.

Bruce reported on the impact of refusals on one's standing on a seniority list. He stated that three consecutive refusals or four refusals in five semesters will take the instructor's name off the seniority list. The need to review this and make it clear was the misconception of an instructor who this semester had accepted an hourly class, which was subsequently cancelled. His Division Chair then offered an alternative class to him, which he refused. The refusal was counted as his third consecutive refusal, as

he had already refused classes offered the preceding two semesters. He argued that as he had accepted the class originally offered to him this semester, he should not receive an “R” this semester, even though he had refused the subsequent offer. That interpretation is erroneous.

Guild elections are coming up in May. Although Olga is running unopposed, she urged all to vote, as the size of the turn-out matters when she represents the faculty’s interests to various administrators and others. Our ballot will have the names of candidates for E-Board membership: Richard Olivas, Jack Ruebensaal, Alice Taylor, Olga Shewfelt, and Bruce Anders. Divisions will also elect their Adjunct Representatives this May. Adjunct Reps will serve for two years and participate in decisions on academic and professional matters in their divisions. They represent the adjunct faculty in their division, and not merely themselves. Division Chairs must not be involved in the selection of the candidates for adjunct representative. A brief discussion led to the conclusion that there is a need for greater clarity about the duties of the adjunct representatives. Olga noted that the adjunct rep should coordinate with h/er department chair; however, the adjunct rep must be aware that s/he works for the adjuncts in the division, not for the chair and not for him/herself.