

Citrus College Faculty Newsletter

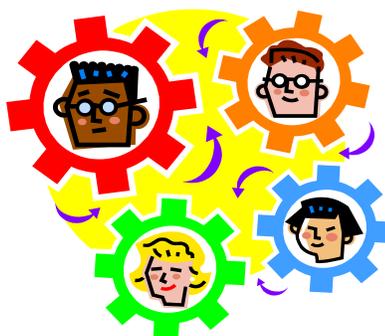
A Forum for Faculty Voices and Thoughts

“Why Unions - Why Now?” from the CCFA President, Kathy Bakhit

For many years we have been reading about the decline of the union movement in the United States. The percent of the unionized workers in the Industrial sector is only 12.4%. Government employees have generally fared better at about 19% with the rate in Education at about 37% (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009). Forces of globalization, the nation and California State economic conditions, and the social mind-sets towards accountability in educational performance and use of tax-payers' dollars are creating unprecedented levels of pressure on workers in general and on faculty specifically. However, I dare say that **the tide is turning- And we need to join in the efforts or else we stand to lose.**

In the past 20 years, improvements in technology, communication, and transportation have allowed for the movement of work and capital around the world and resulted in the trend

we all know –Globalization. The movement of work and capital has had several outcomes. First, as work moved, workers from one part of the world have come to compete with their counterparts in another. The US workers now compete with others in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Egypt to name a few places. As a result, real wage rates especially for unskilled labor have declined and that has put downward pressure on wages of skilled workers. Second, corporations grew in size and influence. Some multinational corporations have sales and budgets greater than the output of many nations. This has resulted in an increase in the power of corporations- for the first time in human history the influence for corporations is superseding that of governments (Bolman and Deal, 2003). Third, the world has become financially interconnected; a financial crisis or a recession in



one part of the world triggers a recession somewhere else. Fourth, to compete, a culture of productivity and efficiency permeated organizations including educational institutions.

So you ask, what does all this have to do with unions? I say everything. It is about the big picture: The drives for efficiency, productivity, and profitability with little monitoring by governments or other organizations such as unions and Non-Government

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Soliciting future articles (500 words or less) on:

- *Improving Student Engagement in the classroom*
- *Navigating a Sabbatical*
- *Tackling Program Review*
- *Shifting to the Compressed Calendar*

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An Update from the Academic Senate President, Jack Call

Hello Colleagues,

As the Fall semester draws to a close, I'd like to update you on what we've been doing in the Academic Senate and what still lies ahead.

I am honored to serve as your Academic Senate President this year. I'm trying to do my best to represent the faculty point of view with the help of a very able Executive Council and a great set of Department Reps.

Your officers on the Executive Council this year are: Roberta Eisel, Vice-President/President-Elect (and a Past-President and a great help to inexperienced me!); Senya Lubisich, Treasurer; Sheryl Walz, Secretary; and John Vaughan, Past-President (Thanks for teaching me the job, John!). They are a great team, and I am lucky to work with them.

If you don't already know

who your Department Rep is, please go to citruscollege.edu, click on that A-Z index at the top, then on "Academic Senate," then on "Officers, Representatives" in the left-hand frame. Remember that your Department Rep is there both to keep you informed of policies and procedures that are intended to support your work and to hear from you when you have ideas on how those

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Why Unions - Why Now, con't.

Organizations (NGO's) result in instability in the economic system. Last year's financial crisis has provided the proof for people and governments that turning a blind eye on free roaming organizations with little regulation on work, pay, work conditions, and worker benefits does not work. It has a built-in propensity to create "bubbles" much like the technology bubble in the 1990's and the housing bubble we are barely recovering from. Also the drive for efficiency and productivity results in greater inequality in the income distribution. Over time, income distribution has become more skewed in favor of the higher income groups both within nations and internationally. As a result, people are realizing that if they do not band together through unions to protect their jobs, benefits, and reasonable work conditions, they are bound to lose them! And **lose them we might** since we are part of this global network. So we better act now, with determination and thought. Now is the time to get involved before your salary, benefits, or other gains faculty have made with sacrifice in the past are put back on the table.

If you need a reminder of workers lives before unions, you do not have to read the history books; just open the newspapers to reports of workers working 16-hour days, with little pay, no health care benefits, in deplorable conditions in China and India, in factories that spew pollutants in the air and rivers. And if you need a reminder of the protections we have in higher education as a result of the unions, consider Tenure and the entailing **Academic Freedom**, Shared Governance, and the defeat of propositions 174, 175, and 176 only four years ago.

At the community colleges, we are not just affected by the global financial crisis and its effect on our State's economy- which is the biggest source of funding for community colleges, but also for the drives for efficiency, productivity, and accountability both at the college level and in the classroom. Everyone has to do more with less. In order for colleges to survive the decline in State funding, they are cutting sections, programs, student services, and laying-off faculty and staff. Threats to salary and health benefits cuts are looming on some campuses. Faculty all over are taking in more students in each section and are losing income from teaching fewer classes.

Furthermore, faculty are asked to prove that students are learning what the classes are claiming to be teaching using SLO assessments. This movement started in the 1980's

due to the public's outcry over the poor performance of the educational system and the demands for more accountability in spending their tax dollars. Faculty were easy targets since blaming them simplifies a complicated issue of teaching and learning into a bad teacher vs. good teacher discussion. As a result, work that faculty have done for years independently as part of their conduct of teaching, must now be document by writing course SLO's, program SLO's, assessment of SLO's, analysis of the assessments, and changes adopted to their teaching as a result of the analysis of the assessment. At Citrus, our accreditation and consequently our jobs now depends (among other things) on the proper performance and documentation of that work.

Currently, discussion about the state budget have calmed down after the California State Legislator passed the State budget and colleges got an idea as to how much funding they can expect to receive. However, the crisis is not over. Budgets are usually revised throughout the year-even after a college has made decisions about its expenditures. Next year's budget is predicted to be even worse.

So where does the situation with the economic crisis, decline in funding, and demands for accountability and productivity in student learning lead us? **We have to act now to protect our jobs, pay, benefits, and what others have worked to accomplish in the past.** But we have to be mindful in our demands and expectations. We recognize that we cannot roll back the clock on the issues of globalizations, State finance conditions, the needs for our districts to manage expenditures to sustain themselves until the crisis passes, or the public's misplaced blame on faculty for the state of the educational system. But we can react to them in a mindful yet determined manner. We have to step up to the challenges before us and deal with them as the professional we are. We need to get involved and educated about our colleges. For example,

- We cannot look at the time we spend involved in the union as a wasted time; rather we should consider it as an **investment** in our future incomes, benefits, and job security.
- We need to **communicate** to our administration, the community, and the Legislator the effects of the decline of funding on students, faculty, and the community as a whole. Students are not getting the classes, they are not graduating or transferring as planned, faculty are losing

incomes they have come to rely on to support their families, and the community is missing on access to skilled and educated labor force.

- We need to get **involved in the discussion** around what cuts are being made, whether they are indeed needed to survive to crisis, and whether they are distributed proportionately among the different areas.
- **Help** our college by providing positive input as to what can be done to manage the crisis such as exploring creative methods of obtaining funding. Look around to see what other colleges are doing to survive the crisis and if there are any creative solutions being used.
- In terms of SLO's, use professional development and other funding to **learn** about the latest research on Adult Learning Theory, different assessment methods, methods of data analysis, and the use of the scientific research methods to draw **valid conclusions** from the assessment data.
- Emphasize the need to use SLO assessment conclusions to help faculty **improve teaching**.
- When the conditions allow, be willing to **push for pay increases** as a result of the increased workload related to SLO writing and assessment. As contracted workers, our pay does not increase when economic conditions improve as private industry workers do. We lag when the economy improves and we suffer when the economy declines. We have not had a pay raise for two years and did not get the State allowed COLA that is designated to help us deal with the increasing costs of living.

As I said above, these are real issues we are contending with at this juncture of time. We must deal with them in a mindful and determined manner. **We can do it. After all, we do not have the honor of being called Professors for nothing!**

References

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policies and procedures can be improved, if new ones are needed, or if old ones are obsolete.

Speaking of policies and procedures, one important job the Senate continues to work on this year is a review of board policies and administrative procedures to make sure they are up to date and that they contribute to the running of an academically sound institution. One important policy/procedure we have been looking at in some detail is the one on sabbaticals. Senya Lubisich and I have been serving on a committee that has just completed proposed revisions of the policy and procedure that are designed to give more guidance to applicants on how to submit a successful proposal. The revised policy and procedure now begin their way through the approval process.

In the meantime, the Sabbatical Leave Committee of the Academic Senate has reviewed six applications for sabbaticals for next year, using the guidelines of the current Regulation that governs the process. We ranked the applications both according to seniority and according to merit, and forwarded our recommendations to the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Irene Malmgren. Due to the financial condition of the District, it is expected that the Board will grant two or at most three sabbatical leaves for next year. These will be on the docket for the Board meeting of Dec. 1, and applicants will be informed of a decision after that.

The Academic Senate is also taking part in a Task Force on Department Chairs. We first met last summer and have met several times this semester to come up with recommendations as to how the governance structure of the college can be reformed to include a role for department chairs. At our last meeting we agreed on three main areas of responsibility for department chairs. We will meet next on Dec. 11.

The Senate continues to oversee the Program Review process, with the aim of making it a medium of faculty input on college-wide budgeting and planning decisions. We have appointed a new Program Coordinator, Jim Woolum, whose job it is to help faculty members through the process. A revised Program Review handbook and template has been ratified by the Senate and is now being used in program reviews that are up for the six-year

review this year. Whenever you are working on program review, whether the six-year version or the annual one, if you think of a way the process can be improved, please contact Jim and let him know.

We also need to continue the excellent progress we have made in implementing SLOs by assessing course, program and institutional general education SLOs and agreeing on ways to document that we have done so. Our intrepid SLO Coordinator Roberta Eisel deserves applause and your cooperation for the stellar job she has done. And while I am recognizing work well done, we all owe a debt of gratitude to Dave Kary, for his excellent work as Chair of the Curriculum Committee.

As you are no doubt aware, the visiting team of the accreditation commission came to campus in October. We expect to receive a draft of their report to the commission soon, and one of our main goals for the rest of this year will be to respond effectively to recommendations of the commission.

Another main goal, related to that one, is to ensure faculty involvement in budgeting and planning decisions. Each of you should be thinking about the curriculum in your program and the balance of course offerings and any change that might be helpful to students in reaching their goals of achieving a certificate, an associate degree, or transfer to a four-year college or university. In this time of budget crisis, it is more important than ever for faculty to be awake and aware and full of helpful suggestions about how best to weather the crisis. We want the effect of budget decisions to be equitable and the least painful possible for students, faculty, managers, and classified staff.

You should also be aware that I, along with Vice-President/President-Elect Roberta Eisel attend regular meetings with Superintendent/President Gerri Perri, Vice-President of Academic Affairs Irene Malmgren, and Vice-President of Student Services Jeanne Hamilton. The purpose of these meetings is to facilitate communication between managers and faculty. Please feel free to contact me, or Roberta, if you have concerns that you would like us to bring up.

I look forward to hearing from you as we continue to move through this challenging and productive year.
- Jack Call

A Forum for Faculty Voices and Thoughts

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Please electronically submit your contribution by 12/14/2007 to slubisich@citruscollege.edu

Please provide the following information: Your name, your phone extension, and the type of submission.



Calendar of Spring Faculty Learning Institute Events

2/16 Tues.

- Flex Day, 7:45- 2:30 pm - Sign in at Campus Center



3/25 Thurs.

- Coffee & Conversation III

CFI-159 – 2:40- 4:00 pm

Topic: “Strategies to Address Accreditation Recommendations”

Roberta Eisel facilitating



4/29 & 4/30

Thurs. & Fri.

- Campus Book Event CFI-159 2:40-4:00 pm/ 10:00-11:30 am

Featuring Erin Gruwell’s book Teaching Hope

Sheryl Walz to facilitate



5/20

Thurs.

- Coffee & Conversation IV

CFI – 159 – 2:40- 4:00 pm

Topic: “Sharing Unconventional Teaching Strategies to Inspire Students”



**Join your colleagues for good
conversation and discussion at
the Spring events!**
