

United Faculty of Evergreen Communiqué

May 9, 2011
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Join the UFE!



An Alternative Budget Narrative

By Laurie Meeker, UFE Chair



In recent communications (email and public forums) Evergreen President Les Purce has tried to set the expectation that all employee categories at the College will be taking 3% wage reductions.¹ But that expectation is not a given. As you know, the Legislature is now in special session (it began April 26) negotiating the final budget. This means that the proposals are still proposals and there will be adjustments until a final budget is announced. In addition, UFE will begin contract negotiations with the College on May 18, and that process is critical to where

issues of faculty compensation will be decided as both parties weigh all aspects of faculty workload and compensation, including proposed workload changes, sabbaticals, faculty development funding, health premium increases, and release time for PUCs and other heavy governance assignments. As these processes are underway, it is also important to clarify what the legislative proposals actually indicate.

SENATE BUDGET PROPOSAL: The Senate proposal includes a temporary salary reduction for state employees of 3% with associated leave of up to 5.2 hours per month (includes higher ed). "The reduction is temporary through the 2011-13 fiscal biennium only."² There is also a higher-compensated employee temporary layoff provision but higher-education faculty are exempted from it. The proposal includes tuition increases of 14 percent each year of the biennium for Evergreen.

HOUSE BUDGET PROPOSAL: The House proposal also assumes a temporary 3 percent salary cut for state employees with associated furlough days for classified workers and an
(continued on p. 3)

UFE-TESC Negotiations Begin May 18

UFE Bargaining Team, 2011:
Rebecca Sunderman, Chair.
Jose Gomez, Grace Huerta,
Gary McNeil, Laurie Meeker,
Sarah Ryan, Joli Sandoz.

Please contact members of the bargaining team with your ideas.

UFE MEMBERSHIP MEETING & BARGAINING FORUM with guest speaker BILL LYNE, UFWS President

All faculty are invited!

Friday, May 13
5:00-7:00

Sem II C 1105

Childcare Provided
Coffee, Tea, and Light Snacks

Contact Elizabeth Williamson: williamson.elizabeth@gmail.com
or visit: http://www.ufww.org/evergreen_wp for more information

About United Faculty of Evergreen

The purpose of the United Faculty of Evergreen is to represent all eligible faculty members in bargaining, grievances, and in all matters relating to terms and conditions of employment with The Evergreen State College, to protect and enhance Evergreen's unique traditions that have earned it prominence among the nation's public colleges and liberal arts colleges, to encourage mutual understanding and cooperation among union members, to engage in legislative, political, civic, welfare and other actions which further the interests of the membership, public education and the labor movement; and to bring about a world where justice and equality are a reality, not just empty words.

The UFE is affiliated with:

United Faculty of Washington State
The Washington Education Association
The National Education Association
AFT Washington
The American Federation of Teachers
The American Federation of Labor/Congress of Industrial Organizations and
sThe Washington State Labor Council

SEE OUR
UPDATED WEBSITE

Vist UFE at...
http://www.ufww.org/evergreen_wp

UFE Faculty Solidarity Scholarship Update

By Stefanie Kozick

The United Faculty of Evergreen (UFE) is pleased to announce the 2010/2011 recipients of the Evergreen Faculty Union Solidarity Scholarship. Jai Reed, Korbett Mosely, Nada Ayesha, and Jeffrey Elliott were each awarded \$850.00 to complete their degree programs at Evergreen. Jai Reed's words express the importance of the award to her education: "

The Evergreen Faculty Union Solidarity Scholarship was a very important scholarship for me this year and I am deeply appreciative. I am grateful for the financial support, which reduced my student loan indebtedness. I am grateful for the presence of a Faculty Union Solidarity Scholarship, it is the sweet flavor of my education at Evergreen that you give not only of your talents and education, but of your money to help me. Financial aid this last year was very limited for me and winning one of your awards was very encouraging. Thanks for standing with me and for Evergreen education.

Twenty-five Evergreen faculty members' contribution pledges made those scholarship awards possible. In 2011/2012, two students (as yet unannounced) will receive the \$850 scholarship (the drop from 4 to 2 students reflects a one-time calendrical issue). As tuition rates keep climbing for Evergreen students, the UFE Solidarity Scholarship is more important than ever. Students applying for the 2012/2013 scholarships will be offered \$975.00 (a 14% increase to match the expected tuition hike) in financial support. Currently, we can probably fund 4 students at this level. You can insure that *more* students will benefit from this scholarship opportunity by pledging today. We encourage ALL FACULTY to contribute, both members and non-members. Contact Paul McMillin at mcmillip@evergreen.edu if you would like to arrange to pledge (or contact your steward). If you have kindly pledged a one-time gift, please consider renewing your support. Thank you.

Three Ways to Contribute to the UFE Faculty Solidarity Scholarship:

- 1) A one-time contribution by check or credit card
- 2) 1/2% automatic payroll deduction (renews annually unless canceled)
- 3) 1% automatic payroll deduction with 'penguin' pledge: If 20 or more faculty choose the penguin pledge, then all penguin pledgers bump up to a 1% automatic payroll deduction.

Quick calculator:

Annual salary	1/2 % per paycheck	1 % per paycheck
40K	\$ 10	\$ 20
50K	\$ 12.50	\$ 25
60K	\$ 15	\$ 30

Contributions are fully tax deductible; administered by the Evergreen Foundation

We currently have 14 penguin pledges.

(continued from page 1)

overall lowering of faculty salary costs. "State support for higher education is reduced. This reduction in state funding will be largely offset by increased tuition revenue."³ The proposal assumes 11.5% tuition increases for each year of the biennium for Evergreen. In addition, the House capped retirement contributions at 6% with the rest to be covered by "other funds," meaning each institution will have to use local funds to provide for contractually required retirement contributions for those faculty contributing more than 6%.



PROPOSALS IN PROCESS: We will know later this spring what the legislature finally decides, but it is important to emphasize that for now, the proposals have three things in common, 1) the 3 percent salary cuts are not mandated 2) they are temporary and 3) they are associated with work reductions. The 2002 collective bargaining enabling legislation indicates that collective bargaining takes place in relation to state appropriations as well as non-state money. "An employer may provide additional compensation to faculty that exceeds that provided by the legislature." [41.76.035 (2)]⁴ Local institutions could choose to invest local funds to keep salaries whole for this temporary period of reduced state funding. Further, The House proposal also indicates that in implementing state appropriations, "the president and governing board shall seek to minimize impacts on student services and instructional programs by maximizing reductions in administration and other non-instructional activities."⁵ The Evergreen administration has yet to make evident in public forums or email communications how it intends to meet this expectation.

NEGOTIATING PRIORITIES: As the legislative process winds down and we enter contract negotiations it is important to remember that the UFE and Evergreen administration will need to grapple with the difficult questions around how to set priorities when it comes to the total package of faculty compensation. At Evergreen, we are fortunate that we have sound fiscal officers who manage the budget so that reserves are available for volatile economic conditions like the current recession. And yet while prosing 3 percent wage cuts the President has indicated a willingness to invest in new initiatives like the advising models proposed by the Remodeling Teaching and Learning at Evergreen DTF. In his April 15th email to all faculty, President Purce stated:

As I noted in early April, I have asked the vice presidents to work on budget scenarios for cuts of up to 7.5%. The latest legislative proposals suggest that these scenarios will be sufficient to meet our immediate budget challenges. In addition to developing budget cut scenarios, I am working with the vice presidents to identify key strategic areas that require additional investment (for instance, the Remodeling Teaching and Learning at Evergreen DTF proposals) and to develop strategies for making good use of the one-time reserve resources that we hope to have available.

UFE may have a tough fight on its hands when it comes to holding the line on faculty salaries and other forms of compensation, including funding for sabbaticals, faculty development and travel, exchanges and rotations, and release time for governance. All of these priorities need to be weighed in addition to examining workload issues and new initiatives. Evergreen faculty salaries continue to lag behind our peers – a recent national study of public institutions ranks Evergreen 517 out of 574 when cost of living is considered. (See sidebar.) President Purce's intention to invest in key strategic areas indicates that the college could also choose to invest in faculty (cont. pg. 4)

FACULTY COMPENSATION

Also relevant to upcoming negotiations is a discussion of where Evergreen faculty salaries fall in the state and national contexts. At Evergreen, despite our reputation for innovation and excellence in curriculum design and student engagement (arguably the result of faculty commitment), faculty salaries remain at the bottom in the state and near the bottom nationally (when cost of living is considered). The 2008 accreditation report acknowledged this as a problem.

Information provided in the self-study, by the faculty union and the administration shows faculty salaries below and falling behind peers. Unless addressed, TESC may find it increasingly difficult to attract and retain faculty. Currently resources appear to be sufficient to attract and retain quality faculty.⁶

A recent national study in the *International Journal of Management and Marketing Research* ranked 574 universities based on compensation paid to their faculty. The analysis ranked salaries on both a raw and a cost of living adjusted basis. Data on salaries for this study were obtained from the 2008 special salary issue of *NEA Higher Education Advocate*. The IJMMR study addresses public institutions (private institutions are absent from the NEA dataset.) The reported rankings are limited to average salary and benefit information (NEA data reports salaries for instructors, assistant, associate, and full professors.) The cost of living index was determined in relation to the city where the university or college is located.⁷

When cost of living conditions are considered along with salary and benefits, Evergreen ranks 517 out of 574 national public colleges and universities. Within Washington State, the public 4-year institutions rank as follows:

- 172 – Washington State University
- 230 – University of Washington (Seattle)
- 409 – Eastern Washington State University
- 446 – Central Washington State University
- 503 – Western Washington State University
- 517 – The Evergreen State College

Footnotes:

⁶ NORTHWEST COMMISSION ON COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, EVALUATION COMMITTEE REPORT, TESC.OCTOBER 6-8, 2008 available at: <https://www.evergreen.edu/provost/docs/FinalAccreditationReport2008.pdf>

⁷ Jalbert, Terrance, Jalbert, Mercedes, Hayashi, Karla. *International Journal of Management and Marketing Research*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 2010.

HEALTH CARE PREMIUM INCREASES

Faculty at Evergreen and across the state will be taking a compensation cut in the form of increased health care contributions, starting in January 2012. The Washington Federation of State Employees leads a coalition of all state employee unions to bargain health care benefits. They reached a tentative agreement last December on increasing the employee contribution to the health care premium. For 2012 and 2013 our share of health care premiums will go up to 15 percent paid by the employee and 85 percent paid by the state. For the rest of this year, 2011, the health care premium split remains the same at 88/12. While the increase is meaningful, the WFSE negotiators made significant movement possible off the governor's team's original proposal to make employees pay 26 percent and the state only 74 percent. The negotiated 15/85 split goes into effect Jan. 1, 2012. The WFSE webpage also indicates that out-of-pocket costs for Uniform Medical Plan participants would not change from current levels. They expect Group Health and Kaiser to fall in line so those plans wouldn't lose subscribers to Uniform.¹ A further interesting detail: WEA analyst Randy Parr indicated that "the higher education health benefit funding remains unchanged from the current biennium at \$850 per member per month and the premiums paid by employees will increase to cover the anticipated rates of medical inflation."²

Footnotes:

¹ www.wfse.org > Bargaining > Health Care Coalition Bargaining

² Parr, Randy (WEA Budget Analyst-Lobbyist). April 4 email, analysis of House of Representatives 2011-13 Operating Budget Proposal

compensation in ways that would enhance our ability to recruit and retain faculty and would make our compensation rates more competitive. As UFE and the College enter contract negotiations, both have the responsibility to see that direct instruction to students is funded in ways that support the mission of the college. UFE will be at the table to make sure we are not asked to do more work for the same pay and to fight for faculty-defined priorities.

Footnotes:

¹ Purce, Les. April 15 email. "Both proposals would also have significant impacts on college employees including 3% wage reductions across all employee categories, additional furlough days for some employee groups, reductions in retirement contributions for some employee groups, and increases in employee contributions to health insurance premiums." (emphasis added)

² Budget Overview - Proposed Senate 2011-2013 Operating Budget (As Passed Senate), pg. 6: "THREE PERCENT SALARY REDUCTION FOR STATE EMPLOYEES - \$175.9MILLION GENERAL FUND-STATE SAVINGS; \$85.5MILLION OTHER FUNDS SAVINGS - Expenditures on state employee salaries are reduced through a 3 percent reduction in employee salaries, excluding employees earning less than \$2,500 per month. The reduction is **temporary through the 2011-13 fiscal biennium only**. The reductions will be implemented consistent with collective bargaining agreements ratified for the 2011-13 biennium. Employees subject to the 3 percent reduction in salary will receive temporary salary reduction leave of up to 5.2 hours per month. **State institutions of higher education are similarly required to implement compensation reductions equivalent to the 3 percent salary reduction.** (emphasis added)

³ Summary and Agency Detail Reports. 2011-13 Omnibus Operating Budget, pp. 214-214. See: <http://leap.leg.wa.gov/leap/budget/detail/2011/ho1113p.asp>

⁴ Washington State Legislature RCWs, Title 41, Chapter 41.76.035. See: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=41.76&full=true#41.76.902>

⁵ ESHB 1087, pg. 151, Section 610, lines 20-23. <http://leap.leg.wa.gov/leap/Budget/Detail/2011/HOBill0409.pdf>

State Budget Proposals and Other Resources See For Yourself:

Senate 2011-13 Operating Budget Proposals (includes Budget Overview and Agency Detail):
<http://leap.leg.wa.gov/leap/budget/detail/2011/so1113p.asp>

House 2011-13 Operating Budget Proposals (includes Summary, Agency Detail, & Budget Bill):
<http://leap.leg.wa.gov/leap/budget/detail/2011/ho1113p.asp>

Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE) – Health Care Coalition Bargaining
http://www.wfse.org/index.cfm?zone=/unionactive/view_page.cfm&page=Health20Care20Coalition20Bargaining

The WFSE website also has TESC bargaining team news and information on the classified staff union negotiations (AFSME/WFSE Council 28). For a fascinating series of events, see:
http://www.wfse.org/index.cfm?zone=/unionactive/view_page.cfm&page=TESC20Bargaining20Team

Evergreen produces an annual report called the Audited Financial Statement and it is posted online at: <http://www.evergreen.edu/annualreport/>

THE NEXT WAVE: HIGHER ED UNDER ATTACK

By Elizabeth Williamson



In our April newsletter, I summarized some of the recent attacks against public sector unions and some of the politics behind those attacks. Unions—which represent many more workers in the public sector than they do in the private—are one of the best tools we have for pushing back against economic policies that seek to normalize declining wages and benefits. The recession has given corporations and state governments an excuse to crack down on union rights, in an attempt to further reduce labor costs while preserving the salaries of Wall Street executives. Fortunately, in Wisconsin and elsewhere, workers are holding the line.

Here at Evergreen, our funding from the state has been reduced from 70% to 30% and members of our community are already feeling the pain. Across the state, unionized public employees have already seen the cost of our health care premiums rise, while the contributions from the state have decreased by nearly a third. Though they have not been widely advertised, these increases represent a significant pay cut for working families. Compensation however, has to be negotiated with the local union at each institution, a fact the Governor and the state legislators have openly acknowledged. At Western Washington University, the president and the faculty union, UFWW, agreed to extend their contract for another year, which means faculty compensation will be kept at current levels.

On our campus, some unrepresented workers are considering unionization. Evergreen's "exempt," or non-unionized, staff includes a large number of employees in student support services who do not supervise other workers, and thus should technically be eligible to join a union. Thanks to the efforts of the Washington State Federation of State Employees, those workers may soon have a chance to bargain as part of their own local; stay tuned for updates on this campaign.

Meanwhile, in Oregon, the permanent faculty at Mt. Hood Community College (MHCC) have been at an impasse in their bargaining since August 2010, and have voted to begin striking on May 12. The good news is that the law is on their side: unions in Oregon still have the right to strike, provided that they go through specified negotiation, mediation, and cooling-off periods. The bad news is that MHCC's administration is openly discussing plans to hire replacement workers, a move that would force current employees to reapply for their jobs once the strike is over. Administrative spokespersons are blaming faculty for "disrupting" students' learning. What is more disruptive to students is the systematic defunding of public higher education. Unions are one of the few formal mechanisms working people have to resist the so-called austerity measures that displace responsibility for the economic crisis from the ultra rich to working families. By forcing those in power to bargain over issues like fair compensation, we resist the logic of inevitability that tends to characterize the rhetoric of policy makers and upper level administrators.

The United Faculty of Evergreen—which will begin bargaining on May 18th—stands in solidarity with striking workers at MHCC, with our own classified and exempt staff, with those who do not yet have the right to unionize, and with our students. When one union develops a strong, principled stand, it makes other locals stronger. Our fight is a shared fight, and it's only just getting started.



Photos by Laurie Meeker

UFE MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN PUT PEOPLE FIRST LABOR RALLY



7,000-12,000 union members gather on the steps of the Capitol building in Olympia, April 8, 2011

UFE members joined an estimated 10,000 fellow union members at the Put People First Labor Rally at the Washington State Capitol on April 8, 2011. The rally was organized by the Washington State Labor Council (WSLC) and thousands came to show their solidarity and strength as workers hit hard by the recession. Speakers like Jeff Johnson, president of the WSLC inspired the crowd with his analysis: "We do not have a budget deficit, we have a social services deficit, we have a jobs deficit, we have a revenue deficit, and we have a deficit of leadership." Another featured speaker, Wisconsin state Sen. Spencer Coggs of Milwaukee, also known as one of the Wisconsin 14, recounted the story of how he and his colleagues had to leave their state to prevent a vote on Gov. Scott Walker's proposals to gut collective bargaining rights. Union colors, logos and banners were everywhere and creative signs entertained the throng. Favorites were: Union Busting is Disgusting, Stop the War on Workers, Enough, Put People First, We are One, Class Warfare? Damn Right! We'll Fight!



United Faculty of Evergreen participants were proud to be union that day, along with 10,000 others in a show of strength and resolve to stop the war on workers. See The Olympian's coverage of the event at:

<http://www.theolympian.com/2011/04/09/1610018/thousands-flock-to-capitol-join.html#ixzz1LYWZREZO>

