

Faculty,

As a result of the November 2014 election, the composition of the Governing Board is changing dramatically. The Board will increase from five to seven members. Current members Dana Saar, Alfredo Gutierrez, and Doyle Burke will continue to serve. New members include Tracy Livingston, John Heep, Johanna Haver, and Jean McGrath.

In advance of the election, Heep, Haver, and McGrath declared “[we] have a goal of lowering tuition and reducing taxes by cutting the wasteful spending in which the current Maricopa Community College Board engages” (<http://lowertuitionnow.com>). An October 27 [Arizona Republic article](#) reported that the trio would “vote to reverse the colleges' plan to increase the ratio of full-time to part-time professors. Currently, 60 percent of classes are taught by part-time, or adjunct, faculty and 40 percent by full-time. The district wants to reverse that by hiring more than 300 full-time professors over the next few years. ‘I don't see the rationale for that,’ said Haver, a retired teacher.”

The 15-year Financial Plan for MCCCCD anticipates that the net gain in new revenues may be as low as \$3.1 million for 2015-2016, if further state funding cuts occur. If the state doesn't cut its investment in the community colleges, the net gain in new revenues will be around \$9.7 million. Although a \$3/credit tuition increase and a 2% tax increase would generate roughly \$16.2 million in new revenues (on top of the \$9.7 million), a tuition or tax increase appears highly unlikely given the pledge of Heep, Haver, and McGrath to cut tuition and reduce taxes. Given that a step costs \$9.7 million and a 2.3% COLA costs \$10.9 million, it may be unlikely that a step or COLA will be funded this year. Furthermore, the funding for new faculty for 2015-2016 as a part of 60:40 also appears unlikely due to limited new revenues and the vocal opposition of some new board members. The 60:40 implementation plan anticipates that it will take 8 – 10 years to attain the needed number of faculty. We are hopeful that in future years funding will be made available to fund this important initiative.

Frankly speaking, future salary progression of MCCCCD employees is uncertain. In fact, ongoing deterioration of salaries (due to inflation) appears a likely outcome for the foreseeable future. The [Western CPI in June 2014](#) was 2.3% suggesting that without a 2.3% COLA for 2015-2016, employee buying power will continue to decline

Nationwide, the picture is more promising. According to the [2014 Higher Education Price Index \(HEPI\) report](#), faculty salaries grew by 8.5% between 2009 and 2014 (an average of 1.65% per year). The MCCCCD faculty salary schedule base increased by 6.24% over the same period from \$41,843 in 2009-2010 to \$44,452 in 2014-2015. (Note: These numbers don't take into account that many individual faculty did receive a sizeable salary adjustment in 2014-2015 as a result of the salary inversion fix. However, it should be noted that those salary adjustments were made to establish salary equity between veteran faculty and more recently hired colleagues.)

There are still many benefits that faculty enjoy in MCCCCD including a substantial institutional investment in faculty professional growth, a strong Faculty Association, and positive relationships with colleagues and students.

It is with this backdrop that I provide this month's Meet and Confer Minute.

The following message will update you on the status of the issues being worked by the Meet and Confer Team this year. The process for addressing issues involves the following steps:

1. Identify the history and interests for the issue (i.e. scoping)
2. Identify data needed and analyze data
3. Brainstorm options
4. Determine which options appropriately address the interests
5. Identify a preferred option or options
6. Gather constituent feedback on the preferred option(s)
7. Draft policy language (as appropriate)

2014 - 2015 Issues

- **Masters of Fine Arts Salary Placement:**

In light of constituent feedback, the Meet and Confer Team agreed to look at MFA salary placement and salary placement as whole within the broader context of the salary system discussion. Although the Team recognizes the argument for treating the MFA as more than a Master's degree, the Team also acknowledges that there are salary placement issues that affect faculty with other degrees and occupational experience that need to be considered as well. (Step 6).

- **Classification and Compensation Study: Faculty Salary Placement and Advancement: (Step 2 – 3)**

In an effort to provide increased clarity, the Meet and Confer issue formerly called Salary System is being renamed Classification and Compensation Study: Faculty Salary Placement and Advancement. The new name makes clear that this issue is associated with the Classification and Compensation Study undertaken by District Human Resources and that the focus of the discussion will include salary placement and salary advancement. The priority issue identified through this year's meet and confer issue generation process, Predictable Salary Advancement, will be rolled into this issue. Based on the updated timeline for the Classification and Compensation Study, this issue is planned to be worked by the Meet and Confer Team in Fall 2015.

The faculty on the Meet and Confer Team made a formal request for a step and a 2.3% COLA in the September 29, 2014 meeting. However, due to current, multiple priorities in the Maricopa district, it is unlikely that resources will be made for additional salary (COLA and steps) in the current year. While we will continue to work on the salary system issue over the next couple of years, the implementation of any solution will be based on the Classification and Compensation Study implementation timeline.

- **Lab Loading:** We have commenced the data collection and analysis. We have reviewed the MCCCDC loading policies from 1976 to present, the ten different formulas used to determine instructor load for courses, and the instructor load classifications for the 9050 active courses in the course bank. Additionally, we have looked at workload models from other community colleges. We are continuing our research. We anticipate we will work this issue in 2014 – 2015 and 2015 - 2016. (Step 2)

- **Residential Faculty Overload:** This issue is a combination of three issues brought forward through the issue generation process: Permissible Overload, Compensation Outside of Accountability, and Faculty Overload Pay. The focus of this issue is to:
 - Clarify which responsibilities are part of hours of accountability and which work activities warrant additional compensation
 - Establish an overload pay rate that is perceived as commensurate with the work performed
 - Establish reasonable guidelines related to faculty workload limits

This history and interests of the issue were scoped in the 11/10/14 Meet and Confer Team meeting (Step 1) and data needs were identified.

- **Conflict Resolution Policy:** We have dialogued about limitations of the current conflict resolution policy and have begun to develop a conceptual framework for rewriting the policy (Step 2 – 3)

Our Choice

As each of us reflects upon the somber information included with this update, we may ask, “Is my membership in the Faculty Association worth it given that future salary progression appears unlikely in the near term?” I answer that question for myself. Now more than ever we need to stand together. The road ahead appears rocky but I am confident that as we support each other in solidarity, we will weather this storm. We stand stronger when we stand together.

Frank Wilson
Faculty Meet and Confer Team Chair