



PART TIME LECTURER FACULTY CHAPTER

RUTGERS COUNCIL OF AAUP-AFT CHAPTERS • SEPT 2008

New President's Message from Mike Slott

As the newly-elected President of our union, I look forward to working with other members of the Executive Board and the membership to make our union an even stronger advocate for PTLs at Rutgers. We have accomplished much over the years. We have the best salaries among all adjuncts teaching in public institutions in the state, but we've further to go to achieve the compensation, professional conditions, and job security that we deserve. An important reason for our accomplishments is that we are affiliated with two national organizations—AAUP and AFT—that provide us with the resources, expertise, and clout to bargain more effectively and to have a voice in the political arena (see the article on “Pensions for Part-Timers” as an example).

From July 10 through July 14, I and several other members of the PTL Executive Board attended the national convention of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), which has over 1 million members. Delegates to the convention voted on many resolutions, elected a new national leadership team, and heard speeches from politicians and labor leaders in the U.S. and around the world. I want to bring to your attention three key issues from the convention:

1. Several **higher education** resolutions were passed. The delegates voted to condemn restrictions on academic freedom and in support of affirmative action for higher education faculty. In addition, the delegates gave their approval to AFT's “FACE” legislative program. The FACE program calls for colleges and universities to create more full-time, tenured positions while improving the compensation and job security of adjuncts or part-time faculty.
2. **Health insurance** is a concern of all Americans, especially the 47 million Americans who have no insurance and millions of others who have inadequate insurance. Because this is a national disgrace, the delegates voted to support **HR-676**, a bill in Congress that establishes a “single-payer” healthcare system similar to Medicare in how it works. One of the benefits of single-payer is that the huge administrative costs and bloated executive salaries of private health insurance companies are eliminated, freeing up those dollars to pay for actual health care needs.
3. The AFT convention endorsed **Sen. Barack Obama** for President of the United States. I realize that voting is a personal decision and, as a union, we cannot and will not “tell you” how to vote. However, as a strong supporter of Sen. Obama, let me give you a few reasons why I will do all I can to work for his election—reasons that directly relate to the work that we do as adjuncts at a public university:
 - Obama has understood from the beginning that the Iraq war was a mistake, with terrible consequences for the people of Iraq. He has strongly advocated ending this unjust war and redirecting war funding to domestic needs, including more funding for higher education. Our ability to bargain better contracts is crucially dependent on government funding of higher education.
 - Obama supports universal health care. He proposes a plan to make health insurance affordable for all Americans. Many adjuncts struggle to pay for health insurance. Obama's plan will provide health insurance at a reasonable cost.
 - Obama strongly supports the right of employees to have a voice on the job, to form a union, and to bargain with their employer over salary, benefits, and working conditions. Federal government support for labor rights creates a more favorable environment for our and other unions to gain decent salaries and fair treatment on the job.

If you are interested in volunteering for the Obama campaign, please email me at msslott@hpae.org.

In Solidarity, *Mike Slott*

PTL, Labor Studies, SMLR, New Brunswick & President, PTLFC-AAUP-AFT at Rutgers University

PTL Salary Increases Every Semester

The new minimum salary for PTLs this semester is \$1325 per credit or \$3975 for a 3-credit course. PALS PTLs will have new hourly rates of \$40 and \$45 per hour; Academic Foundations PTLs have a new minimum of \$1225 per class period. Although no PTL can be paid less than the minimum, departments are free to pay whatever they feel is necessary or appropriate. Many departments pay more than the minimum based on market trends, ethical concerns, or economic decency. PTLs who already earn more than the minimum are entitled to a 2.5% salary increase this semester and another 2.5% increase in the spring semester 2009.

Our union increased PTL minimum salaries 40% in the previous 4-year contract and, under the current contract, the gain is 22% over the life of the 2008-2011 contract. Then, we will negotiate a successor contract to continue salary increases and other benefits for 2011 and beyond.

All PTLs are entitled to salary increases each term. Although we know NJ and Rutgers are facing budget difficulties, negotiated salary increases cannot be circumvented and funding has been set aside. A 4-credit course must be paid at the 4-credit rate, even if there is a lab associated with it and provided that the same instructor is responsible for the lab. PTLs should not be asked to help departments balance their budgets by accepting lower salaries. Please contact the AAUP-AFT office if you think salary increases are not being correctly assigned.

October 2008 PTL Membership Meetings

We will kick-off the 08-09 academic year with campus meetings in October in order to listen to your concerns and to envision a brighter future for us as part-time lecturers!

RSVP to Denise at deniseb@rutgersaaup.org or call 732-964-1000.

Newark	New Brunswick	Camden
Wednesday, October 1	Tuesday, October 2	Tuesday, October 7
2:30-3:50 pm refreshments	Choose a meeting time: 11:30am-1:30 pm lunch or 4-7 pm refreshments	12-2 pm lunch
Paul Robeson Campus Center Room 224 350 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. Newark, NJ 07102	Labor Education Center 50 Labor Education Way Rutgers Cook-Douglass Campus New Brunswick, NJ 08901	Executive Dining Room Campus Center 326 Penn Street Camden, NJ 08102

An Open House will be scheduled at our new office at 11 Stone Street in New Brunswick when the elevator is inspected and approved.

KNOW YOUR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT

Monitoring provisions of the Collective Agreement, in addition to salary, is also important. Some provisions include:

- Compensation if a class is cancelled within a week of the start of the semester
- Compensation for over size classes (if enrollment goes up 1/3 or 25, whichever is less) beyond the approximate enrollment number in the appointment letter
- Protection for PTLs with 12 semesters of service against arbitrary replacement
- Funding available through the PTL Professional Development Fund (see article in this newsletter)
- Annual library privileges
- Access to recreation facilities
- Limitations on the cost of parking
- The grievance procedure, which ensures the integrity of the Collective Agreement

Enforcement of the contract depends on members working with the officers and staff to monitor practices in departments and developing strategies to achieve the best possible result under the given circumstances—and working to change those circumstances, wherever possible. This requires creative strategizing and realizing that to achieve positive change requires perseverance. The entire Agreement is available online at http://www.rutgersaaup.org/misc/PTL_07-11_Agreement.pdf

BEYOND THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT

In the legislature, the PTLFC-AAUP-AFT gained access to the State Health Benefit Program, albeit at our own expense. This is the same excellent insurance coverage full-time faculty receive and is offered at the group rate to part-timers who are already in the pension program (third semester of teaching). Open enrollment is during the month of October. See <http://uhr.rutgers.edu/ben/shbpforsptemployees.htm> for more information.

PTLs may use the Mass Transit Reimbursement Program. See <http://uhr.rutgers.edu/ben/MassTransitSavingPlan.htm>.

Although some departments hold orientations for new and returning PTLs, there is no university-wide or campus-wide event. Let's develop this idea now, so perhaps next year such an event could be a reality. If you have particular suggestions of what might be included in such broader orientations, contact Karen Thompson at kgt@rci.rutgers.edu

PENSION UPDATE FOR PART-TIMERS

Recently, NJ legislators tried to eliminate the right to have a pension plan for part-time and adjunct faculty. The argument was made that this is a type of “double-dipping.” AAUP-AFT lobbied effectively, helping to prevent this cut. The outcome of this legislative advocacy effort is that newly hired part-timers will go into an annuity pension called the Alternative Benefit Program (ABP) rather than PERS. All PTLs already in PERS will remain in PERS. This is another example of our successful joint lobbying efforts with other NJ AFT affiliates, demonstrating that unions do more than collective bargaining.

We do not yet know when this new legislation will go into effect because Governor Corzine has not yet signed it into law.

Background: Currently, PTLs at Rutgers are legislatively entitled to enroll in the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) when they reach their third semester of teaching. The department should give all PTLs who are beginning their third semester of teaching the appropriate forms to fill out. PERS is a “defined benefit” program based on years of service and highest three years of salary; this is in contrast to the “defined contribution” annuity pension called the Alternative Benefit Program (ABP) that full-time faculty enjoy. The advantage of the PERS defined-benefit pension is you are not vulnerable to the fluctuations of the stock market; the disadvantage is that it takes 10 years to become vested and secure the employer contributions. For the long-term employee this is a good thing, but for those who teach only a few years it can be a hardship. The ABP may offer a better value to PTLs.

GOVERNING BODIES SUPPORT CONVERSIONS OF PART-TIME TO FULL-TIME

After much discussion over the past academic year in the University Senate and the New Brunswick Faculty Council, two resolutions emerged, one from each governance body, endorsing the concept of converting part-time lecturer positions to full-time non-tenure-track positions where feasible. Both resolutions also noted that current PTLs should be considered for these positions and positive results are already known, at least anecdotally.

We have learned that at least sixteen PTLs have become full-time non-tenure-track faculty this academic year. Such advancements should be applauded, and the foresight of our tenured colleagues serving on these governance bodies acknowledged. Moreover, since four offers of promotion went to members of the PTLFC-AAUP-AFT Executive Board, any fears that union activism threatens reappointment should now be dispelled. Finally, this pathway to benefits and greater job security has begun to open up. Clearly, good teachers are available to work full-time and their value to the University is being recognized. We will continue to monitor the situation.

PTL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

Another round of funding for PTL professional development projects is about to begin. Just like last year, the total amount of the fund is \$10,000 and applications will be due by November 30, 2008. A wide variety of projects have received funding in the past, including production of CDs, original research, purchase of books, software or other materials, presentation of papers, or travel to attend conferences (whether or not you are presenting). Awards have ranged from \$100 to \$2,000. All proposals must relate to the PTL's teaching and must be endorsed by the PTL's department chair. Everyone is encouraged to apply; the more applications submitted, the easier it is to argue later that the fund needs to be expanded. If you have applied unsuccessfully in the past, it is even more important to apply again now.

We expect that the process will be similar to last year. More specific information about where to send applications and limitations on the length of the proposals will be sent out in October and updated on the AAUP-AFT website. Meanwhile, visit for last year's information: www.rutgersaaup.org/ptl.htm

COMING NEXT NEWSLETTER: A NEW COLUMN ON TEACHING AND PEDAGOGICAL CONCERNS

We will introduce a new column next newsletter that will address some of the teaching and pedagogical issues that PTLs need to address. Here are some of the questions we want to consider:

- *How important is it to have specific, concrete grading criteria established and published in your class?*
- *What criteria should we use as guidelines in the revision of syllabi?*
- *What do you do about a student or group of students who are disruptive in the classroom?*
- *What are some good methods for encouraging student participation?*

If you're interested in writing on a topic like those above, let us know. Send a note to Karen Thompson at kgt@rci.rutgers.edu to get the ball rolling before the next newsletter.

Join the PTLFC-AAUP-AFT! Dues explained on page 8.
[Use the application form in print version or visit <http://www.rutgersaaup.org>, click on Join]

Rutgers Council of AAUP Chapters

*American Association of University Professors
American Federation of Teachers*

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(Please Print)

Name _____
Last
First
Middle

Department _____

Campus: New Brunswick _____ \ Newark _____ \ Camden _____ \

Current Position: Full-Time Faculty _____ \ TA/GA _____ \ EOF _____ \ PTL _____ \

E-Mail Address _____

Home Phone _____

Home Address _____

City
State
Zip Code

Please fill in your SS#

Shaded Boxes For Office Use Only

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I, undersigned, hereby apply for membership in the Rutgers Council of AAUP Chapters. My membership shall remain in effect unless terminated by termination of employment or by me upon written notice of withdrawal provided to the AAUP between June 15 and 30 of any calendar year for Part-Time Lecturers, and between December 15 and December 31 of any calendar year for both Part-Time Lecturers and Full-Time members of the Rutgers Council of AAUP Chapters (including TA/GAs and EOF).

AAUP DUES DEDUCTION AUTHORIZATION

Concurrently, I, undersigned, also hereby authorize Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey to deduct from my earnings an amount as shall be certified by the Rutgers Council of AAUP Chapters or the Part-Time Lecturer Faculty Chapter. The bi-weekly amount deducted shall be paid to the Rutgers Council of AAUP Chapters or Part-time Lecturers Faculty Chapter, as applicable. This authorization shall remain in effect until withdrawn by my submitting such withdrawal in writing to the AAUP for transmittal to the University.

X _____
Signature of Employee
Date

Signature of AAUP Official
Date

**RETURN TO: 11 STONE STREET, NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ 08901-1113 (COLLEGE AVE CAMPUS) OR
FAX TO (732) 964-1032**

Page intentionally left blank for our readers to clip the Membership Form,
fill out, mail or fax back to Rutgers AAUP-AFT.

PART-TIME PROFILE: Eleanor LaPointe



Eleanor LaPointe, PTL in Sociology, is the newest member of the PTLFC-AAUP-AFT Executive Board.

Eleanor has been teaching part-time at Rutgers since 2002 and has extensive experience teaching at other New Jersey-based colleges and universities. She earned her Ph.D. in Sociology from Rutgers in 1991. Her dissertation topic was an analysis of working conditions for waitresses in varied food service work settings in central and southern New Jersey. Eleanor has union experience that goes back to her days as an undergraduate student in New Jersey. She earned her B.A. degree at Stockton State College in Pomona, New Jersey in 1983.

Eleanor recalls her developing viewpoints:

“As an undergraduate in the early 1980’s I saw the positive effects that union membership had on my professors. At the time, I was paying my bills by bouncing from one low-waged job to another. None of the jobs were

unionized. Unlike my teachers, I felt like an isolated, unprotected employee, and quickly realized that being engaged in a professional association was the way to go.”

Among her work experiences at Rutgers was being a Teaching Assistant in the Gateway Learning Retention Program from 1987 to 1990. Semester after semester, she worked with small groups of underprepared students to help them master the verbal, written, and study skills they needed for success. She became involved in the academic union at Rutgers, seeing from the inside the advantages that unions bring to employees and their workplaces.

“During graduate school,” she writes, “as a Teaching Assistant at Rutgers, the opportunity to become involved in the AAUP was something I could not pass up. I felt that I could learn more about the profession by being an active union member, and that this was something that could only benefit my teaching career in the future. Moreover, I was opting for what seemed to me to be the ethically right path. To me, that meant caring about the rights and lives of workers who, without the union, might not have much influence over the conditions within which they worked.” She served as a TA representative to the AAUP Executive Council, as convener of the TA/GA Steering Committee, and also on the bargaining team during negotiations for a successor collective bargaining agreement. Her activism and dedication were recognized by the AAUP Executive Council in 1990, when she received the Distinguished Service Award.

Eleanor’s dissertation, “Still Waiting: Gender and Job Power among Waitresses,” reveals a keen eye for the coping and empowerment strategies used by women working in the food service industry as well as solid quantitative skills. With PhD in hand, Eleanor went on to teach at a variety of colleges and universities in New Jersey, where she was always a member of the academic union. She has a long list of publications and has delivered numerous papers on sociological topics. As an adjunct professor at multiple institutions, she knows what contingency really means in higher education. She understands from both personal experience and research analysis the situation of working in undervalued professions.

She reflects on what she has learned and finds new avenues to apply old lessons:

“Over the years, my experience with the AAUP has proven invaluable and has been an ongoing source of inspiration. I have often thought about the unabated efforts of the AAUP staff and educators that I witnessed when I was a Teaching Assistant. I am very thankful for those efforts as well as for the diligent spirits of faculty and staff at other institutions, where I have since worked, who likewise devote their time to monitoring working conditions, wages, and other benefit programs. As a newly elected Board PTLFC-AAUP-AFT member, I look forward to being able to work with the AAUP-AFT at Rutgers once again.”

Eleanor joined the Part-Time Lecturer Faculty Chapter Executive Board on September 1, thus constituting the 6th member of the Board along with 6 elected officers on 2-year terms and the immediate past President of the PTCFC. Each Executive Board representative serves a one-year term. Elections are conducted by mail ballot over the summer.

Rutgers Part-Time Lecturer Faculty Chapter AAUP-AFT
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732-964-1000; FAX 732-964-1032

Contact information

Officers: President, Mike Slott (Labor Studies, SMLR, New Brunswick); msslott@hpae.org

Vice President, Richard Gomes (PALS, Newark); richard_gomes33@yahoo.com

Secretary, Teresa Politano (Journalism, SCILS, New Brunswick); teresa.p@att.net

Treasurer, Steve Peterson (Mathematics, New Brunswick); batu@att.net

Camden VP, Ann Rosen Spector (Psychology, Camden); arspecto@camden.rutgers.edu

Newark VP, Anthony Bevilacqua (Urban Education & Mathematics, Newark); bevilacq@andromeda.rutgers.edu

Executive Board representatives: Nancy Ellis (Fine Arts, Camden); ellis@camden.rutgers.edu

Paul More (Mathematics, Camden); pdmore67@aol.com

Eleanor LaPointe (Sociology, New Brunswick); elan40@juno.com

Chengwen Wang (Mathematics, Newark); chengwen@andromeda.rutgers.edu

Staff Representative: Karen Thompson (English, New Brunswick); kgt@rci.rutgers.edu; union office 732-964-1000, ext. 21

Why join the union?

AAUP-AFT has tools that no other organization has to address PTL working conditions. To claim these union tools at Rutgers, a Part-Time Lecturer must be a full dues-paying member. Eligibility begins in the second semester of teaching (unless you were full-time or a TA/GA the previous semester in which case you are immediately eligible). Dues are 0.5% (.005) of the salary (\$20 a term if your salary is \$4,000 a course). If you do not join, you pay a representation fee of 85% of dues. Send the membership form to Rutgers AAUP-AFT, 11 Stone St, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 or FAX 732-964-1032.

Join the PTLFC-AAUP-AFT Today!

[Use the application form in print version or visit <http://www.rutgersaaup.org>, click on Join]