

The SCFA Sentinel

published by the Sierra College Faculty Association

... by, for, and about the united faculty of Sierra College

April, 2003

Volume 6, Issue 3

From the Editor's Desk...

Spring has always been my favorite season. New life is appearing, and the world seems renewed and somehow hopeful in the soft, greening glow of the emerging season.

Yet the glory of Spring seems sadly muted this year by the dark clouds of war. Personal or political views aside as to the justness of or justification for this action, one cannot help but feel saddened and dismayed by the failure of diplomacy to avert the conflict, and equally sorrowful over the death and anguish which will be inflicted upon so many during its course. Spring, so long heralded as a season of hope and new beginnings, has instead arrived on the pockmarked, desiccated outstretched wings of violence and destruction.

Although comparatively of far less consequence, the state budget continues to bedevil lawmakers and the public alike. While the final cuts have been made for this fiscal year, the 2003-04 budget remains mired in legislative quicksand, where it will likely subsist until well beyond the June 30 deadline. The issues are huge and complex, and the predicted deficit is staggering by any definition. Even our worst imaginings may not be adequate to predict the impact of this shortfall on the state's community colleges, and so we stay braced for whatever news may come.

Yet despite the chaos of our human-made world, the little Day-Glo yellow finches joyously gather around the feeder outside my window, calling out their songs to all who will listen. Below, the lilac is beginning to bud, and the daffodils are nodding silently in the afternoon breeze. Spring has arrived.

Joan Merriam
Editor



President's Report

by SCFA President Don Cosper

By now, you may be getting frustrated by the seeming lack of "new news" in my column. Lest you presume this means that nothing is being done in the way of negotiations or working on issues central to the needs of our membership and the faculty as a whole, let me assure you that this is most decidedly not the case.

What is the case, however, is that given the uncertain state of the 2003-2004 budget, we remain in an equally uncertain state, with issues on the table but little idea of how much impact the budget cuts, whatever they may be, will have on those issues.

As I mentioned last month, SCFA continues to meet with the administration negotiators to discuss the crucial concerns which remain on the table. Again, because of the very real and potentially devastating budget crisis which remains just over the horizon, SCFA has limited its agenda within the negotiations arena to a handful of the most critical goals which the membership has outlined for us.

You will note from Deb Sutphen's article on the next page that we are now ready to bring before the membership a measure to ratify the creation of a retirement medical benefits trust fund for those District employees hired after 1994. Ratifying this trust will bring a much-needed measure of parity in the provision of health benefits between retirees hired prior 1994 and those hired later.

Other SCFA goals which remain on the bargaining table include:

- Renewal and improvement of the Department Chair article
- Weekly liaison meetings with the District Executive Council regarding fiscal issues and decision-making
- Continued work toward changes in the part-time seniority structure; additional faculty forums will be held soon on our outlying campuses
- Development of an early retirement incentive program
- Improvement of the salary formula

Your questions, concerns, and ideas are always welcome. Feel free to call me at campus extension 2771 or via e-mail at dcosper@sierracollege.edu, or contact any member of the SCFA Executive Board.

Update: Post-'94 Retiree Medical Trust

by SCFA Treasurer Deb Sutphen



On February 27, members of Sierra's Joint Labor Management Team (JLMC) met with trust attorney B. Shana Saichek from the Seattle law offices of Carney, Badley & Spellman to discuss details of the proposed retiree medical trust for Sierra College full-time staff hired after July 1, 1994.

If SCFA and FUSE members vote to ratify the trust, the District will contract with the law firm to draw up the legal trust documents.

The trust would create a tax-favored vehicle to provide medical benefits for post-'94 employees upon their retirement from the District. The plan will originally be based upon a 1% matching contribution from staff and the District, with implementation of the trust commencing in January of 2004.

As a *health* plan (as opposed to a pension plan), members of the trust must think in terms of eligibility and benefits rather than vesting. Also, because this is not a pension plan, its provisions can be changed at any time.

Ms. Saichek advised the JLMC that there are two basic principles to bear in mind when designing these plans: first, the funding of the plan must be done on a group basis, without individual choices as to the contribution amount. Sierra's contribution rate will be set through collective bargaining (and will begin, according to the proposal, at a 1% District/staff

rate).

Secondly, the plan's trustees must ensure that benefit payments are spent on medical care/coverage. Without this rule, the trust runs the risk that the plan will be deemed a pension plan, and subject to the complex and burdensome rules in the IRS Code for such plans.

The JLMC has directed Ms. Saichek to design the trust to include the following provisos:

- Claim benefits may be directed both to health insurance premiums and to Medicare benefits
- To begin drawing from the trust, an individual must be at least 55 years of age, with 10 years of District service; however, graduated payouts are available with a minimum of 5 years service (i.e., if you've paid in for 5 years and retire at age 55, you will receive a smaller payout than if you retire at 55 with 10 years of service)
- For every two years of service prior to the establishment of the trust, employees will receive 1 year of credit, up to a maximum of 5 years. (For example: I was hired in January of 1999, meaning I have 5 years of service if the trust is implemented in January of 2004. That gives me 2½ years of service credit toward the trust. For an employee hired in 1994, s/he will receive the full 5 years service credit toward the trust.)
- Credit will be given for ½ year of service
- Employees may apply un-

used accumulated sick leave to the trust

- The trust should contain survivor benefit provisions for spouses and domestic partners

Management of the Trust will include these provisions:

- The trust will consist of 6 representatives, 2 each from SCFA, FUSE, and the District
- Each trustee will have a vote and each unit will count for one vote; any change to the trust will require a unanimous vote from the three representative groups
- One representative for each unit is to be elected and one appointed; terms will be two years, staggered
- Pre-1994 employees will not be eligible to serve on the trust

The decision to hire Ms. Saichek to begin creating this trust plan must be ratified.

FOR POST-'94 FULL-TIME FACULTY, RATIFICATION MEANS HAVING A DISTRICT CONTRIBUTION FOR RETIREMENT HEALTH CARE BENEFITS, as do our pre-1994 full-time colleagues.

Should ratification occur, then your input on development of this trust is critical.

Questions or comments? Contact Deb Sutphen at Extension 2754 or Don Cosper at Extension 2771.

"Honoring Youth" Pow-wow



The Sierra College Inter-Tribal Unity Club and the Associated Students of Sierra will present their seventh annual "Honoring Youth Pow-Wow" on Saturday, April 26, from 10AM-9PM on the Rocklin Sierra College Campus Quad.

This free, public event is designed to instill a sense of cultural pride in the Native American youth of this area, and to teach both the young people and the public about the various aspects of the Native American culture.

A variety of Native American performers and artists will be on hand, including drummers, exhibi-

tion dancers, and youth dance groups.

Throughout the day-long event, Native American artists and craftspersons will also be offering a number of handmade items for sale such as beadwork, jewelry, stone carvings, prints, and other goods reflective of the Native American culture.

Delicious specialty foods including fry bread and Indian Tacos will also be available.

The "Grand Entry"—the ceremonial entrance of all the dancers, honored guests, and flag bearers—will occur at noon and again at 6PM.

For more information, call (916) 789-2797.

Metal Mania 3

The metal artworks of Joe Ticer will be showcased from now through April 24 in the west entrance lobby of the "H" building.

The show, "Imagining in Steel," is sponsored by the Metal/Manufacturing Technology and Metal Arts department, and will feature a number of Joe's stylish and often-humorous works.

Joe has completed several courses in our Metal/Manufacturing Technology and Metal Arts department as well as in the Automotive and Art departments.

These student exhibits will rotate every three weeks, with each segment showcasing the work of a different student.

Library Q & A

The Sierra College Library is now offering reference services via e-mail.

Just e-mail your queries to:

[ReferenceDesk](mailto:ReferenceDesk@sierracollege.edu)

[@sierracollege.edu](mailto:ReferenceDesk@sierracollege.edu)

and within 48 hours or less, a reference librarian will get back to you!

To assist the librarian in getting you the information you need, please include the following information:

- your e-mail address
- the course for which you need this information (if applicable)
- any information you already have about the topic
- sources you have tried previously, including print and non-print

Part-timers: Stay Informed!

It's not always easy keeping up with the latest information and news about what's going on at Sierra...especially when you're a part-time instructor.

If you're like a lot of us, you have your job at Sierra, plus a second job, and maybe a third... then you have your obligations at home...maybe a family (two-footed or four)...community activities...plus you'd like to squeeze in something of a social life.

Doesn't leave much time for staying informed about part-time faculty issues, does it?

So do yourself a favor: sign up to join the Sierra College Part-time E-mail Forum! It's free, easy, and all you need is a private e-mail address.

Once you're signed up, you're automatically "connected" to all the other members of the Forum, where you can exchange thoughts and concerns, ask questions, and keep abreast of the issues that affect you as a part-timer.

To sign up, log onto the SCFA website at www.scfa.net and go to the Part-time Page... then just click on "Join Part-time Forum." If you'd rather, just email List Administrator Joan Merriam at jcm@foothill.net—include your name and the department for which you teach, and she'll sign you up.

With the P-T Forum, there's NO EXCUSE for not knowing what's going on.

Join today!

4 New Guidelines for Student Course Packs

Beginning this Fall, faculty are required to use an official "Use of Copyrighted Material" form—available in division offices and at the Sierra College Bookstore—when submitting course pack materials for sale at the bookstore.

The form was created by the Ad Hoc Bookstore Advisory Committee in an attempt to ensure that all course pack material meets the guidelines set forth by the Association of American Publishers in their "Guidelines for Classroom Copying."

For the complete guidelines, go to the AAP's website at: www.publishers.org, and click on "Conferences and Publications."

In brief, the guidelines pro-

vide for two sets of circumstances: single copying for an instructor's own use, and multiple copies for classroom use.

SINGLE COPYING FOR USE BY AN INSTRUCTOR

An instructor may make a copy of any of the following for scholarly research, for use in teaching, or in preparation to teach a class:

- A chapter from a book
- An article from a periodical or newspaper
- A short story, short essay or short poem, whether or not from a collective work
- A chart, graph, diagram, drawing, cartoon or picture from a book, periodical, or

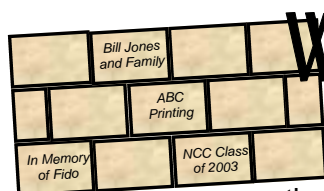
newspaper

MULTIPLE COPIES FOR USE IN A CLASSROOM

An instructor may make multiple copies (not to exceed more than one copy per student), provided that:

- The copying meets the tests of brevity and spontaneity; and
- Meets the cumulative effect test; and
- Each copy includes a notice of copyright

The tests of brevity and spontaneity, as well as the cumulative effect test, are explained in detail on the AAP website.



Wanna Buy a Brick?

The Nevada County Campus Coordinating Council of the Sierra College Foundation is in the final stages of their "49'er Brick" sale...but you need to hurry, because the sale ends forever on April 15!

The 49'er Brick Wall is located in front of NCC's bell tower, on the beautifully landscaped interior quad. Bricks can be engraved any way you want: with your name or the name of your family...the name of your business, agency, or organization...in memory of someone...or to honor someone. Each brick contains two lines, with room on each line for 20 letters, spaces, and/or punctuation marks.

100 percent of the fully tax-deductible contribution of \$49 per brick will stay on the Nevada County Campus. To order a brick—or a dozen of them!—send your name, address, telephone number, and the engraving as you want it to appear, along with your check for \$49 per brick payable to the Sierra College Foundation to:

Sierra College Foundation - NCC Coordinating Council
250 Sierra College Drive
Grass Valley, CA 95945

The wall has room for only a few more bricks...so if you'd like to see your name "up in bricks," don't delay!

Teaching Tip

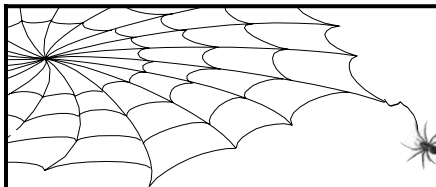
Do you sometimes get the feeling that your students are doing everything *but* listening when you lecture?

Why not borrow this idea from Angela Payne, an instructor at Mississippi County Community College: she occasionally gives what she calls "bonus quizzes," based on the content of the previous session's lecture. Students can earn extra credit points toward their final grade by answering each question correctly. Incorrect answers are *not* counted against the student.

For the instructor, the advantage is that quiz answers can point up problem areas that need to be recapped. For students, they not only get the chance to earn extra credit, but also get a "leg up" when studying for major exams because they've already studied the material once.

WEB SITES

A gathering of some of the most helpful resources the Web has to offer on and about the world of Higher Education



◆ **LIVES, THE BIOGRAPHY RESOURCE**
http://amillionlives.com

Excellent online resource that boasts links to thousands of biographies, memoirs, diaries, letters, and oral histories; special collections include African Americans, Latinos/Hispanics, Native Americans, women, Holocaust survivors and rescuers, and renowned composers and artists.

◆ **AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS**
www.aaup.org

This site includes information on the protection of academic freedom, diversity & affirmative action, part-time faculty, women in higher education, and intellectual property issues, plus an online version of AAUP's magazine, *Academe*. Of particular interest in light of current world events are some excellent faculty resources regarding the potential impacts on academic freedom of the USA Patriot Act and other national security measures.

◆ **CALIFORNIA PART-TIME FACULTY ASSOCIATION: THE CPFA FORUM**
www.cdfa.org

Online home of the organization, begun in 1998 by a handful of part-time faculty from districts throughout the state (including Sierra College!), that has become a powerful and respected activist voice on behalf of part-time faculty in the state's community colleges. Their site includes resources and links, a calendar of events, position papers, and a broad range of information on part-time issues.

Budget Update: The Hits Just Keep on Coming



You're no doubt aware by now that the governor signed the 2002-03 midyear funding cuts for community colleges...and thanks to the combined voices of students, faculty, staff, and administrators, plus the unremitting efforts of organizations like FACCC, CPFA, the Community College League, and our own ASSC, the devastation to the system wasn't quite as bad as it could have been.

Unfortunately, there's no time to rest on those admittedly meager laurels.

The budget-cut projections for 2003-04 have the potential to eviscerate the system to an even greater extent—in fact, ominous rumblings have been heard from some districts that their only remaining option is to shut down entire campuses.

While the situation at most colleges—including Sierra—is not

that dire, the proposed cuts have truly crushing implications. According to the Chancellor's office, the \$530 million in system-wide losses will mean turning away nearly 150,000 students in the fall—a number almost equal to the entire undergraduate population of the University of California system.

Impacts will be felt in virtually every part of our colleges, from student services to maintenance to class offerings to faculty and staff salaries.

As an example, this spring, almost 3,000 community college part-time faculty were laid off. The Chancellor estimates that number to climb to **5,000** by fall.

Meanwhile, as community colleges face cuts of more than 10 percent, the budget offers funding increases of 6 percent for the UC and CSU systems.

Of course, the fact that community colleges are always shuf-

fled to the end of the line for the dregs comes as no surprise to those of us within the system.

Our job remains to educate the community about this shameful reality.

We need to explain what it means when the future of their children attending community colleges somehow means **less** than the future of those at the state's universities.

What it means when the aspirations of adults returning to community colleges are **less** important than if they returned to a CSU or UC institution.

What it means when the desire for education on the part of a less affluent or underprivileged citizen is **less** of a legislative priority than when it comes from someone on the upper end of the economic scale.

Once again, it's time to make our voices heard. Because it's OUR future as well.



Companion Campus Connections

NEVADA COUNTY CAMPUS

NCC's newest student group, Sierra Students for Change, has become one of the most visible and active elements on campus. On March 5, they hosted an all-day "Books Not Bombs" event, complete with speakers, singers, food, and information tables.

Except for one minor alteration (apparently personal rather than political) the day went very smoothly, and served to refocus the community's attention on the existence of the campus and the involvement of its students and faculty in the issues of the day.

The group—along with fac-

ulty advisor Barbara Ozzello-Reed—continues to meet and plan for future campus events.

The closure of the NCC cafeteria persists in making some faculty and students see red. "I understand budget constraints," said one instructor, "but how are we supposed to attract *students* when we don't even have a *Student Center*?"

TRUCKEE CENTER

Planning is almost complete for the first-ever summer session at the Truckee Center. Dean Frank DeCourten, mindful of the distinct needs of the Truckee community as well as the unique character of its population, has scheduled a number of unusual courses which will

hopefully entice potential students and ultimately bring more of them to the campus during regular semesters.

Another piece of good news is that, despite having to cut 10 classes this semester from its scheduled offering of 42, FTES is nearly equal to what it was the previous year. That means the campus is serving the same number of students with nearly 25% fewer classes.

ROSEVILLE GATEWAY

The only news out of the Gateway facility is that the district is now advertising for the Economic Development Administrative Assistant position. This is a leave replacement position, not a new one.



I Wonder Why...

By Joan Merriam, SCFA Sentinel Editor

...no one, from the governor to the legislature to our own administrators, seems to get it that part-time faculty in our state's community colleges are no longer expendable?

Once upon a time, part-time faculty were fewer and further between. They were hired to teach subjects in their area of special expertise, to show students how classroom learning could be put to use in the world outside of academia.

Thus, a sculptor would teach a sculpture class...a real estate appraiser would teach a class on appraisal...a bridge-builder would teach a specialty engineering course. Then each would go back to their "regular" job.

But times have changed. Today, part-time faculty are the

very literal backbone of our community colleges. If even a quarter of part-timers walked off the job tomorrow, the system would come to a complete and grinding halt. It simply **cannot function without part-time faculty.**

Yet time and again, we are told that part-timers have a limited role. We merely give colleges "flexibility" in scheduling. We simply help colleges balance the need for faculty against enrollment demands. We're just there to take up the slack. We're certainly helpful, but expendable. Replaceable. Adjunct.

It should come as no surprise, then, that in tough fiscal times, few express much guilt at letting these "expendable" workers go. When interviewed, administrators bemoan the budget

cuts, but boast that no culling was done to the ranks of "regular" faculty—the implication being that not only are part-time faculty insignificant, but that the quality of education is wholly dependent upon the college's cadre of full-timers.

Yet the truth is, part-time faculty are anything but insignificant. We have in fact become absolutely essential.

It is on our backs that colleges are balancing their budgets, now more than ever.

It is our presence in the classroom that is allowing colleges to continue teaching.

And in the end, it our livelihoods that colleges are sacrificing to the budget crisis.

Strange definition of "expendable."

Discussing the War: Valuable Lesson or Potential Disaster? 7



The reality of the current war in Iraq is all around us. We are being subjected as never before to instantaneous updates and analyses of the efforts on the battlefield as well as public reactions from around the world.

As instructors, we need to realize that our students' concerns over the war aren't limited to classes in social justice or world history. Each of us needs to be prepared for discussions of these issues to emerge.

The Center for Research on Learning and Teaching at the University of Michigan has developed a number of helpful guidelines for dealing with these kinds of classroom discussions.

ISSUES TO CONSIDER BEFORE DISCUSSING THE WAR

- Because students will have very different thoughts about the war, it is important to allow them to express these differences without fear of ridicule or attack.
- Some people have a complicated relationship to this war. Discussion may be especially difficult for persons from certain groups, including those personally connected to the armed forces or who have family and friends in the military...those from the Middle East...or members of groups that some are blaming for the current crisis. For each of these groups, there is a potential for backlash fueled by misguided generalizations.
- Be careful when comparing current leaders/events with historical ones. Individual perspectives on these comparisons are shaped by political differences, personal history or age, past experience of vio-

lence or tragedy, group membership, or cultural origins.

- Don't feel *compelled* to allow discussion—especially if your own emotions make you hesitant to do so, if you have strong views that would make it difficult to lead in an unbiased manner, or if you consider it an inappropriate use of class time. Make a simple statement to the class to this effect, then move on.

STRATEGIES WHEN THE TOPIC OF WAR COMES UP UNEXPECTEDLY

- Acknowledge the concern of the student who raised the issue; point out that all those in the room have their own concerns.
- Get a quick sense if others would like to devote time to sharing views. If you do pursue a discussion, set a time frame, then carefully format the discussion.

STRATEGIES FOR LEADING DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE WAR

- Think through appropriate ways to introduce and close the session. For instance, you might begin with the reasons you are having the discussion, acknowledging that there are widely divergent opinions about the war, and close by reiterating this fact.
- Establish discussion ground rules. For example:
 - ~ Ask students to use the time as an opportunity to learn more about issues, rather than as a chance to debate
 - ~ Maintain an environment that encourages responsible discourse
 - ~ Allow students to express anger and frustration, yet demand that everyone re-

spect each other's views

- ~ Limit the length of any one contribution so that all students have a chance to participate
- ~ Agree to discuss this topic in a way that does not shut out any members of the class
- Explore links to your discipline and let topics emerge from the content of your course. Discussion topics applicable to all students include:
 - ~ What questions and fears do you have about this war?
 - ~ How are you personally affected by these events?
 - ~ How might these events affect your/our future?
 - ~ How can you become better informed?
 - ~ What positive actions can people take in response to this war?
- Encourage participation, but don't force students to join. You might allow each student to speak without interruption in response to a guiding question, and let others pass if they wish; divide students into small discussion groups of 3-5; offer students a chance to write down and organize their thoughts before speaking.
- Be prepared if things stall or go awry:
 - ~ Formulate questions—*What makes this hard to talk about? What is most confusing for you right now?*—to break the silence and encourage participation.
 - ~ Acknowledge the emotional aspects of the discussion, and help students identify the intellectual issues embedded in these responses.
 - ~ Validate personal experience while also helping students identify negative stereotypes and generalizations.

DON'T MISS SIERRA'S ANNUAL JURIED STUDENT ART SHOW

Ridley Gallery — Sierra College Rocklin Campus Library, lower floor

Show runs Tuesday, April 29 through Tuesday, May 6

Gallery Hours: Monday-Thursday from 11AM-6PM and
Tuesday from 11AM-8PM

◆ AWARDS AND ARTIST RECEPTION: TUESDAY, MAY 6 FROM 5-7PM ◆

Ballet & Jazz

Support the Sierra College Foundation and enjoy a great evening of music and dance at the same time!

On Wednesday, April 9 at 8PM, the Sacramento Ballet and the CSUS Jazz Ensemble will appear on Sierra's Deitrich Theatre stage as a fundraiser for the college Foundation.

The Sacramento Ballet is a professional troupe with 22 full-time paid dancers, and has consistently drawn full houses to see its innovative blend of classical and modern works.

The Jazz Ensemble, one of two jazz groups at the university, has played widely throughout northern California, including the Sacramento Jazz Jubilee.

Admission to the fundraiser is \$12 general, \$10 for seniors & students, and \$7 for students holding an ASSC card with an orange sticker.

The **SCFA Sentinel** is published four times a semester by the SIERRA COLLEGE FACULTY ASSOCIATION in Rocklin, California. We welcome your comments, suggestions, and letters; please contact SCFA Editor Joan Merriam, c/o Sierra College Nevada County Campus, 250 Sierra College Drive, Grass Valley 95945

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Two-thirds page	\$60	One-third page	\$35	Business card size	\$15

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