

# NEWS

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## Three long days of bargaining, but little progress on major issues

Each of the past three bargaining sessions, on Aug. 11, 12, and 17, started at 9:00 a.m. and ended near 5:00 p.m., but the Faculty and administration teams remain far apart on key issues including workload, compensation, benefits, hiring, and distance education.

Faculty Chief Negotiator Geoff Woolf said, "The sessions on Aug. 11 and 12 produced some tentative agreements on a few issues, and allowed us to reduce the number of concerns that will be presented to the fact-finder on Aug. 29."

"However, in almost every case where we've reached a tentative agreement, it's the result of compromise by the Faculty team to try to meet administration concerns."

"In contrast, the administration team is consistently unwilling to make any significant movement from their initial proposals on workload, compensation, benefits, and other unresolved issues," Geoff added.

"The administration is still proposing workloads that are far outside the norm for Ohio community college faculty, and they are still proposing a net

decrease in compensation, along with an increase in the cost of benefits," Geoff said.

"At the end of three long days of bargaining, the teams are a long way from agreement on many important contract articles," Geoff said.

Chapter President Paul Davis said, "From what I'm hearing about the bargaining sessions, it appears that the administration team is being ordered by the Board of Trustees to 'just say no' to every possible compromise on the remaining issues."

"We can hope that when the Board meets on Tuesday, they will hear from their team about the Faculty team's willingness to achieve reasonable compromises," Paul added.

## Over 100 faculty attend AAUP meeting

More than 100 faculty members attended the AAUP Chapter meeting on Aug. 16.

Faculty heard a report on the progress of negotiations and discussed possible next steps for reaching a contract settlement.

Chapter President Paul Davis said, "It was gratifying to see such a large turnout in support of our negotiations."

"We also hope the Board members recognize that faculty members are prepared to do whatever it takes to show how important it is to gain an appropriate contract," Paul said.

## Administration proposals end fairness in hiring & remove distance education article

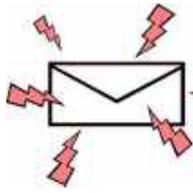
Faculty Team member Bob Eveslage said that in discussions of the contract article on selection and hiring, the administration continues to offer proposals that remove current contractual guarantees of a fair process for determining screening committee recommendations.

"The administration's

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"We had a lot of good discussion of the bargaining process, as well as what could happen after a fact-finding hearing is completed."

"Clearly, our faculty members want a fair and appropriate contract settlement and they are willing to show their resolve through a variety of actions," Paul said.



## Letters

To the editor:

Although this is my 29<sup>th</sup> year at the College, I have never before written a letter about the state of Cincinnati State.

When I came to the College in 1983, my program had seven students. Today, the Hospitality programs have over 1,000 students.

My colleagues and I have spent thousands of hours working tirelessly to promote the continuous improvement of our programs. Because of that we now enjoy the highest level of accreditation, one of only 40 exemplary programs in the whole United States.

I've dedicated my life to putting this College on the map, nationally and internationally. I've spent countless hours away from my family working to improve the lives of our students and improving the careers of over 22,000 chefs.

If the College had to pay me

for all of the hours I've spent doing these things, I would be extremely wealthy.

Now sadly, here we go again, with negative negotiations. The administration appears to be totally ignorant of what we do and the time we spend in our classrooms, our offices, and our communities.

The administration's proposals show contempt for us as full-time faculty and seem to indicate they would like us to go away.

So I challenge the administration to put your own house in order, especially in the Midwest Culinary Institute. I haven't yet seen a financial report showing the MCI to be making a profit.

A great portion of the blame for where we are today is that when we opened the Midwest Culinary Institute, we did not have the human resources needed to make it a success. The few people who were hired were swamped from day one.

If administrators want to criticize my overload, understand one thing: You couldn't afford to pay me the amount of money you really

owe me for the hours I've put into this institution for 29 years.

This is not just about John Kinsella; it's about all of my colleagues who have also given so much of their time and skill to make this College and the Institute successful.

So I say to the administration, go back to the negotiation table; leave your paid suits and the political hacks behind. They don't understand who we are or what our mission is. We stand for excellence in education, not the sub-standards they want.

Professionals should be able to work together for the betterment of the institution. So let's have some Harvard style win-win negotiations, rather than who's got the biggest gun in the room and who's going to blink first, and most of all, stop playing the blame game.

This is not Congress. This is Cincinnati State and those of us who care dearly for the College and the future of quality education for our students are willing to fight for it.

John Kinsella, CMC  
Hospitality & Culinary Arts  
Business Technologies Div.

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would put the College into an "untenable fiscal position."

I don't believe that any more than I believed the administration bargaining team of 1989 when they said giving CTC faculty a term off, and a raise, would "bankrupt the College."

And, we've heard that the Board doesn't care if faculty go on strike, because the administration is completely prepared to handle it.

I don't believe that either. Our Trustees certainly aren't in a position to verify if claims of "full coverage in the event

of a strike" are valid. But more importantly, I just don't believe our Trustees don't care about the reputation of our College in our—and their—community.

I don't believe that even those Board members who have less than high affection for public sector unions really want to rip the institution apart in the way that happens when strike preparations become part of daily conversations—let alone when faculty take action to defend our principles and values.

Some of our Board members served in other years when Early Fall enrollments plummeted just

because "strike talk" was in the air. I would think they'd want to avoid repeating that blow to our institutional fiscal health.

And I think they would prefer to avoid embarrassing "disruptions" of events like the Presidential Inauguration.

After the Board meeting last month, Cathy Crain, a relatively new Board member who will become the Chair of the Board in September, told me in relation to bargaining, "Everything is going to work out." Mrs. Crain made similar comments to other faculty members.

I don't know Mrs. Crain well,

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## ***Bargaining / continued from 1***

proposals would allow Deans to demand that a candidate be sent forward for a interview with the Dean, even if the screening committee objected to forwarding the candidate," Bob said.

The administration's hiring proposals also impose timelines for carrying out hiring processes, and would allow Deans to take over the process entirely if timelines are not met.

"The administration team claims that their goal is to add efficiency to hiring processes, but the result of their proposals would give Deans unprecedented power to take over hiring completely," Bob said.

"The current contractual hiring procedures have been worked out over many years of negotiations," Bob said. "The process provide appropriate balance between faculty

expertise and managerial hiring prerogatives."

"It's hard to understand why the administration won't acknowledge that the current system is working for the most part. Instead, they want to go backwards to a time when hiring was even slower and much more contentious," Bob said.

"The administration seems to want to blame faculty for everything they think is wrong with current hiring processes," Bob added. "That's unfair, and inaccurate."

Faculty Team members said there has been no change in the administration's proposal to eliminate the contract article on Electronically Purveyed Methods of Instruction (distance education).

"The administration's position on distance education doesn't seem logical," Geoff said.

"They are claiming that we no longer need a contract article on distance education because distance education is no different from any other part of our educational offerings," Geoff said.

"But if that's the case, then why didn't the College wipe out the position of Distance Education Director when it became vacant, and let the Deans supervise distance education along with other courses?" Geoff added.

"Instead, the administration hired a director, and in just the past year they created a new distance education website, and had to make a special presentation to our accrediting agency, the Higher Learning Commission, to give us approval to offer online degrees," Geoff said.

"Those actions don't support the claim that distance education is just another part of our regular academic programs," Geoff said.

## ***View from the table / continued from 2***

but I've been impressed by the clarity and candor of her public comments at Board meetings. Perhaps it's noteworthy that Mrs. Crain is not only a CS Trustee, but also a CS student, taking classes related to her interests in parks and environmental concerns.

So far, everything we've seen at the table suggests that the Board's view of things "working out" requires faculty to capitulate on every issue, and to accept working conditions, an economic package, and a role in some elements of College governance that would be the worst in the history of the College.

Faculty simply will not "work out" that agreement with the administration. I think the Board members know that.

I also think the majority of Board members know that Cincinnati State faculty are hard-working educators who genuinely enjoy working with our students and for our community.

I think the Board members know that if they asked their bargaining team to treat us with respect, and allowed their team to make compromises rather than stonewalling, we could quickly reach an agreement that would serve everyone's interests.

After all, we're professional educators. Faculty members are good at listening to a reasonable argument (not to mention listening to lame excuses) and formulating an appropriate response.

Cincinnati State faculty also are quite good at coming up with creative ideas for solving institutional problems. We've done it many times before, at the bargaining table and in countless other forums.

So if Mrs. Crain and the other Trustees really want things to "work out," all they need to do is give their team the authority to get the job done, through compromises by both sides rather than by eradicating the faculty role in keeping this College strong and vibrant.

Our Faculty bargaining team, and the faculty we represent at the table, want to finish negotiations and get back to our "real" jobs of helping students and the community.

We'll have to wait and see if that's what the Board wants, too.

# The view from the bargaining table

-- Pam Ecker, Faculty Team Member & Chapter Past President

I've attended more meetings of the Cincinnati State Board of Trustees than any of the current Board members.

I've attended more Board meetings than almost all of the current senior administrators of the College.

I started "BOT-watching" in the late 80s when we began the campaign to form a faculty union.

While I don't have a perfect attendance record, I've seen a heck of a lot Board action (and inaction) over the past two-plus decades.

Yeah, we've had a few Board members who seemed to be there only to add a line to their emerging political and/or corporate resumes.

However, I believe the majority of our Trustees have been, and still are, good public citizens who accepted this unpaid job simply because they believe in the mission of our institution.

After all, it's not like they get

the perks that four-year school trustees get. No tickets on the 50-yard line or trips to bowl games for our Trustees; just a free meal once a month.

Over the years, and regardless of the political affiliation of those who made the appointments, our Board members have shared some characteristics: they tend to be fiscally conservative caretakers of the College's financial resources, and they tend to stay out of micro-managing the day-to-day work of the College.

Both are desirable traits, in my opinion.

In recent years, at the behest of recently-appointed members, the Board has actually become a bit more open and forthright in conducting their public business.

They no longer meet in private session before they meet in public, and their meetings of the past year or so have included some refreshingly-candid public discussion of problems, concerns, and pet peeves of

various Board members.

Therefore, given what I've seen of CState Trustees past and present, I find it difficult to comprehend why the current Board is taking their current approach to bargaining with the faculty.

The instructions that the BOT has given its bargaining team appear to come straight out of the 2011 "let's mess with the unions" political guidebook.

First the administration team refused to bring proposals for key issues to the table; now they essentially refuse to move from their absurd opening positions.

In the most recent session, on Aug. 17, we heard that the administration team recognizes that their workload proposals would have us working "a few more hours" than before.

We also heard that making CS semester workloads comparable to all the other semester community colleges in the state

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