



Local 1610

College of  
**MARIN**

## UPM's Tuesday Debriefing

December 4, 2007

### What's Good for General Motors Is Good for...

The rumors about the rumors seem to be true and the College of Marin must complete a four year Program Review in 6 months to avoid the possibility of “probation” status from the accreditation team. This situation raises many interesting questions, but the analogy that comes to mind is the following: what if the workers for **General Motors** were engaged in tough contract negotiations with their employers and the work environment was one of union busting. Then management reveals that a government agency has told the company that two years ago they were told to begin a process for improving the fuel economy of all their vehicles. GM did engage in a process that over the next four years would move in the direction of better fuel efficiency. But just last month the same government agency tells GM that all of the automobiles coming off their assembly lines must meet the new, current standards, and they must do so by next June or face loss of sales and all that that brings with it. So General Motors begins a process to meet the new standards by the deadline, but...

Doesn't it make sense for the assembly line workers to say to management if you want our help in producing these new vehicles, settle our contract first? Engage in intensive bargaining and finish negotiations in 30 days! It can be done. Yes, the factory could close, but the workers know that with a settled contract the cars will be done right and by the deadline and the factory will go on just like it always has.

Now UPM is *not* suggesting that faculty avoid participating in Program Review. To the contrary, it has been suggested that faculty be fairly compensated for their participation, and UPM has even approached the District to negotiate the details of the compensation. But still...

It could get done!

### The Administration Knows Best—Part 1

UPM and District administrators are at the table negotiating Program Review compensation. The District's proposal involves one teaching unit per person AND **Vice-President Anita Martinez** will designate the person in each program. Mind you, at the time of this proposal the word “program” had not even been defined by the District, but the Vice-president was in the process of creating “the programs” to be reviewed, or so the bargaining team was informed. UPM feels that individual programs, whatever they may be, know best who should do the work and at the very least, someone who volunteers is more inclined to be positively involved than someone who is appointed.

## **The Administration Knows Best—Part 2**

The Union-District Workload Committee, **UDWC**, oversees many responsibilities, one of which is monitoring requested changes in class size (a working condition, hence, negotiable). In this current semester representatives from Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Nursing have come to UDWC with requests to decrease the size in their laboratory classes. Their rationales all relate to health and safety issues—new curriculum, new experiments, new equipment all dictate that things be done one-on-one with more careful monitoring by the instructor. It will no longer be safe for students to double up on experiments, etc.

UPM representatives on the UDWC supported the reduction, but District representatives balked at the notion. The explanation given at the time was that a reduction in class size now would have a negative impact on enrollment and the labs in the new buildings—4 to 5 years from finished construction—would be able to accommodate the current or even larger lab sizes! It goes without saying that UPM strongly believes that faculty and students should not work or learn in unsafe environments. It would be nice if everyone believed the same and acted accordingly.

## **The Administration Knows Best—Part 3**

About 6 weeks ago a faculty member submitted a conference leave request to the Professional Affairs Committee, **PAC**. The conference was relevant to the Union member's employment at the College and was approved by the UPM members on the PAC. However, District representatives have yet to sign off on this conference request. After many attempts to find out why, with numerous apologies from the UPM representatives for the lack of a reason for the delay, the faculty member was told by **Director of Human Resources Linda Beam** that she was questioning why this faculty member was going to conference A instead of conference B, since many of his colleagues were attending the latter conference. The faculty member replied that he may very well attend conference B, but was seeking PAC support for conference A. And so he still waits.

## **Save the Dates!**

Want to do something about it? Want to know what the latest is? Come to one of the following informational and action meetings:

- Monday, December 3, 4:00 PM, LC-38
- Thursday, December 6, 3:30 PM, LC-38
- Friday, December 7, 11:00 AM, LC-38

Have a great week!

UPM Executive Council

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