PONDERINGS OF THE PRESIDENT
By Laurie Ordin

A NUMBER OF YEARS AGO, I think it was about seven years back, I really started paying attention to the goings on at the college beyond my classes and a few committees and clubs that I was involved in. I guess before that time I thought that everything was going along ok and that the faculty could count on the UPM leaders to take care of us and protect us. I must say that they tried, but in spite of their efforts it seemed that the college culture was deteriorating before our eyes.

At that time there were many articles and press releases put out by the college extolling our virtues and promoting the “successes” brought to us by our CEO. At the time there was much concern over declining enrollments, and particular concern over enrollment at IVC. Some of the press releases were glowing about the increased enrollment at IVC. They were indeed impressive increases. And then I found out a few things. One of the reasons enrollments were exploding at IVC was because programs were moved from KTD to IVC, a small detail that was omitted in the press releases.

My article in last month’s newsletter mentioned another tactic used to inflate enrollment that has cost the college, according to President Coon, $1.2 million. Some of these issues prompted me to start writing letters and articles to the local newspapers to object to the “data.” Soon after that, my mailbox in the mailroom started filling with gifts from my colleagues, T-shirts that only a math teacher, actuary or statistician could love. One of them had “When all else fails, manipulate the data.” printed on the front.

One of the other T-shirts that was given to me had the following printed on the front:

There are three kinds of lies:
Lies, damned lies, and statistics - - Mark Twain

So fast forward to our negotiations. At our most recent bargaining session one of the District’s team members announced that with the offer that they have on the table, according to the calculation that now has us at ninth from the top of eleven Bay Area college districts with regard to wages, we would now move >>
September 30, 2014, President Coon opened with “In the interest of transparency and accuracy...the District has proposed a faculty wage package totaling $1,455,890...the total package represents an average increase of 8.68% for full and part-time faculty.”

The District’s bargaining team has repeatedly told us that we could take that offer in any way we wanted, that we didn’t need to follow the District’s suggestions, which were outlined at the end of President Coon’s aforementioned email. UPM’s Collective Bargaining Team, after careful consideration, decided that a very fair deal would be to set aside all of the little pieces that the email outlined and just take the 8.68% wage increase across the board for all of our part-time and full-time faculty. [See Chief Negotiator, John Sutherland’s CB update for more details on Pg.4]

We believe that this is a fair deal for our faculty, and conforms to the offer made by Dr. Coon.

We await the District’s final acceptance, so stay in touch, stay informed, stay involved, AND PAY ATTENTION. □
OUTSOURCING AT COM

For the past 27 years, the College Bookstore on our Kentfield campus has been operated by Barnes and Noble. But during that time, the store’s employees were employees of CoM and members of CoM’s classified union, CSEA. They enjoyed all the perks and protections of CoM employment status and CSEA union membership, including a negotiated pay scale, medical benefits and grievance and arbitration rights that a union contract guarantees.

But soon no more.

As of this Fall, the District has changed the operator of the bookstore from Barnes and Noble to the Follett Corporation, a company that operates over 900 college bookstores around the country. And our District is attempting to remove these employee positions from CoM and CSEA, so that they can become at-will employees of Follett (a non-union company), without union protections, or benefits, or grievance rights.

The financial arrangement that our District has negotiated with Follett is better than what was offered by Barnes and Noble, and our college surely does need additional revenue, but shouldn’t our District also be concerned with how CoM employees are treated? Our management repeatedly argues for equity for its management team, so how about some equity for our bookstore personnel, some of whom have been on the job for fifteen years.

Five of these bookstore workers have decided to retire and take advantage of the SERP, but virtually all of them report that they would not have chosen to retire if not for the District’s move to Follett.

When Barnes and Noble ran the store and as employees of CoM, they were treated as professionals. They were involved in book and merchandise selection, and they had input into store operations. Interaction with students was encouraged. Currently however, under Follett, they report that their jobs have devolved into merely “stocking and selling, stocking and selling,” and their contact with students is devalued and diminished.

So who’s next? Will our District soon be trying to privatize and outsource the work of our janitors and our gardeners and our electricians etc. to the lowest non-union bidder?

And what about our faculty? Are we really immune? Or will our District soon be climbing aboard the Gates, Walton, ALEC, Arne Duncan privatization bandwagon, and seek to remove the union protections that our faculty currently enjoys?

Perhaps we could let our new VP of College Operations know that this isn’t a right-to-work state like Georgia. Our District should show care for its employees.

UPM MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I hereby apply for membership in the United Professors of Marin, AFT Local 1610

Name: __________________________ SS#: __________________________
Address: __________________________ City: __________________________ Zip: __________________________
Date: __________________________ Email: __________________________
Home Phone: __________________________ Campus Ext: _______

Check the appropriate category:

_____ I am a permanent credit or non-credit employee or leave replacement
_____ I am a temporary credit or non-credit employee on the semester system
_____ I am a Community Education instructor

Return to the UPM mailbox or to the UPM Office.
And please make sure you have completed the UPM payroll deduction option, in Human Resources.

Please Note: Unless you have filled out the above UPM Membership Application, you are only paying a representation fee and you are not entitled to UPM’s full membership benefits.
UPM COLLECTIVE BARGAINING UPDATE
John Sutherland
UPM Chief Negotiator

UPM SAYS YES TO PRESIDENT COON!

AFTER RECENT LIVELY PUBLIC DISCUSSION between the District and UPM regarding salary, your Bargaining Team went to the table with the District to accept President Coon’s summation of the District’s offer on Wages—an 8.68% increase. Though we expected the District team to jump at our acceptance, we received hesitation rather than the approval we had anticipated.

On September 18, 2014, President Coon sent out a universal email on Budget Planning. In it, he committed to, among other things, “Salaries that attract and retain employees” and that provide “our valued employees with the means to meet the rising costs of living.” Our UPM Bargaining Team was pleased to hear of this assurance, and we took it to heart.

Though one might question a District plan that promises “reductions in our overall staffing level” at the same time it commits to growing the Reserve (currently hovering around 11%, even though 5% is considered healthy and respectable), President Coon appeared to be devoted to fair and equitable salaries. Recent salary increases among managers, President Coon among them, range to 30%. So while UPM had some issues with the overall message, we listened thoughtfully, figuring that if top managers got hefty salary increases, we would be next.

The public discourse continued: UPM President Ordin’s response (9/25/14) to President Coon’s Budget memo elicited much feedback from UPM members, and almost immediately President Coon wrote once again (9/30/14), saying that “the total package represents an average increase of 8.68% for full and part-time faculty.”

Though the UPM Bargaining Team had spent many hours at the bargaining table trying to negotiate the best we could on Wages, we reconsidered what we had achieved up to that point and decided for the benefit of the membership as a whole to accept President Coon’s 8.68% average increase for full and part-time faculty. (Note: At least part of the District’s previous offer on Wages was contingent on reaching an agreement by 8/30/14, but since Benefits were still up in the air, UPM could not consider making such a commitment.)

On Thursday, October 9, 2014, our UPM CB Team met with the District with the intention of accepting President Coon’s offer. We presented our acceptance of this 8.68% increase for full and part-time faculty. Surprisingly, the District team balked at our acceptance counter, but we insisted that they consider it and discuss it with President Coon. We’ll see.

On another front, we addressed the District imposed retirement announcement dates in the SERP agreement. Our original written agreement stipulated only that any unit member eligible for and interested in taking advantage of the SERP would retire either on December 31, 2014, or on June 30, 2015. Subsequently, the District added dates for applying for the SERP. UPM’s legal counsel has advised us that though these added dates may apply to members of other CoM worker groups, we have a written agreement that supersedes any additional, non-negotiated criteria.

Elsewhere, we are still waiting for a District update on Benefits though the District has indicated optimism that benefit rates will fall and coverage will be affordable and equitable. Again, we’ll see.

Finally, the District responded on Article 8, Workload, and insisted that absolutely no ambiguity exists in 8.1 and 8.2 regarding “expected” and “required” faculty professional service duties. The District is now adamant that its interpretation of said “expectations” for professional duties authorizes it to include all aspects of SLOs and syllabi in future evaluation processes. Furthermore, the District’s now persists that 8.1 and 8.2 are “not negotiable,” which is curious since the District opened these articles for negotiation in the first place.

The District’s position on 8.1 and 8.2 is further complicated by its view that unit members will still be required to complete said tasks even if doing so falls outside of the 37.5 hour work week: “That would be her/his choice as an exempt employee.”

Moreover, the District’s doggedness to make these duties mandatory comes as a surprise to the UPM Bargaining Team since it was the Academic Senate led faculty that led the charge in getting us off Accreditation warning and probation... without being “required” to do so. We’ll see. □
ON OCTOBER 4, 1816, FRENCH REVOLUTIONARY poet and transport worker Eugene Pottier was born. Pottier was a member of the Paris Commune of 1871 and following the Commune’s defeat he wrote “THE INTERNATIONALE,” a song that has become the anthem of workers throughout the world.

The title refers to the First International Congress of socialists and trade unionists held in 1864, which called for solidarity of working people throughout the world and the establishment of a more egalitarian society.

The anthem’s opening words “Arise ye Prisoners of Starvation...” may seem outdated in today’s affluent world, but over a billion people still live on less than $1.25 a day, and 22,000 children die each day due to conditions of poverty.

And it’s not only in third world countries where these conditions exist. They exist in our country and in our county, where there are people who are unemployed, hungry and homeless.

So next time you give a dollar to a street-person who is broke and homeless, and they offer thanks and say “God Bless You,” you might answer, “Don’t bless me, curse the system.”

HALLOWEEN PARTY

Tuesday, October 28
11:00-1:00
in
Deedy Lounge

BRING YOUR LUNCH, OR JUST DROP BY THERE WILL BE LOTS OF TREATS.

(Sponsored by the UPM Social Committee)

STATE OF THE UNION
(Our Union-Your Union)

ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 3rd, 4:00 to 6:00 pm there will be a UPM General Meeting on the Kentfield Campus. Join for a discussion of bargaining issues and other important matters that affect our college and our working lives.

Location to be announced.

DEAN HUMOR
(All in Good Natured Fun, of Course)

A COLLEGE DEAN attending a conference checked into a hotel and went up to his room. Five minutes later he called the desk clerk and said, “You’ve given me a room with no exit! How do I get out?” The clerk responded patiently, “Tell me what doors are in your room?”

“Well, said the Dean, there’s one door that leads to the bathroom, another door that goes into the closet, and a third door with a sign on it that says ‘Do Not Disturb.’
NEW FACULTY COLLEAGUE

IN DR. COON’S MOST RECENT MESSAGE to our faculty regarding CoM’s budgetary crisis (9/30), he addressed us with the salutation, “Dear Faculty Colleague.”

Many of us have great respect for what Dr. Coon has done and is trying to do at CoM, but is he really our “faculty colleague?”

To my knowledge he doesn’t teach, or counsel students, or work as a librarian. Nor is he a member of our faculty bargaining unit. And he certainly isn’t compensated on the same pay scale as the rest of our faculty.

Dr. Coon is our boss, and while his duties as boss are notable, it might be questioned whether he really should be presenting himself as a “faculty colleague.”

Some of us feel that if Dr. Coon were truly our faculty colleague, he would more sympathetic to the financial and benefit needs of the rest of our faculty.

Signed,
A Faculty Colleague

FIFTY YEARS AND COUNTING

ON OCTOBER 1, 2014, THE UNITED PROFESSORS OF MARIN celebrated its 50th Anniversary as a charter member of the American Federation of Teachers. UPM’s election as bargaining agent for our faculty was the first community college election for the AFT in the Bay Area.

Over the years since, our Union has achieved many other distinctions, including a Contract that is the envy of most other community colleges in California.

The struggle now is to maintain our Contract standing in the face of unit and personnel cut threats by our District.

We will be able to prevail if we have the support and involvement of our membership. So as our UPM President repeatedly encourages, “Stay informed, stay in touch, and stay involved.”

ACCJC LOOSE ANOTHER ROUND

ON TUESDAY, OCT. 7, SAN FRANCISCO Superior Court judge Curtis Karnow heard arguments from ACCJC and the San Francisco City Attorney regarding ACCJC’s attempt to avoid a trial for its disaccreditation of City College of San Francisco.

The hearing involved the legal distinctions that ACCJC was trying to make between the process and substance of free speech. ACCJC’s legal team maintained that the accrediting agency’s new “restoration status” policy represented a fair way forward for the college. The SF City Attorney argued that the problem was not process, but rather the actual harm inflicted by ACCJC’s actions on the school, students, faculty and community. If ACCJC’s distinction prevailed, all of its actions, all of the time, would be immune from prosecution.

The judge took only one day to rule against ACCJC—the sixth time that ACCJC has failed to have their trial dismissed. This means that the trial, slated for the week of October 27 in San Francisco will proceed as scheduled. At stake is continued access to affordable higher education for 80,000 students, and the jobs of nearly 2,000 faculty and staff.

ACH SEMANTICS

WHEN THE DISTRICT OFFERS OUR FACULTY a 2% wage increase spread over three years, they call it a PAY RAISE. But when they give their Vice-Presidents a 30% yearly wage increase they call it a “RECALIBRATION.”

Wouldn’t George Orwell call it DOUBLESPEAK?

“THE ISSUE IS JOBS. YOU CAN’T GET AWAY FROM IT; JOBS. HAVING A BUCK OR TWO IN YOUR POCKET AND FEELING LIKE SOMEBODY.”

Studs Terkel
GOOD OF THE ORDER (3)

JOB CREATION

ENOUGH ALREADY ABOUT THE WEALTHY being job creators. They are personal wealth creators. They would replace you with a machine or a robot in a minute if they could. They would send your job to China and make you train your replacement if they could. They would cut corners drastically on safety to make a few extra bucks if they could. They would deny you health insurance and pensions to raise their bottom line if they could. They would avoid paying taxes by hiding their money in offshore banks if they could. They would poison the entire world to the point of altering the climate if they could. If you’ve read this far and don’t know that they’ve done these things, then you have a lot of catching up to do. Get busy. Get informed. Say Union Yes! □

PROGRAM REVIEW & SLOs

WHATEVER YOUR OPINION OF PROGRAM REVIEW as an institutional planning tool, it should be understood that faculty participation in the Program Review process is voluntary.

Faculty are not required to participate in Program Review “and faculty who choose not to participate shall not be penalized.” * Nor may Program Review assessments be used for faculty evaluation or to reward or punish faculty or infringe upon academic freedom. Faculty may choose to voluntarily participate in the Program Review process, but if they do “they shall control the selection of the methods designed for assessment, administration of the assessment, analysis of the assessment, and the use of the assessment results.” *

*[From an MOU between the District and our Academic Senate, 9/3/2009].

Similarly, faculty may choose to participate in Student Learning Outcome (SLO) assessments, but may not be mandated to do so or penalized for not doing so.

If faculty do choose to engage in SLO assessment, they “shall control the entire process of assessment in their own programs, include(ing) the selection of methods chosen or designed for assessment, administration of the assessment, analysis of the assessment data, and use of the assessment results.” ** And “Faculty shall maintain ownership of student learning outcomes and assessment processes.”

** [From MOU between District and Academic Senate 10/20/2005]

These SLO and Program Review MOUs were agreed upon by our Academic Senate, our Board of Trustees, and our college Presidents and are not subject to change or termination except by mutual agreement. They may be viewed on our college website: Faculty & Staff>>SLOs and Program Reviews; and at: http://www.marin.edu/WORD-PPT/MOUonSLOs643.pdf □

FUNNY (?)

A HISTORIAN, AN ENGINEER AND A STATISTICIAN are duck hunting. A duck rises from the lake and the historian fires and shoots 10 feet over the duck. Then the engineer fires and shoots 10 feet under the duck. The statistician shouts “got him!” □
THERE COMES A TIME WHEN THE OPERATION OF THE MACHINE becomes so odious you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you've got to make it stop.

Mario Savio, 1964

MAYBE THIS IS NOT WHAT MARIO HAD IN MIND,

BUT

IF OUR FACULTY WANT TO HAVE AN INFLUENCE ON THE EDUCATIONAL MACHINERY THAT GOVERNS OUR WORKING LIVES, (WITHOUT SACRIFICING OUR BODIES), WE CAN DO IT BY DONATING TO OUR UPM POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (UPMPAC)

MONEYS COLLECTED WILL BE USED TO SUPPORT A PROGRESSIVE EDUCATIONAL AGENDA AT OUR COLLEGE AND THROUGHOUT THE STATE.

United Professors of Marin
UPM-PAC Payroll Deduction Form

The UPM-PAC (Political Action Committee) provides financial support to candidates and measures that support or benefit education in Marin County and the College of Marin in particular. If you would like to support the UPM-PAC with a monthly contribution, small or large, please fill out the form below and send it to the Payroll Office.

To: Payroll, College of Marin
Date: _______________

I hereby authorize the Marin Community College to deduct from my earnings the sum of ________ beginning in the month of __________ (year), and each month thereafter, and to remit this sum to the United Professors of Marin PAC #99-0958 until I revoke this authorization in writing.

Signature: __________________________
Print Name: _________________________
Address: ____________________________
City: ________________________________
Zip: ________________________________
SSN: ________________________________

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