



# Faculty Association Negotiations Update #13

## ***STRONGER TOGETHER!***

To: All Faculty

From: Sandra Esslinger, Lead Negotiator

Date: 07/10/2024

We met with the District team for the 15th time on Tuesday, July 9, 2024.

Team members In attendance:

District: Sokha Song, Alexis Carter, Francisco Dorame, Tami Pearson, Lance Heard, Kelly Fowler, Delana Miller, and Morris Rodrigue

FANT: Sandra Esslinger, Emily Woolery, Joshua Christ, Herschel Greenberg, and Robin Devitt (CTA)

**Overview:** In this negotiation, FANT responded to the core financial counter proposals. While in the July 1st negotiation, the district did not provide us with adequate rationale for why they rejected all but one of our proposals. The cut-and-paste district rationale is paraphrased: they value the work faculty do, but they cannot afford the financial requests. They had our proposals for weeks, just to **reject them without due consideration—no matter how small.**

**The FA hopes the Trustees request copies of the current proposals so they can see for themselves.**

**There is no financial crisis at Mt. SAC. There is a problem with priorities** which has been ongoing, affecting faculty well-being for nearly a decade. With the current retirement incentive program, the district should use this opportunity to show their fiduciary responsibility without cuts, delays, or layoffs, by freezing positions. Several of these positions exist only in title, creating a chance to do the right thing. As funding grew, assistant and associate positions also grew and are now diminishing the employee experience.

When we asked the district how much they thought each proposal would cost, they gave us numbers so inaccurate that **the district estimated costs were inflated up to 368%**. At the time, we requested the district provide accurate information, with variables and calculations justified. Additionally, **the district has not acknowledged that adjunct office hours are now no longer compensated at 50% but at 90% by the CCCCCO. This impacts the cost of many of our proposals as it made already negotiated funds available to improve adjunct circumstances.**

The faculty is upset by the cavalier approach to our very serious and needed requests. The faculty is responsible for earning the core revenue that benefits the campus through our vital work with our students. Faculty are an essential part of the infrastructure of the educational institution and, as such, require district expenditures for the

maintenance of campus human resources—those costs are COLA, health insurance, professional development, competitive salaries, and equitable longevity.

Faculty operate on a service model with quality and professionalism as their core standards. The District looks at the faculty as numbers and costs. These perspectives are clearly conflict at the administration and faculty levels at this college—the priorities again are something the trustees can help us with. **The priority problem is clear when buildings get what they need automatically, while the administration sees faculty as a line item where they can save money, even COLA.**

*The FA did not exercise its right to reopen any part of the contract, except for the automatic reopeners—Appendices, Benefits, and Salaries. The FA’s focus is and has been on Salaries, Benefits, and Longevity. We have not resolved these areas yet.*

**Final Comments:** Mt. SAC has a projected actual ending fund balance of \$63,185,663. This is 21.96% of the operating budget! The Board of Trustees passed a plan over three years to achieve an 18% fund balance and reached 21.96% in one year! Every year, the administration cries wolf and sees a fiscal crisis. Every year, the ending fund balance is higher, and the reserves grow—there are more managers reclassified, added to the payroll, and buildings built. Even now, bonds are being discussed for more buildings, while the faculty salaries and benefits languish. **The district is concerned about deferrals, but this is only a payment postponement. Faculty know what that is like as their COLA is deferred year after year, while the district earns the interest, faculty are forced to pay ridiculously high interest on our credit cards.**

	2012	2023	Difference	11 year Growth %
FTES	28,701	30,410	1701	6%
Faculty	395	463	68	17%
<b>Managers</b>	86	160	74	<b>88%</b>

**FA Responses:**

Article 7—Salaries: The FA responded with the remainder of COLA on the salary scale and appendices, with a modest raise, and full retroactive pay.

Article 8—Contract Benefits: The FA responded by making the formula identical to other units but tied it to the faculty benefit plans.

Appendix A.5 –Service Increments (Longevity): The FA responded with the same proposal, but enhanced rationale, since all other units have a 15-year and % increases compounded for each increment.

Article 10.B.5– Adjunct Professor Student Office Hours: The FA responded with the same proposal but added rationale as the Chancellor’s office is raising the compensation from 50% to 90%, which is **a substantial cost savings that from our calculations covers this proposal and A.C and A6.b.** (see two items below)

Appendix A.6.b–Professional Growth Hours: The FA responded with the same proposal but countered that this is a very low-cost item, and that professional development should be a priority for the district.

Appendix C Adjunct Longevity: This is another low-cost item. Faculty asked for a % increase for adjunct longevity over 15 years. FA wanted to show the adjunct that we appreciate those who have made long-term career commitments to the college.

Article 8.H.--Tuition and Fee Reimbursement: The FA made a clear argument in our proposal that this **would make money for the district in enrollment numbers** than any possible costs it could incur. Due to costs only, they struck the entire proposal. They did not take into their fiscal considerations the increases to FTES revenue it would generate. The FA responded with the same proposal and enhanced rationale.

**The Faculty Association Negotiation Team is working hard to protect our profession!**

Now that we are negotiating into the summer, we need your ongoing commitment to this process. We know that you have plans for the summer. We still need your full support to be seen as we fight for very reasonable financial proposals:

- Full COLA
- 15-year longevity step with equitable structure to other employee groups
- Protection of professional autonomy and integrity

We need you to support negotiations; please contact Maya at [malvarez\\_galvan@hotmail.com](mailto:malvarez_galvan@hotmail.com).

**Sign up for text notifications:** Text “Join FT” or “Join PT” to 424-334-0655

**United We Are Stronger!**