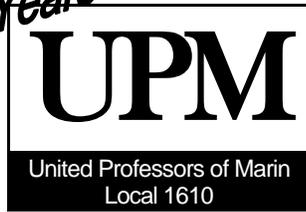


37 Years Strong!



INSIDE					
1 Ponderings of the President	3 Grievance Report: Student Complaints	4 Connecting the Dots: OCCUPY MAY DAY	5 UPM Committees and Staff	6 CFT Union Summer School	7 CFT/AFT Member Benefits
					8 UPM Forms

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Union Press

PONDERINGS OF THE PRESIDENT by Ira Lansing

In math classes we often tell our students there may be more than one way to solve a problem, there may even be more than one correct answer. A primary concern that mathematics instructors have when there is more than one approach is that the methods used by students are logically correct, reproducible, will not cause issues later, and produce the correct results. All too often students get caught up in the “but I got the right answer” syndrome. In a high anxiety subject area like mathematics, just getting the correct end result can be such a relief that students don’t care how it happens; which, of course, is a source of great distress to those of us teaching the subject. Usually a quick example like the following will get their attention. This uses the mythical principle of “canceling 6’s”:

$$\frac{16}{64} = \frac{1}{4}$$

(this is true; 16/64 does equal 1/4).

Yes, the answer is correct, but one more example reminds students that this was a one-time coincidence: $\frac{61}{62} = \frac{1}{2}$ (not true; the original fraction is almost 1, which is more than 1/2).

An endeavor to reinforce the realization that there may be more than one way to solve problems is an effort to reduce *friction* for students, while negating the non-principle of “canceling 6’s) only seems to increase *friction* for the student. The New York *Times* columnist David Pogue defined “friction” as a “hassle”.¹ In talking about how web sites often make users jump through many hoops, he goes on to say that “low friction doesn’t just mean more sales. It means more of *any* behavior you’re trying to encourage”.

¹ “Technology’s Friction Problem” by David Pogue, *Scientific American*, April 2012

Continued on 2

As UPM president I have viewed my primary job duty as one of reducing friction for my members. Whatever it is you want to do while employed in the Marin Community College District, I want to make it possible for you to do it (as long as it is not illegal, immoral or insane—the three no-no “I’s” of the Education Code). How I attempt (not always successfully) to accomplish this may vary. Often it is just being accessible and responsive. People don’t always like what I tell them (no, you cannot grieve a colleague; yes, management can change your overload class), but at least you get an answer, which reduces friction.

Sometimes friction is reduced by calling on the Collective Bargaining Agreement to provide a procedure to get something done or to resolve an issue. Knowing where to look, or even if one needs to look, can be a challenge, and as president part of my responsibilities involve familiarity with the Contract. By the way, said familiarity is still imperfect, did not start at the current level and is always a work in progress, like the Collective Bargaining Agreement itself.

I also believe a Union president must know when some friction is required.

Not all friction is bad. Friction is why some things don’t move, which can be good; and why some things do move (think where the tire meets the road). It is very desirable to be able to work well with management, to bargaining successfully, to resolve grievances. But some friction in these processes works to keep the organization strong and meaningful (think getting run over). It is important however, to understand how much friction can be tolerated or no movement can be the consequence.

This by no means sums up the job of UPM president (or of a mathematics instructor), but does provide some insight into what goes on in that position.

Remember, you also get to write your own rambling column if you are UPM president. As of this July 1 UPM will not have a president (no, I am not going to be snatched by aliens, I will be the Grievance Officer). The position does require experience and familiarity. I am not soliciting applicants for the position, but any future president must have experience and familiarity, which will only come from involvement.

So, as always stay in touch, stay informed and stay involved.

Keep in Touch with Your Union News

Visit the UPM website for the most recent newsletters, union announcements and more.

Looking for a side-by-side comparison of the new and old contracts?

ww.unitedprofessorsofmarin.org

Grievance Report: Student Complaints

Since President Coon has come aboard, the grievance board in the UPM office has been quiet. But that doesn't mean your Grievance Officer has been idle. In fact, the spring semester has brought with it a number of student complaints, and so I've been as busy as ever attending meetings regarding complaints and defending colleagues as appropriate.

Currently, three separate student complaints have had me running from meeting to meeting, consulting on and reading instructor responses, and conferring with the Executive Council as to the best next step. Of particular importance in these affairs is, of course, the UPM/MCCCD Contract as well as the Board Policy and Procedures governing student grievances.

First off, our Contract provides for UPM representation at every stage of the student complaint/grievance process. Board Procedure is also quite explicit and defines steps a student must take to file a grievance. Of note is that a student grievance is defined in District Procedure (4.0023) as follows:

"A Student Academic Grievance is a specific allegation by a student that a faculty member has violated State law, Federal law or a policy of procedure of the Marin Community College District (MCCD) regarding issues of grading or assignments:

Grading: A student may file a grievance if he or she believes a grade was assigned by the instructor of record due to a mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetency. Absent the above, under California Education Code,

all grades given by the instructor of record are final.

Assignments: A student may file a grievance if he or she believes a faculty member has given the student an assignment that is unreasonable or unsafe, i.e., an assignment that subjects the student to unreasonable demands or requirements, or to unsafe conditions.

Harassment/Discrimination: A student may file a grievance if he or she believes a faculty member has harassed or discriminated against the student based on race, color, religion, age, sex/gender, sexual preference, national origin, ancestry, marital status, medical condition (cancer) handicap, or status as a Vietnam-era veteran."

That's it. These are the ONLY reasons a student can file a grievance.

At least one of the current student "grievances" clearly falls outside these guidelines and should never have been forwarded to the next step. If it is not a valid grievance, it is NOT a grievance. However, District willingness to side with a student can overlook these very definitions. It is imperative that we understand the parameters of student rights as well as our own rights.

There are additional steps, to be sure—informal meetings, the formal grievance, managers' recommendations, appeals, etc.-and these can be found in detail in Board Procedures, but they're unnecessary and too long to enumerate here.

If you are notified of a student complaint, first be sure to obtain a copy of the complaint itself. Then, contact your UPM representative immediately for guidance.

John Sutherland

CONNECTING THE DOTS

News and Opinion
by Arthur Lutz

OCCUPY MAY DAY

Next Tuesday is May 1st – **May Day**. Most people think of May Day as a day to celebrate the rites of spring; a day for revelry and dancing.

But **May Day** is also – **International Workers' Day** – a day when workers around the world celebrate and honor the struggles and contributions of labor and the people who fought (and died) to improve working conditions. It's a holiday that started in Chicago in 1884 in support of the 8-hour working day, when the *American Federation of Labor* adopted a resolution stating that "*eight hours shall constitute a legal day's labor from and after May 1st, 1886.*"

"8-Hours for Work! 8-Hours for Rest! 8-Hours for What we Will!"

To enforce these demands, 80,000 residents of Chicago – over one quarter of the entire population, most of them immigrants, marched through the streets. The march was peaceful and the mood was joyous because workers felt that they would have a better future. But the authorities and the media and local corporate interests denounced the marchers as dangerous ruffians and the police attacked them and fired into the crowd and killed fifty marchers. It is called *The Haymarket Massacre*. And when a bomb was thrown (possibly by a provocateur) the police rounded up eight revolutionary labor leaders (who were miles away at the time of the

explosion), and they were convicted solely on the basis of their political beliefs and sentenced to death. Four were hung. And martial law was declared for two months and thousands of people were arrested and interrogated. It was an attempt by the authorities to discredit the 8-hour-day movement and criminalize dissent.

But the movement grew, and the 8-hour-day finally became law. And from that day forward on May 1st, in every country in Europe, and in Africa and Asia and in Central and South America, May Day was (and continues to be) celebrated as a day of labor solidarity and resistance against political oppression and economic inequality.

In the United States, most cities also held May Day parades, and workers, sometimes in the tens of thousands, marched to express their collective power. But in 1949, at the height of the McCarthy "red scare," President Eisenhower, at the behest of organizations like the *National Association of Manufacturers* and the *American Legion*, designated May 1st as *Loyalty Day*, and a year later added the designation *Law Day*. And May Day parades were banned in New York City and in other cities around the U.S. And with the disappearance of these May Day marches and celebrations, few Americans have been exposed to the compelling expressions of labor solidarity that was responsible for achieving the eight-hour day and other New-Deal labor legislation.

Continued on 5

But things seem to be changing. Since September 2011 when Wall Street was first "occupied," there seems to be a new understanding and appreciation for what the Haymarket marchers were fighting and dying for. It was the poet Adrienne Rich (who died earlier this year), who said it best

when she was asked what *she* was fighting for:

"Simply this; the creation of a society without domination."

That too is what **MAY DAY** and **OCCUPY** are all about.

UPM COMMITTEES AND STAFF		2011-2012
<p style="text-align: center;">PRESIDENT Ira Lansing</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BARGAINING TEAM Paul Christensen (Chief Negotiator) Theo Fung, Arthur Lutz, Michele Martinisi, Patty O'Keefe, Laurie Ordin</p> <p style="text-align: center;">UPM-PAC Arthur Lutz, Laurie Ordin, Co-Chairs</p> <p style="text-align: center;">GRIEVANCE OFFICER John Sutherland</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TREASURER Theo Fung</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BUDGET MONITOR Deborah Graham</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BAY 10 REPRESENTATIVE Open</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CCC REPRESENTATIVE Open</p>	<p>NORTH BAY LABOR COUNCIL REP Open</p> <p>PROFESSIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE Patty O'Keefe, Chris Schultz</p> <p>WORKLOAD COMMITTEE Carl Cox, Michele Martinisi</p> <p>HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE George Adams, Chris Schultz</p> <p>PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMITTEE Bonnie Borenstein, Arthur Lutz</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p><i>37 Years Strong!</i></p>  </div>	<p style="text-align: center;">SABBATICAL LEAVE COMMITTEE Michele Martinisi, Patty O'Keefe (Chair), Walter Turner</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CRA TRUST Sarah Brewster, Judy Coombes, Ed Essick (Chair), Ira Lansing, Laurie Ordin</p> <p style="text-align: center;">UPM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE Ira Lansing, Paul Christensen, Bonnie Borenstein, Carl Cox, Deborah Graham, Arthur Lutz, Michele Martinisi, Laurie Ordin, John Sutherland</p> <p style="text-align: center;">WEB MASTER Mike Ransom</p> <p style="text-align: center;">UNION PRESS EDITOR John Sutherland</p> <p style="text-align: center;">EXECUTIVE SECRETARY Teresa Capaldo</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PART-TIME REPRESENTATIVE Open</p>

PAC Funds

Professional Affairs Committee (PAC) representatives Patty O'Keefe and Chris Schultz have announced that conference leave funds have been expended for the year. You may/must still apply for conference leave through the PAC; however, if your conference is before July 1, 2012, you will have to find another source of funding. New funds will be available as of July 1.



August 13-17, 2012 at UCLA

The CFT Union Summer School equips local leaders with the powerful skills to organize successful campaigns, expand union membership, involve members in union activities, increase the union's political power, and establish excellent representation and collective bargaining programs.

The program is geared for emerging and veteran leaders who want to take their skills to the next level. The week will be filled with rigorous workshops, motivated and skilled trainers, and applied learning. There will be ample opportunity to share best practices with local leaders from across the state and to find inspiration in one another's work.

Registration deadline is June 4, 2012. Join us for this exciting, week-long, union leadership program!

2012 Course List

1. **Winning the Best Contract:** *Collective Bargaining & Contract Campaigns*
2. **A Voice at the Worksite:** *Effective Problem-Solving & Grievance Handling*
3. **A Strong Local Union:** *Building Power Through Organizing*
4. **Power of the People:** *Political Action in 2012*
5. **Treasurer's Training:** *Financial Stewardship & Leadership for a Strong Local Union*

Scholarships Are Available

Scholarships are available for the CFT Union Summer School. Call 714-754-6638 or email [Eva Kappen](mailto:ekappen@cft.org) at ekappen@cft.org to request a Union Summer School Scholarship Application. Scholarship applications are due on May 29.

For More Information About The CFT Training Department

The CFT Training Department is also available to assess your local union's training needs and work with your local leadership to create a training and leadership development plan. For more information, contact CFT Training Director [Laura Kurre](mailto:Laura.Kurre@cft.org) at [lkurre@cft.org](mailto:Laura.Kurre@cft.org) 510-523-5238.



Letters to the Editor

Feel free to voice your comments and/or opinions concerning any Union related article or issue. Letters should be signed, but names will be withheld upon request.

Please direct your letters to john.sutherland@marin.edu

CFT Member Benefits

Subscriptions to union publications

- California Teacher
- Community College Perspective
 - Part-Timer
- UC-AFT Perspective

Low-cost group insurance plans

- Homeowner, condominium, and renter's insurance
 - Auto, motorcycle, and boat insurance

Retirement planning services

Tax-sheltered annuities

CFT-endorsed programs

- **NEW!** United Estate Planning, Inc
- CFT Auto and Homeowners Insurance Program
- CFT-endorsed Mosher Financial Services

National Member Benefits

Affiliation with AFT and AFL-CIO

- **AFT:** Over one million members throughout the nation supporting effective public and private school education and the best working conditions for all members
- **AFL-CIO:** 15 million members and their families in the American labor movement providing strength and solidarity to achieve common goals

AFT's \$1 million occupational liability insurance

- Provides security while performing your job
- Protects members in the event of a suit by a parent due to a child's injury
 - Malpractice protection

AFT Plus discount services

- **MasterCard:** no annual fee, skip-payment privileges during a strike
- **Low-cost group insurance plans:** term life, paycheck protection, catastrophic major medical plan, limited medical plan, and long-term care.
 - **Home mortgage:** competitive rates, low down payments
 - **Prescription drugs:** discounts and free delivery
- **Legal:** free 30-minute consultation with a union- friendly attorney, reduced rate personal legal service
 - Discounts at Target, Ann Taylor, Petco, BlackBerry, Dell, and Hewlett-Packard.
 - **Dental and Vision:** average of 20% - 50% savings
 - **Magazines:** the very lowest prices on magazine subscriptions
 - **Theme Parks:** discount packages available online
 - **Flowers:** 15% discount for orders of \$30 or more
- **Educational tours:** international travel for educators and students

Subscriptions to AFT union publications

- American Teacher
 - On Campus
 - American Educator
- **PSRP Reporter** (Paraprofessional and School-Related Personnel)

UPM Membership Application

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

Date: _____ Email: _____

Name _____ SS #: _____

Address: _____ Department: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Campus Ext.: _____

Check the appropriate category:

I am a permanent credit or non-credit employee or leave replacement.

I am a temporary non-credit employee on the quarter system.

I am a temporary credit or non-credit employee on the semester system.

Return to UPM Kentfield campus mailbox or UPM Office, Science Center 136

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 #990958 until I revoke this authorization in writing.

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Zip: _____

SSN: _____