



# BU APSCUF NEWSLETTER

Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania

400 E. 2nd Street

Bloomsburg, PA 17815



## November 2009

## From the APSCUF President

### Bloomsburg APSCUF LEADERSHIP

**Chapter President**— Stephen Kokoska

**Vice President**— Winona Cochran

**Secretary**— Eric Stouffer

**Treasurer**— A. Blair Staley

**Delegates to the Legislative Assembly:**

1. Stephen Kokoska
2. Gloria Cohen-Dion
3. Mark Melnychuk
4. Dee Anne Wymer
5. Terrance Riley
6. Christopher Hallen
7. Wendy Lee
8. Eric Hawrelak

**Grievance Committee**— William Hudon

**Meet/Discuss & Negotiations Committee**— Richard Angelo

**Nominations, Elections, & Rules Committee**— William Calhoun

**Membership Committee**— Chris Donahue

**Public Relations Committee**— Eric Hawrelak

**Health & Welfare Committee**— Margie Eckroth-Bucher

**Legislative Committee**— Gloria Cohen-Dion

**Social Committee**— Joan Benek-Rivera

**Gender Issues Committee**— Barbara Wilson

**Coaches Delegate to Legislative Assembly**— Gary Agard

**Alternate Coaches Delegate to Legislative Assembly**— Vacant

**Representative to State Coaches Committee**— John Stutzman

**Alternative Representative to State Coaches Committee**—

Vacant

**Coaches Grievance Representative**— Chet Henicle

### What's in this newsletter?

- ◆ New APSCUF Members (pg. 2)
  - ◆ Upcoming Meetings (pg. 2)
  - ◆ Holiday Social Information (pg. 3)
- ◆ What has APSCUF/BU been doing? (pg. 3)
  - ◆ Message from Steve Hicks (pg. 4)
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  - ◆ Health & Welfare Committee Announcement (pg. 6)



### The Scout Motto

Our current contract expires on June 30, 2011. That's not that far away. I want you to know that State APSCUF, the Legislative Assembly, and the Chapter Presidents have already started to prepare for the next round of negotiations. Given the changes to our state bylaws, I believe we will all struggle to follow the new guidelines and to solidify the working relationship between the negotiations team and the committee.

The Negotiations Team will consist of the State President, a professional negotiator, and two faculty members at-large. There will be a more formal call for interested faculty members soon. It is a little unclear what the term "professional negotiator" really means. This person could be a lawyer, a seasoned consultant, or a representative from another labor union.

The Chapter Presidents hold monthly conference calls. In December we will meet as a group in State College with the explicit purpose of preparing for negotiations. Prior to previous negotiations, there have been membership surveys, focus groups, and general meetings with Chapter Presidents. We intend to develop a plan to request and organize your issues and concerns so that we may provide clear direction to the Negotiations Team.

The state budget projections for the next few years appear grim. As you know, the base appropriate for PASSHE has been lowered substantially this year. It is vital for us to be ready with appropriate facts, figures, and defensible positions.

Was it the Lion King who sang "Be Prepared?"

Steve Kokoska





# New APSCUF Members



Ackerman, Jodie  
 Bonomo, Virginia  
 Borlick, Todd  
 Campbell, Todd  
 Colon-Mendoza, Ilenia  
 Davis, Arianne  
 Gunes, Itir  
 Heery, Christopher  
 Holladay, Meredith  
 Hower, Eileen  
 Hsu, Ming-Chu  
 Jackson, Bernard  
 Jevtic, Nada  
 Johnson, Keith  
 Kahn, Eric  
 Khaleghi Moghadam, Arian  
 Koch, Randy

W  
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Kodwin, Patrick  
 Lim, Minjung  
 Lusk, Jeniece  
 Martin, Michael  
 Mohassel, Babak  
 Mueller, Greg  
 Oast, Jennifer  
 O'Brien Joseph  
 Petry, Julie  
 Pitingolo, Edward  
 Roggenbuck, Theodore  
 Schmidt, Tracey  
 Sondheimer, Karen  
 Stuart, Anne  
 Van der Jagt, Johan  
 Whisner, Jennifer  
 Yarnell, Jennifer  
 Young, Craig



## General Membership Meeting

On Thursday, October 29, 2009 State APSCUF President, Steve Hicks attended the general membership meeting in the Schweiker Room. Topics of discussion included the budget and preparations for negotiations.

# Upcoming Meeting

## APSCUF Executive Board Meeting

- ◆ **Friday, November 13, 2009**  
8:00 a.m. WAB 38A



# APSCUF/BU HOLIDAY SOCIAL

## APSCUF/BU HOLIDAY SOCIAL



### MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

11:30 a.m. — 2:30 p.m.

Schweiker Room, AL

Come enjoy the refreshments and  
company of your colleagues!!



## What has APSCUF/BU been doing?

### POLICY ISSUES:

- ◆ Completing work on revised APSCUF/BU Bylaws
- ◆ Attempting to execute the Labor Relations Board directive to negotiate with management in regards to The Smoking Policy
- ◆ Worked to ensure department promotion, evaluation, and tenure committees, are established properly
- ◆ Impact Bargaining with the State System in regards to the new Geisinger agreement and required drug screening

### STUDENT SERVICES:

- ◆ Welcomed new students and parents during Fall 2009 Move-In Day, distributing free water and highlighters
- ◆ Awarded five \$400.00 scholarships to five BU undergraduate students
- ◆ Coffee Nights-provided free coffee, cookies, and tutoring to students during finals week

### FACULTY DEVELOPMENT:

- ◆ New Faculty Orientation: Presented new faculty with information about the contract benefits, rights, promotion, and tenure

### TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS:

- ◆ Conducted 5 General Membership Meetings
- ◆ Conducted 6 Executive Board Meetings
- ◆ Chapter President met with University President monthly
- ◆ Chapter President and Meet & Discuss co-chair met with President and Provost monthly
- ◆ Represented faculty in Meet & Discuss sessions with Administration
- ◆ Conducted an Evaluation of our Managers
- ◆ Filed 4 grievances on behalf of faculty & coaches
- ◆ Membership meetings with coaches
- ◆ Represented APSCUF/BU at three Legislative Assemblies
- ◆ Conducted University Wide Committee Elections
- ◆ Conducted APSCUF Officer & Committee Elections
- ◆ Set up a Q & A session with Dr. Soltz
- ◆ Represented faculty at 5 County-Labor Council, Breast Cancer Coalition, State Grievance and Health & Welfare Meetings
- ◆ BU Representation on State APSCUF Executive Board– State Treasurer Chris Hallen

### PUBLIC RELATIONS:

- ◆ Hosted a Fall Social at Quaker Steak & Lube to welcome new faculty
- ◆ Hosted a Spring Social at Frosty Valley to honor APSCUF members who have retired
- ◆ Hosted 3 visits by State APSCUF President, Steve Hicks
- ◆ Produced and distributed 6 local newsletters
- ◆ Distributed APSCUF Pens and Highlighters at Bloomsburg Fair Stand

## \$27 million reasons why we didn't "Give Back"

Finally, on Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has a state budget and PASSHE knows its appropriation.

The amazing thing is that PASSHE will have more money to spend this year than they had last year – by a whopping \$32 million, or 6.7%!!!

The big bang here is a last minute surprise of \$27 million from the ARRA fund (aka “stimulus money”) that is designated as 2008-09 “fill” (to make up for the cut we took in Oct. 2008), but comes to the system as cash.

In a meeting Monday with union leaders, the Chancellor said he had various ways he might use and distribute that money. One included pushing half of it into 2011-12 when we all expect state appropriation to only be the \$444 million allotted this year (the other \$65 million is stimulus money).

But the point here is: he has many millions to make decisions about.

In May he wrote me a letter asking us to forego both our steps and raises. My written response (much less profane than many suggested) told him that his request was premature, since neither the appropriation had been approved (that’s five months ago, you’ll notice) nor the tuition set for the year. He had no idea what their budget for 2009-10 might look like. And they didn’t know how many students they would have (which adds income, though their financial people are quick to point out that income comes at a cost).

Since May, there have been a series of meetings, including Monday’s, attended by myself and an assortment of others (including one discussion at state M&D) where their theme has been “help us.”

Now we know how much help they needed.

I told the Chancellor, and some of his staff, as politely as I could, but sometimes not so politely, that we didn’t believe their numbers. Their pie charts were pretty, but, upon questioning, their numbers slid away – they didn’t have the correct student count; they didn’t calculate the right health insurance rate; they were depending on last fall’s faculty complement numbers to determine faculty cost.

Today, with a budget approved, we already see that the state system is planning for 2011-12 –not crisis management for 2009-10. We expect the talk of givebacks and broad-based retrenchments will stop.

We also expect that they will manage wisely. Budget season is over, for a moment, so we can publicly question the state system’s managerial growth, both in numbers and as a percentage of the budget, while recognizing student body growth (another record this year, up 4%) and no equivalent faculty growth spurt (we’ve seen less than 1% growth in tenure track faculty THIS DECADE!).

As Scarlett O’Hara said, “Tomorrow is another day.” But today we have our contract intact, our pay intact, and more than little dignity in being one of the few faculty unions in the region to be able to say so.

In solidarity,




**VISIT OUR APSCUF/BU WEBSITE  
WWW.APSCUF.ORG/BLOOMSBURG**



## PASSHE IN THE BUDGET

The budget is complete-well, almost. After 101 days, the \$27.8 billion dollar budget was finally passed and signed by Governor Rendell on October 9, 2009. This budget cut many line items, but maintains last year's funding levels for early elementary and increases basic education funding by \$300 million. The 2009-10 enacted budget funds PASSHE a total of \$530,423,000, which helps to restore the cuts made to PASSHE in October of 2008 when all of its line items were reduced by 4.25 percent, or approximately \$22 million, which left PASSHE at \$497,168,000.

The biggest boost to PASSHE was the flow of stimulus funds. Overall, the General Education baseline for PASSHE in this budget was reduced to \$444,470,000. Along with line items for Affirmative Action, Program Initiatives, the McKeever Center, the PA Center for Environmental Education and the Recruitment of the Disadvantaged, the total state General Fund line item for PASSHE was \$465,197,000. Because of stimulus funding, PASSHE was able to receive over \$38 million for 2009-10 and an additional \$27 million for 2008-09, that can be used this year to restore cuts.

Overall, there were not many winners out of this budget, but APSCUF is thankful to the General Assembly and Governor's office for keeping PASSHE a priority in this difficult economic season by restoring the cuts made in 2008 and providing a slight increase from last year in this budget.

Though, due to shrinking revenue, this budget uses \$2.6 billion in federal stimulus money to cover gaps in the state losses of revenue, PASSHE being one example of a recipient. \$655 million worth of stimulus funds will be going to basic education. \$31 million of the same fund will be heading to the state-related universities to maintain funding, as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act mandates this for public institutions. APSCUF members must continue to advocate to PASSHE funding, as the state will find itself in a difficult situation when the stimulus funds run out in 2011. PASSHE advocates will have to aggressively lobby to bring the PASSHE baseline level back up.

It looks like it will be an even more difficult climate next year for legislators to find additional revenue sources. With the debacle of this budget still lingering and having half of the Senate seats and all of the House seats up for election, legislators will be less likely to support new or increased tax revenue sources next year. Plus, they may want to consider doing the budget on time for once.

### **Fiscal Code agreed upon with Articulation Agreement language attached**

Fiscal code legislation was approved by both chambers and enacted in House Bill 1614. The fiscal code lays out the various funds involved in paying for the general fund budget. The House approved the language 106-92. The Senate approved on a vote of 35-14. Articulation Agreement language was placed in the fiscal code, though would ultimately expire with the enactment of the 2010-11 budget, unless the legislature takes action to make it permanent through stand-alone or school code legislation. APSCUF has specific concerns about the legislation and will work with legislature when this issue is back on the table. The sponsor of the Senate Articulation Agreement legislation, Senator Dinniman, wrote a response to APSCUF over concerns. You can view his response at [www.apscuf.org](http://www.apscuf.org). The fiscal code also provides language to deplete the \$755 rainy fund to assist with the budget deficit. The Articulation Agreement language was agreed to by legislative leadership and the Governor.

The current legislation would expand the number of transferrable credits from a Community College to a PASSHE institution from 30 to 60 credits, and would accept full junior status of a student holding an Associate degree in either the Arts or Sciences into a parallel baccalaureate program. The legislation details that this must be in place by December 31, 2011.

## PASSHE IN THE BUDGET continued...

### **Budget Items still in the Air**

Though the actual budget, House Bill 1416, has been signed by the Governor, there are still items for the legislature to handle before certain funds start flowing. 28 institutions, labeled “non-preferreds,” including the state-related institutions of Penn State, Pitt, Temple and Lincoln, will not see their allocations until table games legislation is agreed upon for Pennsylvania casinos. Penn State is to receive nearly \$334 million; Pitt, \$168 million; Temple, nearly \$173 million and Lincoln, around \$13.7 million, which includes stimulus funding. Each bill for these “non-preferreds” must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the House and Senate. Legalizing table games would raise about \$200 million for the budget, and the legislature currently has held back voting on the non-preferreds in order that the budget would balance.

Looking at the House session schedule, enacting this legislation may take longer than one might assume, as the House chamber has indicated its next session day will be on November 9, 2009, a week after the General Election. The State Senate will convene next week to swear in its newest Senator, former Representative Bob Mensch. Senator-elect Mensch will serve the 24th Senatorial district, which has parts of Bucks, Lehigh, Montgomery and Northampton. This swearing-in will have the Senate Republicans controlling the chamber 30 to 20. As Mensch leaves the House, the House Republicans are left with 96 votes (two members serving active duty). A date for the special election to fill the 147th House seat has not been announced.

### **PHEAA sees funding**

Students waiting to see how much they will receive through PHEAA should get more detailed information near the end of this week. The checks could still take about a month to process. The 2009-10 has allotted \$403 million for this year, which is a less than one percent decrease from last year’s \$407 million. Despite this decrease, it is estimated that the PHEAA grants will remain the same as were estimated this summer. PHEAA will maintain for the 2009-10 academic year the maximum grant award of \$4,120. The average grant will be \$2,728.

*By Laura Saccente*

*APSCUF Governmental Relations*

## Health and Welfare Committee

Faculty members in the Highmark Healthy U program can use a Flu shot, dental exam, or vision exam in the category of other Preventative Services to help meet the requirements for the program. Faculty members who have purchased the Flu Shot from their primary care provider or other source should submit this cost to the Health and Welfare Fund for reimbursement.

Separate from the Healthy U program, but an added Highmark program is available for members who wish to quit smoking. Highmark has negotiated a new agreement with the American Institute of Preventative Medicine (AIPM). The new agreement enables Highmark members to purchase an 8 week supply of either nicotine replacement gum or patches for just \$25. This discounted price is only good for nicotine replacement products purchased through the AIPM. To participate, members call (800) 345-2476 and answer a few questions to obtain the discount.

Margie Eckroth-Bucher PhD, RN  
APSCUF/BU Health and Welfare Committee