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Part-timers in quagmire over pay

Matt Olson

The Clackamas Print

A new Part-Time Faculty Agreement is being negotiated by Clackamas' administration and part-time faculty association.

Currently, the new contract is delayed since both sides are seeking mediation through Oregon's Employment Relations Board.

Bargaining teams have come to an impasse over a few key subjects.

"There are a number of articles that haven't been agreed upon," said Courtney Wilton, vice presi-

dent of college services. "The compensation is a large portion of that."

In a September Board of Education meeting, Part-Time Faculty Association President Rosemary Teetor gave a presentation outlining the desires of the part-time faculty in their new contract.

According to Teetor's presentation, the part-time faculty are requesting "equal pay for equal work, health care benefits for those working at least half-time and an end to marginalization of part-timers as temporary, expendable, interchangeable cogs in the higher education machinery."

The previous part-time contract expired June 30, and any new contract agreed upon will be retroactive to July 1.

The pay disparity between part-time faculty and full-time faculty is at the forefront of discussion.

"There is a lot more money going to full-time faculty, percentage-wise from longevity, and we don't begrudge them a penny of it," said Teetor. "They earn it; we simply think we earn it, too."

Wilton agreed on this point, saying, "There is a disparity between the two - there just is. I think it's not just [Clackamas]; I think it's virtually every college in the nation."

The difference between full-time annual pay and an equivalent workload for a part-time instructor is significant.

A part-time instructor teaching 15 credits a semester will earn \$27,932 a year at the highest pay rate, which is acquired after working 1,530 hours.

The lowest pay rate for full-time faculty is \$45,821, which then scales up to \$72,339 after spending a number of years, often 15, employed here at the college.

"The whole premise behind having part-timers set up the way we are now is that we're so flexible that we end up being the budget balancers. What we're asking for is equal pay for equal work," said Teetor.

Competitive pay scaling between full-time and part-time faculty is a large focus in the new contract bargaining.

"Overall, the package proposal is very, very comparable between the classified and full-time and what we're proposing for the part-timers," said Vice President of Instructional Services Baldwin van der Bijl.

Part-time faculty suggested a 5-4-3 percent raise over the next three years; five the first year, four the second and three for the third. The administration counter-offered with 3-1-1. The administration's offer, according to Teetor, would actually increase the disparity in pay between full-time and part-time instructors.

"The total over three years for our [proposal] would be about \$22.5 million. The total from theirs would be \$26 million, and the difference between the two is \$3.5 million," said Wilton. "[We] have a little flexibility, but it's not like [Van der Bijl] and I

can just decide to do what we want to do; we work for the president, and she reports to the board."

Any contract agreed upon by both sides must be verified by the part-time association, Wilton, van der Bijl, President Joanne Truesdell and the Board of Education.

Also, the part-time faculty are seeking a health care plan; currently they have none. In response, the administration offered an annual trust fund of \$12,000.

"Well, I think it's a start," said Wilton of the trust fund.

Other local colleges have instituted similar trust funds or even offered health care to part-time instructors who qualify.

Part-time instructors who must travel between schools - also known as "road scholars" - are a large portion of the part-time faculty here at the college. Often, they have the option of medical coverage at another institution.

Part-time faculty believe that this will lower the cost of health care since many will not need full coverage.

The administration sees this as a sign that a plan is unnecessary and the trust fund will suffice.

"We'd love to pay as much as we could to everyone, but we also have budget realities," said Wilton.

Mediation between the two sides will take place Nov. 1 and 2.

"The decision to go to mediation was mutual," said Counselor Tim Pantages, who is the head of the part-time bargaining team.

The mediation provided by the state will focus on reaching common ground for both sides and has no authority to force either side to settle.

"I think the attitude of both sides is good. We want to get this resolved, and the mediator is going to come in and help us do that," said Van der Bijl.

Though mediation was requested by both sides, outlooks are positive.

"We like part-time faculty. They do a really good job; they are good instructors and are really important to the college," said Wilton. "Ultimately, we'll try to be responsive to what they want, and if they have one thing that's more of a priority than others, then we can move things around and focus dollars in one area."

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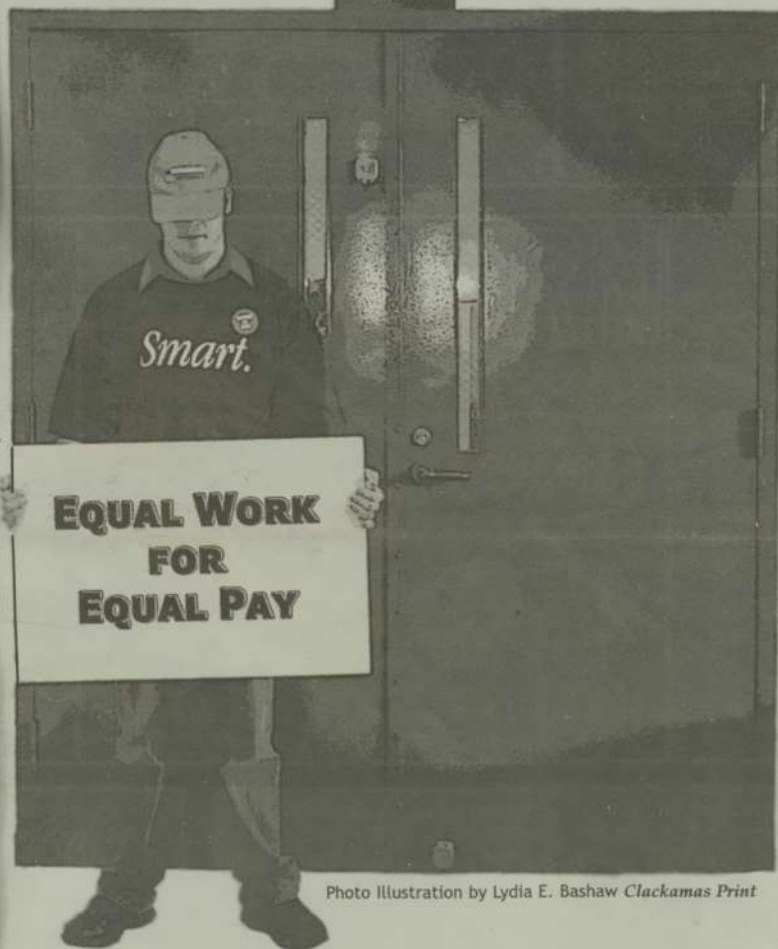


Photo illustration by Lydia E. Bashaw Clackamas Print

Democratic Club has high hopes for marijuana forum

Alexandria Vallelunga

The Clackamas Print

It's not a bird. It's not a plane. It's not even a superhero.

It's the Democratic Club trying to save Mary Jane.

Clackamas' Democratic Club is sponsoring an on-campus forum on the legalization of marijuana Nov. 14.

"We're just trying to create activism amongst the people who already want it legalized, and information is the beginning of that," said Democratic Club President Brett Bernhoft. "The students are going to receive so much information on legalizing, facts about marijuana and what to do - how can I get active?"

The co-coordinator of the event, James Bissonette, said, "It is the stereotype; it's hard to get a stoner to do

anything, let alone get active for his own drug."

The forum will address questions such as whether there is harm in having increased THC levels. Students will be able to participate, as there will be a question-and-answer segment.

A variety of issues will be discussed, including why marijuana is illegal, why it is legal in Amsterdam, taxation on marijuana, regulation, responsibility, advertising and similarities between marijuana, tobacco and alcohol.

"We are holding an event with sophisticated representatives from organizations on the legalization of an illicit substance, so we're expecting a lot of resistance," Bernhoft said.

Bissonette said, "Everyone is invited to the forum, including the community, parents and students. We invite people on both sides of the issue to

show up; in fact, we encourage it."

Representatives from the National Organization for Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML), Mothers Against Misuse and Abuse (MAMA) and Voter Power will attend.

According to Bissonette, NORML is the biggest movement for the legalization of marijuana on the West Coast. It has financed the building of more medical marijuana dispensaries than any other organization.

"NORML's public image is medical marijuana, but they're pushing for more than just medical use," he said. "They want complete decriminalization of responsible private use of marijuana."

NORML's mission statement, which was adopted by the NORML Board of Directors on Feb. 27, 1999, is "to move public opinion sufficiently to achieve the repeal of marijuana prohi-

bition so that the responsible use of cannabis by adults is no longer subject to penalty."

"MAMA is an organization that believes that all drugs - pharmaceutical and illicit - should be treated under the same circumstantial evidence ... meaning, if it kills, why is it legal?" Bernhoft said.

Voter Power is a non-profit organization from Salem.

As stated on Voter Power's Web site, the group "advocates for reasonable, fair and

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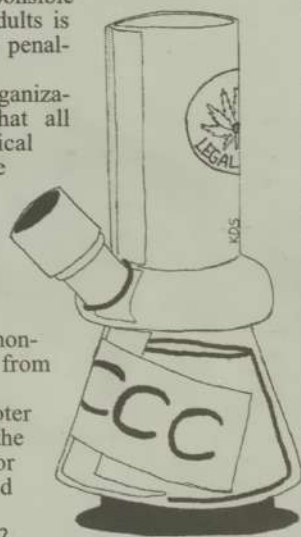


Illustration by Kyle Steele Clackamas Print

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