

30 Years Strong!

UPM

United Professors of Marin

INSIDE

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Union Press

Ponderings of the President by Ira Lansing

The following speech was given at the College of Marin Opening Day Convocation. In attendance were members of the Board of Trustees, administrators, faculty and staff.

Three elderly people are in a doctor's office for a memory test. The doctor asks the first person, "What is three times three?" "274" is the reply.

The physician turns to the second person and asks, "What is three times three?" The second person answers "Tuesday!"

The third person is asked by the doctor the same question, what is three times three, and answers, "Nine."

"That's great!" the doctor says. "How did you get that?"

"Easy," is the reply. "I just subtracted Tuesday from 274."

The passage of time and recollection are interesting phenomena. You may be aware that this year marks the 30th anniversary of the United Professors of Marin. In those 30 years I, personally, have seen more than a dozen college presidents come and go. I have sat through more meetings of the College Board of Trustees than anyone in this room, and that includes the trustee guests in the front row. But enough about me, let's talk about you.

If you are the average College of Marin employee you have provided more years of service to this District than the average CoM president. If you are a faculty member just out of your probationary period,

you have provided more years of service to this District than almost half of the current members of the Board of Trustees. But enough about you, let's talk about us.

We do come and go in this District, we don't stay forever. Yet we all have a collective memory of who we are, what is expected of us and what rights and privileges are available to us. Whether you belong to SEIU, CSEA or UPM, this collective memory is found in the same place—in your collective bargaining agreement, in your contract.

The Trustees and the administration of the College of Marin are well aware that we all have knowledge that extends beyond the tenure of most everyone here. It is the single-most reason that

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contract negotiations for all unions have been agonizingly slow and non-productive. If you doubt my perspective and you are in SEIU, ask yourself how many people on the District's bargaining team have first-hand experience in maintenance or groundskeeping or law enforcement. If you belong to CSEA, how many of the District's representatives with whom you bargain have first-hand experience as technicians or lab techs or in

registration or financial aid, for example? And if you are a member of UPM, you can count on no fingers the number of people on the District's bargaining team who are academic administrators.

This is not a coincidence. This is a concerted effort to make you forget—and eventually lose—the rights that are collectively yours. Do not let this happen. Your only success in keeping or gaining anything lies in the collective bargaining process

and the contract that ultimately results. If you think otherwise, then you will become a victim of job amnesia, content with only what is benevolently offered to you by someone with other interests. But then again, it won't really matter, because you will have forgotten that you ever had—or could have—something different and better.

Stay informed. Stay involved. It cannot happen without you.

New UPM Website

Did you miss Ira's remarks at this year's convocation? Or maybe you were there but want to hear his message again. It is available on the new UPM Website

www.unitedprofessorsofmarin.org.

Look for the 'Press Release' button on the UPM home page.

Do you want to check the language in the current contract or see how the next step in the salary schedule will affect your gross pay? You can find the Collective Bargaining Agreement and current salary schedule in searchable .PDF format on the Web site. Need to get in touch with an Executive Council member, or some other unit member currently serving as a representative on a union committee? The new Web site will provide you with his or her union email address. Just click on the person's name listed on the "Officers & Committees" page.

We have a good start on the site and are looking for your suggestions on what to features we can add to make it a really useful and informative tool for United Professors of Marin.

Mike Ransom, Webmaster

CONNECTING THE DOTS

News and Opinion
by Arthur Lutz

Species-ism at COM?

During the 1950's and 60's, the psychologist Harry Harlow and his students at the University of Wisconsin conducted a series of experiments to determine the effects of maternal and social deprivation on primates. They separated newly born Rhesus monkeys from their birth mothers and siblings and raised them on terry-cloth mother surrogates containing mechanical feeding tubes. The results indicated that if animals were deprived of maternal and sibling contact during infancy and early childhood they would exhibit severe emotional distress lasting on into later life. It wasn't sufficient that the infants were just well fed; they also needed a nurturing physical contact and social interaction if their emotional development was to proceed normally.

The study ran for five years and at its conclusion, when the animals were to be disposed of, they showed so many signs of neurotic

behavior that zoos throughout the country refused to accept them into their primate colonies. They appeared constantly fearful and would retreat to corners of their cage, grimacing and rocking; hiding their eyes and pulling hair from their bodies. So because they were unsuitable for public exhibition they were sold to pharmaceutical labs where they were used for cosmetic testing and then for drug interaction studies, and finally euthanized and sent to taxidermists to be made into anatomical study specimens. Dozens of Harlow's monkeys were used in this research and were disposed of in this fashion.

Experiments like these in which animals are subjected to life-long psychological and physical trauma were common in past decades and few researchers at the time objected to the stress and suffering that was inflicted on these animals. The justification, and one that is still widely held, is that man's standing on the evolutionary hierarchy gives him the right, the privilege, and the entitlement, to use animals to satisfy human needs – for food, for

clothing, for medical research, for enjoyment. It's called "*speciesism*," (a prejudice akin to sexism and racism), and entire industries derive their income from the belief that "lower" animal species are fair game for exploitation.

But it isn't only animals that are exploited. The history of mankind shows that there are also some *humans* who are considered inferior and who are fair game for exploitation.

And even here at the College of Marin it appears that such is the case. Because despite President White's assurances that her administration supports the principle of *shared governance*, the President's own negotiating team has declared that the District has the hierarchical "right and privilege and entitlement" to dictate our conditions of employment, including increasing our workload without consultation or compensation, and imposing arbitrary and punitive sanctions without just cause or due process.

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Our Union does not accept that the District has an "entitlement" to relegate our faculty to a subordinate or inferior status. We view our relationship with management as one based on equality, not servility, and we will not bargain away the

contractual rights and prerogatives for which UPM has fought for over thirty years, and which have afforded us a level of equity.

We hope that President White and her team will rethink their bargaining proposals and abandon

their attempts to introduce regressive, exploitive and *speciest* restrictions into our Contract. Our faculty is not "fair game" for exploitation. We don't intend to be treated like Harry Harlow's monkeys.

Bargaining Information

Over the summer, your Bargaining Team put together a survey to get your feedback on Articles under negotiation, but equally important is the team's intention to inform the membership of the District's proposals. At the August 17 UPM meeting, Chief Negotiator Paul Christensen led a discussion concerning the current round of contract negotiations. At the meeting, Paul explained that the dominant theme in the District's proposals is "takebacks." That is, the District now wants to take back hard won faculty contractual rights and in turn take control of most everything from assignments to overload to sick leave to evaluation and more. The turnout at the meeting was good, but many of our colleagues were not present. Therefore, as a means of keeping unit members informed about negotiations, we reprint the survey here. The Bargaining Team asked for direct responses—

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"Acceptable, Unacceptable or No Opinion." Note that we are NOT asking that you complete this questionnaire here; it is purely for your information.

Article 1

- a) District demands total control of coordinator assignments and unit compensation.**
- b) District defines job descriptions for coordinators, and coordinators are subject to evaluation and punitive sanctions.**

Article 3

- a) District position on salary is status quo.**
- b) District will exclude Children's Center employees from wage increases provided to other unit members.**

Article 4

District proposes increase in medical co-pay for office visits and prescriptions from \$5 to \$20 per visit.

Article 5

- a) District demands change in formula for calculating sick leave that will authorize the District to deduct sick leave for days on which the unit member has NO ASSIGNED DUTIES.**
- b) District demands three more management representatives on the Sabbatical Leave Committee.**
- c) Should the cancellation of classes by the District reduce the workload assignments of full time unit members below the mandated 29.5 units per year, the District shall be authorized to deduct previously earned banked units to meet the District's obligation to a full year assignment.**

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Article 6

- a) District demands the removal of some of the limitations on management control of faculty assignments specified in Article 6.
- b) District wants to eliminate full-timers' right to overload.
- c) District wants to remove the rights of part-timers' qualified for discipline hiring pools.
- d) District wants to require part-timers to give notice of availability one full year in advance of teaching assignment.

Article 7

- a) District demands authorization to replace the current objective evaluation criteria with subjective management standards which can be used for the purpose of punitive sanctions.
- b) District wants to limit Union participation in the evaluation process and include management in evaluation of full-timers.

- c) District demands the right to make unscheduled evaluation visits.

Article 8

- a) District demands authorization to increase the assigned workloads of instructional unit members with additional duties (beyond classes & office hrs) up to 37.5 hours per week—without additional compensation.
- b) Failure to perform additional duties will be subject to evaluation and sanctions.
- c) District demands unrestricted authority to assign evening and weekend work without consent of unit member.
- d) District demands to control assignment of unit members on all committees.

Article 13

- a) District demands a reduction in unit compensation to UPM, the elimination of UPM's right to rent on-campus office space and the elimination

- of UPM's right to duplicating services, resulting in a substantial increase in the Union's operating expenses.
- b) District demands limits on the Union's right to grieve issues that impact unit members.

Article 24

District demands authorization to treat all disciplinary procedures in Article 24 as "for guidance only" with the application of penalties to be solely at the discretion of management.

The above survey should serve as a starting point for all unit members. It's important to keep informed as to what the District has proposed. If you have any questions, ask a member of the Bargaining Team (Members listed under UPM Committees in this newsletter) or come to an Exec meeting to learn more.

J Sutherland



Letters to the Editor

Feel free to voice your comments and/or opinions concerning any article or issue about you, the College or your union. Letters should be signed, but names will be withheld upon request. Please direct your letters to john.sutherland@marin.edu

An Open Letter to the College of Marin Board of Trustees and Senior Management

Dear Gentlemen and
Gentlewomen:

As a member of the College of Marin faculty, I would like to write to you in response to reports we have received regarding the ongoing negotiations between the District and UPM. I would like to begin by saying that when I was first called to teach as a part-time hire at COM over a decade ago, I was reluctant to take the position because it was so far from my home and other colleges where I was teaching. I was convinced by the mathematics department chairman after he told me of some of the very attractive articles of the UPM contract. As a part-timer, I appreciated the pay and faculty rights and responsibilities, and I agreed that it would be worth my while to drive to COM three evenings per week. Gas prices were a lot lower then and so were housing prices.

When I arrived at COM, I found a terrific group of eminently qualified colleagues along with students who really appreciated the quality education they were receiving. Many of my colleagues in the Science Center had Masters and PhDs from some of the most highly regarded institutions in UPM PRESS

the world, and they were in subjects that intimidate most of the population, including, I am guessing, many of you. Most of my colleagues could have found jobs outside of academia at salaries two to three times their salaries at COM, but they chose to teach because they loved teaching and the students they taught, and they were very good at what they did. I felt valued and respected and part of that feeling was due to the excellent working conditions and pay that I was receiving. It didn't hurt to have a little extra money to help pay for college tuition for my four children, either.

Fast forward to 2007 and the faculty at COM find that a large majority of the articles of our contract are under attack in the current round of contract negotiations with the District. With median prices of houses in Marin hovering around \$1,000,000 and gas prices spiking, the ability to either live near the college or get to it has been greatly compromised and freezing salaries is not going to help this situation. Part-timers are always challenged to put together a schedule that will pay them enough to live with dignity, driving from college district to college district in their attempt. Requiring them to commit to a schedule one year in advance will make it impossible for many of them to have the flexibility they need to cobble out a schedule that will pay

enough for food and shelter, not to mention the automobile fuel that it takes to be a "Roads Scholar."

Speaking of schedules, full-timers are being asked to give up almost all of the control over their schedules to management and give up their right to overload assignments. Does it really matter how many days a week a faculty member is on campus, as long as he/she does an excellent job? Presumably, the District and Management is concerned about the environment. Does it make sense to force faculty to increase the number of trips back and forth from homes which must necessarily be farther and farther away from campus because of affordability issues? What good will all our "green" buildings be if we are spewing more carbon into the air getting to campus? What does the District gain by taking away our right to overload assignments? More faculty members will have to be hired to cover these classes and these people will have to be paid benefits. It seems to me that overload assignments may actually save the District money, so this take back is really just about control.

So let's talk about control for a moment. A number of articles being addressed during this round of contract

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negotiations take academic control away from faculty and put it in the hands of management. Wouldn't it be prudent to leave academics, the coordination of academic programs, and the committees that support academics in the hands of people who have been working in the trenches rather than those who are observing from above? Isn't it wise to have faculty evaluated by their peers, evaluators who have a depth of expertise in the subject area? We are also being told that we don't work long or hard enough and that we need to have more hours assigned to fill up all of our "free" time. Do you think that we just walk into class with our brains tied behind our backs and wing it? Do you have any idea how much time it takes to prepare quality materials and evaluate our students' work? I would challenge any of you to come to a calculus, chemistry, biology, physics or geology class and imagine what it takes to walk in prepared and ready for any question that might come up. I have no experience in the arts, humanities, social and behavioral sciences and all of the other disciplines that make this college the quality institution it is, but I can

imagine that very few of my colleagues go home after a day of teaching and sit by their pools with cool drinks and loll around. The attitude of the District in this regard is demeaning and shows a lack of respect and insight into what it takes to make a college as academically successful as this one is. After all, in spite of some of the shortcomings for which our district has been criticized, we consistently rank near the top for our transfer rate and our students' success rates at their transfer institutions. This success is directly attributable to the faculty, not the management. For this, the faculty should be rewarded by the District, not demeaned.

So what does this evisceration of our contract do to our ability to attract quality faculty to our campus? My colleagues in science have told me that it is getting more and more difficult just to get people to come out our way. And this is with our contract before take backs. Is the District interested in high quality faculty or do you just want to rule with an iron fist? Are you serious about a fair contract or do you really just want to break the union and

have your way? I understand that a number of you are very involved in the Democratic Party here in Marin. I have always associated the Democratic Party with being supportive of working people and appreciating that they are the steam that fires the engines of progress and productivity. The word "liberal," the label often given to the Democratic Party, comes from the same Latin root, "liber," as the word "liberty" and is associated with freedom, not control. It seems that most voters in this county would agree with this. Finally, are you really interested in the most important people here, the students? If you make it more and more unpleasant to work here for the faculty, and make no mistake about it, that is exactly what you are doing, eventually our students will suffer because fewer and fewer high caliber people will be willing to work here and we will be left with pretty "green" buildings and little else. You will only have yourselves to blame for this.

Sincerely,

Laurie Ordin
Department of Mathematics
College of Marin

Visit UPM's New Website:

www.unitedprofessorsofmarin.org

**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: _____
Name _____
Address _____
City : _____
Zip: _____
SSN: _____

UPM Membership Application Form

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

Date: _____

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
Zip: _____
Home Phone: () _____
Campus Ext: _____ Dept _____
Email: _____
SSN: _____

Check the appropriate box:

- Permanent credit or non-credit employee or leave replacement.
- Temporary non-credit employee on the quarter system.
 - Temporary credit or non-credit employee on the semester system.

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

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