Welcome to “THE PULSE” the new newsletter from your Professional Staff Union! Our plan is to provide a printed newsletter a couple of times each calendar year, supplemented by a website and both regular and ad hoc e-newsletters during the intervening months.

We are excited about participating in what we hope will become a regular and very important way for all of us to communicate and share with each other. We’ll be looking to collect and present information about our union and its activities, general news about who you are, who we are, and how the union works for you; and offer ways for you to share your own experiences with others who could use your help and support.

But this whole effort cannot live up to its full potential without your contributions. Given the current work life climate, it will become crucial in the coming days and months for us all to communicate, strategize and advise each other – and we encourage you to send along your ideas, criticisms, suggestions, questions, as well as any information about your own accomplishments, activities, or milestones you’d like to share with other members.

We’re looking forward to hearing from you! You can email us at prostaff.union@umb.edu or send a note to THE PULSE, c/o Sarah Bartlett, Registrar’s Office.

Suzanne Allmendinger, Sarah Bartlett, Katie Brenton, Jocelyn Burke, Mary Jo Connelly, Jon Hutton, Thijs Messelaar

A longstanding goal for the Chapter Board has been to improve the means we have of communicating with each other as union members about the issues we face and the things we do. We see this newsletter as a big step in that direction. A lot of our communication up to now has come in the form of quick email hits to alert members to pressing issues, upcoming events, etc. While these will continue as an important part of our communication strategy, the newsletter allows us to go deeper. It will feature educational items to make us all more informed union members. It provides a means for us to get to know each other better and learn about the great things we all are doing. And it provides a forum for us to explore and weigh in on important issues and initiatives happening both on and beyond our campus. Given the current climate out there, we think that’s more important than ever.

We hope you will enjoy THE PULSE and hope that you will contribute your ideas and energy to making it a central part of our union’s work.
It’s Saturday night and a server goes on the blink or another chunk of the garage falls down or rats in the Psychology lab escape. You get the call. Are you expected, as part of your job, to answer that call and respond to that problem? If so, then you are most likely what our contract defines as an “on-call” employee.

According to Section 18.3 of our contract (see box on page 3), on-call employees are those employees who are expected to “answer the call” and respond during their off-hours. It may be that your department has a formal on-call system with specific scheduled times that different employees are required to cover, or it may be that a regular schedule has never been formally established – you just know (through your supervisor’s statements, or your position description, etc.) that you are expected to respond to emergency calls or emails whenever they come in. Either way, you’re on call.

If you are on call, our contract requires that you be compensated for that – whether you get called or not. It is the expectation that you have to answer the call that determines your on-call status.

While there is a contractual formula for the calculation of on-call compensation, what’s most important for you to know is that on-call compensation goes into your base pay for the years that you are designated to be on call, and is recognized by the retirement system as part of your base for those years. So, it’s important that on-call staff are properly recognized and compensated.

Sometimes being on call is confused with being called into work when you’re not regularly scheduled to be there. That’s actually different. If you are called into work or are required to do “prolonged” work outside of your regularly scheduled hours, that is “call back” time. While being expected to respond (being “on call”) earns regular monetary compensation, actually being “called back” to work earns compensatory time.

On-call language has been in our contract for years. Early on, Boston didn’t have a lot of employees who fell into this category, but in the last 10 years, with the increasing use of cell phones and the increase in technology (and its related problems) the Union discovered more and more employees who were expected “to answer the call.” We set out to identify who in our bargaining unit was on call. We developed a survey and distributed it to our members and we heard from many of you. And, as we did, we also learned that there were a lot of you out there and that NONE were being properly compensated for being on call. The union engaged in a lengthy campaign to change that. After multiple meetings with Chancellors, consultations with management, membership petitions, grievances and other member actions, we’re pleased to say that some PSU members who we have identified as being on call are now being paid their due.

But the fight’s not over. There are quite a few on-call PSU members whose departments are not yet paying for that service, and we are still fighting over retroactive pay for all members who have been on call in the past without compensation. In fact, we are headed to an arbitration in June 2011 on this issue. We will keep you posted as we go.

ARE YOU ON CALL?

If you think you might be an on-call employee who is not yet on our list, we want to hear from you. Please fill out the on call survey (link on the PSU website, PSU-UMB.massteacher.org) or email us at prostaff.union@umb.edu and we will send you one. When you’ve filled out the survey, send it to Anneta.argyres@umb.edu.
Section 18.3  On Call/Call Back

A. Some University departments maintain formal on-call systems in order to cover off-hour shifts or to assure appropriate response to incidents and emergencies which occur at night or on weekends. Professional staff are assigned specific periods of duty, must be available during assigned duty, and must respond when called. For these situations, on-call and call-back shall be considered a single entity. A salary adjustment shall be made to acknowledge the additional expectation of serving regularly as part of a formal on-call/call-back system. Compensatory time for call-back shall be approved by the supervisor only in those instances when the employee must respond to a situation that requires work for a prolonged period of time (i.e., several hours during a night). The supervisor's discretion prevails in these cases.

B. A department which does not maintain a regular and on-going on-call system may set its own policy for compensating bargaining unit members who are occasionally assigned, in writing, to be on call, but in no case shall a bargaining unit member receive less than one hour of compensatory time for every 8 hours assigned to be on call.

C. In departments without formal on-call systems, for every hour that a bargaining unit member on-call is called back to work beyond his or her regularly scheduled work hours the bargaining unit member shall receive an hour of compensatory time.

CONTRACT UPDATE: TUITION BENEFITS FOR SPOUSES & DEPENDENTS

You may remember that in our last round of contract negotiations, one issue that was emphasized by all the university locals was the restoration of the tuition benefit for employee spouses and dependents. As it stands, Board of Trustee agreement provides that dependents and spouses of employees are entitled to full tuition waivers. Back in the day, when tuition made up the major share of the cost of attending the University, this was a generous benefit. But the benefit has eroded drastically over the years, as rapidly increasing fees have come to take the place of tuition on our campuses.

The first was the freezing of fees for employee spouses and dependents at the Fall 2009 levels. (This was at the time that the Board voted to raise fees by $1500. Our agreement meant that employees were not subject to that increase.) The second small victory was getting agreement for a multi-union, system-wide labor/management committee, that would be established as of January 1, 2011 to develop a joint proposal to waive all mandatory fees for all UMass employees’ spouses and dependents who are eligible for tuition waivers, including Continuing Education waivers for employees, within the UMass system.

Many of our members, in both Boston and Amherst, participated in different events to support the coalition of University unions as they took the tuition and fee campaign from the negotiating table to the Board of Trustees and back again. After all was said and done, the unions returned with two small victories.

As agreed, the Tuition and Fee committee is now being established. It will be comprised of representatives from most of the union locals from the different Umass campuses as well as representatives from the campus-level management and the President’s office. It is the unions’ hope that as the costs of education continue to rise, this committee will be able to develop a proposal to go to the Board of Trustees that will help to restore the value of this important benefit. We will keep you posted on the committee’s progress as things develop.

WHO YOU GONNA CALL? INTRODUCING THE GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

The PSU is very proud to be able to introduce our Grievance Committee. The current members are: Jim Allen, Anneta Argyres, Sarah Bartlett, Tess Ewing, Tom Goodkind, Martha Kelly, AK Koutropoulos, Eleanor Leonard, Martha London, Kevin Mullen, Carolyn Nelson, Linda Perrotto, and Ben Sheldon. We will have more new members to introduce before the next issue of this newsletter comes out: people who have been fully trained and participated in our activities but were unable to attend the last meeting, when we set up our new system.

The PSU has much to be proud of: a supportive membership and dedicated leaders. But one thing we have long lacked has been a robust structure for dealing with grievances. A very few people do all the cases. This is a dangerous situation for any local, and a heavy burden for both the few active stewards and the departments where they work.

So last winter, we held a day-long grievance committee training, which was attended by 18 members. Since then, the committee has met several times to discuss issues and fill in the gaps, and a number of the new stewards have been involved with grievances.

Now we are taking another new step. We have paired up new stewards with the more experienced ones, who will provide back-up and guidance. In the future, the first person you meet with to discuss a problem or potential grievance will probably be a new steward. But an experienced steward will be just a phone call away, and will be brought in when and if the case requires. (See insert for contact info)
Dear Miss Management:

I was hired four years ago as Staff Assistant to the Assistant Associate Vice Assistant Associate Chancellor for Very Special Programs. I’m a member of the PSU and my position is a grade level 29. When I started, it was a two person operation and my duties were pretty clear cut. I handled administrative matters for the AAVAAC, managed the office budget, developed and maintained program information, and worked as a liaison with the different special programs that we coordinated.

Well, in the last couple of years, our operation has expanded A LOT!!! There are four more people working in my area: two special project coordinators responsible for developing new programs and two classified staff members. And it seems like I now have responsibilities with all of them! They also have me working on grant proposals and administration (new to me!) and managing a website. Plus, I am now supposed to supervise the classified staff in the office - even though my boss says they report to him.

It sure seems to me that my job has changed a lot and I think I should have a new job description (and an increase in my salary). But when I talk to my boss about it, he says that times are tight and he doesn’t see how he could ask for more money for me now. He also tells me that he doesn’t think my job really has changed, and that these new things are just those “other duties as needed” on my job description. He says “be patient” and that when the time is right, he’ll see what he can do. Do I have any rights here?

Sincerely,

Tired of waiting for the right time

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Dear Tired of Waiting:

I am exhausted just reading about your issue, dear, so I can only imagine how you feel. Unless you’ve heard that hell will be freezing over soon, you shouldn’t wait for your boss to decide it’s the right time for you to have your position reviewed. You have the right to have your position reviewed whether he likes it or not. There are rules about these things and you should learn about them!

Rules governing position descriptions and classifications are spelled out in detail in the Professional Staff Salary Administration Program (SAP). In your spare time (LOL) take a look at the SAP manual. You can find the manual on your union’s website and on the Human Resource website.

Here’s a snapshot:

If your job has changed substantially (and it certainly sounds like yours has) I would advise you to immediately start the process for a position classification review. According to the SAP guidelines, a position classification review should be done when there have been significant changes in the “complexity” of your duties. (I’d say you meet that criterion.) The idea is to make sure that your grade level and salary are aligned with what you’re really doing – not what your old, out-dated job description says.

The guidelines for how to initiate a classification review are spelled out in the SAP Manual. You should read them and then get right to work on drafting an accurate position description for yourself. (There are some worksheets in the manual that you might find useful). While you’re doing that, you should get in touch with the union. I recommend you meet with a union rep to go over the changes in your job. The union will help you formulate a new position description and fill out the review request form – the first steps in your review. Once that’s done, you’ll be ready to present that to your boss/department head and hopefully (sigh!) he’ll sign on and you can forward the review to HR. A word to the wise, keep that union rep’s phone number handy. If your boss isn’t cooperative, you’ll want advice on how to proceed.

Once they receive it, HR will review the information. They may ask you and/or your boss some questions to help determine the accuracy of the position description. And then they will assign it a grade level and salary. They will communicate their decision to you all.

Hopefully, the process will lead to a satisfactory outcome for you. But if you disagree with the classification HR assigns, you need to notify the union within 10 days in order for them to determine whether an appeal is in order. You can read more about the appeal process in the SAP manual. If it comes to that, your union reps will guide that process, so I won’t go into details here.

But just so you get your tail in gear and get going with this, you should know that any salary adjustment will go back to when HR received your completed request for a review. So you don’t want to sit on it too long.

And listen, honey, we’re all grateful to have jobs these days, but don’t be a sap about it! Learn about the SAP and use it!

You can write to Miss Management at: prostaff.union@umb.edu
Earlier this month, students across the UK began protesting against planned increases in tuition fees and the cutting of university services. Today, students have been occupying buildings in Birmingham and hurling snowballs in Edinburgh and marching in London. All of this thoughtful demonstrating—which is winding down in arrests and some clubbings and the offering of mince pies to politicians—takes place against the dramatic backdrop of the first demonstrations on November 10th, when tens of thousands of young people stormed London. At the end, in Millbank, in central London, some demonstrators smashed windows; fires were set; and an occupation of Conservative headquarters by a few hundred ensued (from that building, an 18-year-old threw a fire extinguisher off the roof). Further, the second wave of demonstrations, on November 24, went off with some hitches when some small violence against property ensued and the police cornered and arrested a number of marchers.

The media refers to both the November 10th and November 24th demonstrations as "riots." ("As Students Rampage...," headlined the Mirror last week.) So what is becoming lost is what the November 10th demonstration was like for the 30,000 to 50,000 peaceful protesters who flooded the streets outside Parliament in defense of higher education.

My protest experience began at the ungodly hour of 7:30 a.m. in a University of Sussex campus bar. It was serving breakfast early for the occasion. The warm-enough eggs and triangular slabs of hash browns were just one aspect of the institutional support for the demonstration—professors were encouraged to reschedule lectures to allow attendance, and assignment due dates were pushed back a day. The Sussex Student Union had found common cause with an administration seemingly eager to regain students' good will and stave off government cuts.

In a burst of journalistic arrogance I approached a student sitting intent over his eggs and toast and asked if he'd mind answering some questions. He said that he didn't mind, his name was Bart, and he was Dutch, in that order; when asked why he was demonstrating for another country's education system, he replied that it was a matter of social responsibility—and a misconception on the state's part of what education is: "Basically, you have to pay for your own education because you are the only one profiting from it. And that's just not true." Common benefit should equal common cost—as morally clear a belief as any, and one directly contradicted by the reasoning of the Browne education review and David Cameron's governing coalition.

The Browne review is the polarizing document from David Cameron's government—which was actually commissioned by Gordon Brown on the way out—in order to reduce Britain's growing national deficits. You may read it here. The summary explains that Lord Browne's "recommendations present a radical plan to shake up higher education in England and a charter for choice for students." The review is now a component of Cameron's deficit reduction scheme which contains, among various policy suggestions, cuts to social programs, welfare, government payrolls and defense. The most controversial recommendations so far—at least the only ones to inspire tens of thousands to wave signs and yell slogans from the National Gallery to Millbank—are the ones to do with the Browne report. Britain's higher education system, a bedrock of the welfare state since the 1962 Education Act mandated free university for all, has been steadily eroded since Tony Blair's Labour administration instituted fees in 1998.

Since then, fee limits increased from £1500 to £3000, as the government tried to shift the funding of universities from grants to tuition. The Browne review would raise that limit to £9,000, as well as eliminating all government funds for the humanities. This has sparked what can only be labeled a shitstorm among students, many of whom voted for Nick Clegg's Liberal Democrats only to see the party abandon their anti-fees pledge upon forming a coalition with the Conservatives.

Given that US American college students—I am an exchange student—regularly face tuitions of up to $50,000 each year to go to school, the outrage here can have a surreal tinge to it. Then again, we expect our schools to treat us like consumers. In fact, the new buzzword in higher education has administrators calling students "customers."
Presenting: Our New Chapter Board Members

Martha London

I’ve been a PSU member working at UMass Boston in the Office of University Advancement since 2003. It’s the first job I’ve ever had in which I have an opportunity to be in a union, even though I’ve been in the workforce since 1975! I’m also an alumna of UMB—I got my MA in Teaching English as a Second Language in 1993—so I can also understand the many concerns our students have.

Over the years I’ve become more and more interested in how our union works, how management and labor interact, and the breadth of the issues that the Professional Staff Union assists members with. For the past couple of years I’ve also been very concerned—like everyone else!—about the deterioration of the larger economy, both in the US and abroad, and this has influenced my decision to be more active in our union. So this January I became a member of the Chapter Board of the PSU.

For some time now there has been a constant drumbeat of disrespect for state workers in the mainstream media. “Overpaid state workers”, “lazy state workers”, “over-benefitted state workers”—we’ve all heard it, ad nauseum. This is a not-so-subtle attack on our livelihoods and our reputations, and is very likely a preparation for attacks that are more than verbal. Only a united membership can protect itself from such attacks. As a Chapter Board member, I sincerely look forward to working with our union members to get the pay, the benefits and the respect that all of us deserve.

Carolyn Nelson

Carolyn Nelson has been a part of the campus IT department since 2006, when she was hired to assist with a PeopleSoft Financials implementation. She has been a computer professional for most of her work life. Although she has had management experience, this is Carolyn’s first experience of being a union member. She has been impressed by how talented UMass staff members are, and how much they contribute to the university above and beyond their jobs.

Going through the grievance process as a PSU member led Carolyn to want to be part of making change at the university. She sees the union as a voice that understands “things can and should be better here.” As a Chapter Board member, she looks forward to working with other members and other UMass stakeholders to further a shared vision of the university, of education and society:

“We can talk about a world of shared values we want, but as part of a public institution, we have a unique opportunity to shape it and bring it into reality.”

Welcome to Staff Organizer: Mary Jo Connelly

We are very happy to have Mary Jo Connelly working as the UMass Boston PSU’s new part-time organizer. She will be on campus one day a week, usually Tuesday, based in the union office but also out talking to you. Mary Jo was a member of this union and its Chapter Board while she was working at the Labor Resource Center from 1997-2003. Mary Jo has worked as an organizer, educator, and researcher—most recently for Community Labor United. She lives in Somerville with her partner—an MTA middle school teacher—and two children.
This will be a regular newsletter feature and will present information about our bargaining unit. This time we will focus on the range of jobs PSU/MTA members do.

The Professional Staff Union/MTA represents all full-time and regular part-time non-academic professional staff bargaining unit members employed at the Boston and Amherst campuses of the University.

The unit does not include managerial employees—Deans, Associate and Assistant Deans, Research Fellows and Post Doctoral Research Associates, Medical Doctors or Directors of most administrative offices, professional employees employed in a confidential capacity, casual or temporary employees. It also does not include Professional staff employees in many areas reporting to the President's Office.

PSU/MTA members do a wide range of work that extends well beyond academic support, advising and administration. Our bargaining unit includes:

- Clinical Social Worker
- Registered Nurses
- Webmaster
- Archaeological Conservator
- Horticulturalist/Greenhouse Manager
- Coordinator Recycling/Sustainability
- Director of Stewardship
- Dock master
- Early Childhood Teachers
- Fire and Life Safety Manager
- Construction Manager

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: ROSE COVENEY & TALENTED U

UMass Boston graphic designer, Rose Coveney, grew up in the Boston area as a member of an eight-person Italian household, giving her, right from the start, a good, healthy sense of community. She has never lost that. And with that foundation, she has been able to carve out a niche, making things happen within whatever her community has been – be it as an art director, magazine designer, or graphic designer.

UMass Boston’s Office of Publications is a busy place. And while Rose loves consulting with a wide range of university people, she admits is can be hard to figure out how all the pieces fit to form a whole institution. She never fails to learn a lot from each of the people with whom she consults on the many projects in which she gets involved, though, and to be inspired by many of them, as well.

This ability to be inspired by others has been key to her most recent “extracurricular” project – TalentedU. That showing of art work and performance by UMass Boston staff, which now happens in the spring and the fall, was directly inspired by Rose’s contact with talented co-workers and consultees. “I was struck,” she says, “by the beauty and wonder that’s right here!” She understood that not everyone can or chooses to make a living with their artistic talent and skills, and so she started to keep mental track of these folks.

In an elevator, she remembers, she shared this vision with friends, who over time – understanding the value of what she was saying – agreed with her that, “we can do something about it.” So, she, Jain Ruvidich-Higgins, Bernadette Levasseur and Kelly Westerhouse became the core organizers of the TalentedU project. Together they solicited cooperation, works of art, and performances, advocated for the project, sought funding and support, publicized the project, and eventually scheduled and hung the final presentations in the Campus Center bookstore gallery. About herself, Rose says, “Some might call me a ‘curator.’ I just call it ‘official pushy person.”’

And there it is, again – Rose’s sense of belonging within a solid community!

Jain Ruvidich-Higgins, Rose Coveney, Bernadette (Bernie) Levasseur and Kelly Westerhouse
WHAT’S GOING ON?
OPEN SEASON ON PUBLIC EMPLOYEES? DISCUSS

When we started to write copy for this newsletter back in January, we were working on a piece that we hoped would draw attention to anti-public employee initiatives that seemed to be bubbling up in several states. In the wake of the November elections, reports were that several initiatives were underway to take on public unions head-on. Going after public unions seemed to be gaining popularity as a nice little package deal—a two-fer—a way to make the case against big government and unions all rolled into one. And some elected officials seemed to be thinking that the time and the climate were right to go for it. One of those was a governor named Scott Walker, who was making a name for himself with his promise to go after the unions in his state.

Well, that was then and this is now. What a difference a Wisconsin makes! We weren’t surprised when Governor Walker and his fellow republicans carried through on their threat and put forward legislation to strip most public employees of their collective bargaining rights, but we did not predict what came next. The incredible and brave response of the public workers and their unions in Wisconsin has been inspirational. The support from across the country has been heartening!

It seems like the direct attack may have had the unintended consequence of energizing the labor movement and its supporters. As AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka told reporters on March 1, “We’ve never seen the incredible solidarity that we’re seeing right now.” Trumka said the clash between pro-union protesters and Republican leaders in Wisconsin has brought a level of excitement to unions that he hasn’t seen in years — one that could spark a resurgence in the American labor movement. “People are giving us another look now,” he said. “It will be up to us to keep it going and continue defining ourselves in ways the American public will support.” (AP, 3/2/2011)

We’d like this newsletter to be a place where we in the PSU can talk about “how to keep it going” and what role we should (and can) play in educating, organizing and mobilizing for progressive and responsible strategies to support and grow public services and public service jobs and strengthen our unions.

We’d like to hear from you! What are your thoughts about what’s been happening? Are there things you’ve been hearing or involved in that you’d like us to know? Are there things you’re reading or seeing that you’d like to share? Most importantly, what ideas do you have for ways that we, as a union and as individuals, can do our part to “keep it going?”

We will collect your ideas, opinions and resources and get them out part to “keep it going?”

DEFENDING PUBLIC SERVICES: CAMPAIGN FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

At its February meeting, the PSU Boston Chapter Board voted to be an Endorsing Organization for the Campaign for our Communities. The overarching goal of the campaign is to build a broad coalition of community groups, labor unions and business people to mobilize for new and progressive revenue strategies to preserve essential services in a fair and balanced way. The Chapter Board sees this as an important first step toward what they envision as a necessary long-term educational and advocacy campaign to build support for the public sector and for progressive revenue strategies.

As a first step, the Campaign is putting its support behind proposed tax legislation that would raise at least $1 billion in new revenue to partially address our state’s $2 billion shortfall. The proposed legislation (co-sponsored by Sen. Chang-Diaz and Rep. O’Day), is titled “An Act to Invest in Our Communities.”

The bill takes a balanced approach to the fiscal crisis by raising revenue to maintain services by asking more from high income households, while raising the personal exemption as a way to hold down the tax increase for middle-class families. The impact from this change would be little or no increase in taxes for people making less than $200,000 a year, while people who are in the top 1% of the income scale would pay more (their fairer share). Projections are that these changes would bring in about $1.2 billion overall, drastically reducing the budget gap and making our tax system far more progressive.

The Campaign is organizing public speak outs to raise awareness about the budget and to push for progressive reform. The Boston speak-out is scheduled for:

TUESDAY MAR. 22, 6PM - 8 PM
HIBERNIAN HALL
182-184 DUDLEY STREET, ROXBURY

We hope the PSU will turn out for the event. Whether you can attend or not, you are encouraged call your State Rep and Senator today at 617-722-2000 and ask them to support “An Act to Invest in Our Communities.”

For more info or to help, contact:
617-265-7100 or mimi.reunited4justice@gmail.com
617-282-3783 or mikeprokosch@verizon.net.
On Wednesday January 26th of this year, Governor Patrick submitted his Fiscal Year 2012 budget bill, known as ‘House 1,’ to the Massachusetts the House Ways and Means Committee for review. The Governor’s budget reflects priorities submitted by all of the agencies and departments, including the University of Massachusetts. The Governor must submit revisions to his proposed budget if Spring revenue forecasts predict a shortfall.

February and March: the House Ways and Means Committee is now reviewing the Governor’s budget and will hold public hearings to take testimony from constituents.

April: the House Ways and Means Committee will release its version of the proposed state budget to the full House of Representatives by mid-April. The House will then debate and amend it, releasing its proposed budget by the end of April.

May: After the budget is passed by the House, it will be sent to the Senate Ways and Means Committee, which has the right to put together its own budget independent of the Governor’s or House budget proposals. The Senate Ways and Means Committee will hold public hearings and take testimonies before preparing its version of the budget for the full Senate by mid-May. As in the House, the full Senate will debate and amend this proposal by late May or early June.

June: House and Senate leadership will put together a conference committee to negotiate differences between the House and Senate bills. The conference committee report can only be approved or rejected by the full legislature, with no amendments. Once approved by both the House and Senate, the Governor will have 10 days to review the budget. He may approve or veto the entire budget or may veto or reduce specific line items or sections, but he may not add to it.

July 1, 2011: the FY 2012 Massachusetts budget will take effect. It will include pay raises negotiated by the PSU/MTA in its most recent contract.

NOTE: this calendar reflects the FY 2011 budget process and may vary slightly this year.

Calendar: Events of Interest to UMB PSU Members

UMB Union Meeting: Wed. March 16, 12-2pm, Ryan Lounge. Lunch provided. Everyone who comes will get a printed contract.

Updates & discussions will include:
- What Wisconsin means for us
- The damage of student fee increases
- Introducing the Grievance Committee
- Campaign for our Communities speak-outs
- Progress of the on-call grievance
- Evacuation Day and Bunker Hill Day holidays

Campaign for Our Communities SPEAK OUT, Tuesday, March 22, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Hibernian Hall, 182-184 Dudley St, Roxbury

PSU New Member Orientations are held twice each month from 11:45am - 12:30pm in the Union Conference Room, Quinn. Upcoming Sessions will be: Tues. March 22; Wed. April 6; Tues. April 19.

Your are invited to attend the National Education Association (NEA) 2011 Annual Higher Education Conference: March 25-27, 2011 at the Park Plaza Hotel, Boston. If you are interested in attending the conference, please contact Tom Goodkind ASAP at 617-287-6515 or by email at tom.goodkind@umb.edu.

Consider attending the Mass Teachers Association annual meeting coming up May 13-14 in Boston. For more information, contact Julie Sanabria at 617-287-5523 or julie.sanabria@umb.edu.
Congratulations go to UMass Boston’s **Shandell Hughes** of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, who has been a foster parent for years and recently adopted two of her lucky children. She also plans to adopt a third child! For a picture and article about Shandell, go to: http://www.bostonherald.com/galleries/?gallery_id=4565&p=2

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PSU member **Peter Adams** presented a paper entitled “After the Fall: Post-Apocalyptic Novels by Women Authors” at the International Society for the Study of European Ideas (ISSEI) conference in Ankara, Turkey in August. The paper looked at several post-apocalyptic novels from the beginning of the genre (Mary Shelley’s “The Last Man”) to contemporary works such as Margaret Atwood’s “The Year of the Flood.”

After the conference, he and his family visited several Greco-Roman ruins as well as major sites in Istanbul such as the Hagia Sophia and the Topkapi Palace. He even got to visit with World Wildlife Federation workers on Olympos beach and see baby loggerhead turtles making their way to the sea at dawn!

He is grateful to the PSU for the great benefits he has, such as five weeks of vacation per year, without which the trip would have been impossible.

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UMass IT employee **Peter Schmiro** had exhibits of his photographs in the Spring and Fall 2010 Talented U presentations that were held in the bookstore. His photographs can also be found on the UMB web site at: http://www.umb.edu/slideshow/fall_2010/fall_2010.html

**Apostolos Koutropoulos**, MBA, MSIT, MEd, MA, CTS, Applications Training Coordinator in the UMass Boston Healey Library recently completed his MA in Applied Linguistics. “I just found out that I passed my comprehensive exams with a High Pass (perfect score), and I have completed my fourth Master’s degree. It was a great program and I learned a lot in the process. The journey to attainment of knowledge continues.”

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**Susan Moir** took 12 days off over the holidays and enjoyed a visit to Plaster Fun Time with her daughter where they painted a horse and the letter “H” for Hayden.

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**Jon Hutton** of the Enrollment Information Services attended the 36th Annual Boston Science Fiction Film Festival and Marathon in February with his son and grandson, as well as other family and friends (some of whom are also UMass Boston alumni). He has missed only three of these events since 1977. He would like Susan Moir and Hayden to consider creating a plaster model of the spaceship Enterprise.

**Dale Freeman**, Digital Resources Archivist at the Healey Library, is recording a new CD at a studio in Medway. It is to be titled, “Daylight is Fading.” Near completion, it will be released this summer, hopefully, and will contain 11 originals in the rock/folk genre. They are songs about his daughters, family and other things in his life. “After 15 years,” he says, “I have finally started getting them recorded with help from friends Steven Higgs on piano, Jodi Stevens on bass, and her husband Chris Stevens on drums. Other guest musicians help out, too, on trumpet, Celtic fiddle, and even a cello.”

PSU, CSU members, family & friends at One Nation Rally in Washington, D.C. OCTOBER 2010

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**Barbara Graceffa** from McCormack Graduate School has been promoted to Director of Marketing and Communications for the school. When she is not creating new brochures and webpages at UMass, she is putting other creative skills to use in her own interior decorating business, Secretary of the Interior. Barb welcomes you to view her portfolio or attend one of her free decorating classes in Weymouth; details at www.sec-interior.com.
London Demonstrations (continued)

(continued from page 5)

Given that us American college students—I am an exchange student—regularly face tuitions of up to $50,000 each year to go to school, the outrage here can have a surreal tinge to it. Then again, we expect our schools to treat us like consumers. In fact, the new buzzword in higher education has administrators calling students "customers."

I filed into line after breakfast and received a recycled wristband (it was labeled "Sussex Fresher’s Pub Crawl") to gain access to the coach. The bus filled up quickly and left. Students talked animatedly, hands around cardboard cups of coffee, or leaned their heads against windows and tried to sleep. A tall, pale kid in a hoodie walked the length of the double decker, hawking copies of Socialist Worker; a group of three unnaturally peppy girls carried a large tupperware container of flapjacks, selling them for some cause or another. Luke, a first year student with the red of a Remembrance Day poppy on his blazer, sat next to me. For him, the demonstration was a personal as well as political matter—while he would be out of university before the fees came into effect, his younger brother would have to face the choice of heavy debt or lack of education.

The drive stretched north through miles of English suburbia and countryside. The low November sun bathed the coach and formed shifting, fractal shadows against the encroaching treeline. A black, tapered structure appeared out of the passing fields—a World War II monument, small wooden crosses and poppies arranged next to it in rows. The traffic grew torturous as we passed through the outskirts of London—Coulsdon, Norbury, and Streatham crawling by in repetitious streets of barber shops, Halal restaurants, convenience stores, and one incongruous Papa Johns. Repurposed factories that were now shops littered side streets, defunct smokestacks angled up to the cold blue sky. A banner outside the Stockwell underground station memorialized Jean Charles de Menezes, an innocent man shot dead in 2005 by police who believed him to be a terrorist responsible for the recent London tube bombings.

We eventually made it into London proper, disembarked at the Aldwych Theater, and began to walk to the London School of Economics. Along the way I talked to students. Ellen, a Sussex undergraduate, said that she was marching for her younger sister, while Adam, a student in a pseudo-military getup carrying a sign over his shoulder, was at his first major protest. The commonalities were striking—a lack of major political experience, a feeling of betrayal on the part of Nick Clegg and the Liberal Democrats, and a of moral outrage over the government’s abdication of social responsibility.

To read the rest of the article, including a cracking firsthand account of the protest, go to http://www.theawl.com/2010/11/londons-student-demonstrations-are-the-best-sort-of-education.
CALLING ALL ARTISTS: THE PSU NEEDS A LOGO.
AND WE WANT YOU TO DESIGN IT!

HERE’S THE PLAN:

Step 1. Design a logo that you would be proud to see on the PSU website, on our letterhead, on signs and on T-shirts. The logo should look good big and small, in color and in black and white. The logo must include either the words “Professional Staff Union” or the letters “PSU.” (Only PSU members may submit logo designs.)

Step 2. Go to the PSU website and print out the “Logo Design Cover Sheet”; fill it out; and follow the directions on the sheet for how to submit your design(s). The deadline to get your submission in is: Monday April 4, 2011 (You can submit as many designs as you like. Please complete a separate cover sheet for each design.)

Step 3. A “Selection Committee” made up of PSU members from UMass Boston and UMass Amherst will review all the submissions (without knowing the artists’ identities) and pick the top five designs. Then our Joint Executive Committee (JEC) will choose the winning design! (The JEC reserves the right to reject all designs, and/or to ask artists to make changes to their designs.)

Step 4. If your design is chosen, you will receive the grand prize of $400 and, more importantly, have the eternal satisfaction of seeing your work all over UMass!! (The four runners up will receive prizes of $50 each.)

For those of you who aren’t artists, but know good art when you see it, please send an email to Jo Martone at UMA (jojo@oit.umass.edu) or Anneta Argyres at UMB (Annete.argyres@umb.edu) and let us know that you want to be on the Selection Committee. (Members on the Selection Committee may not also submit designs.) Our Chapter Board will appoint two to three members to serve on the committee from each campus to review the logo submissions. Selection Committee members will receive the submissions on Tuesday, April 5th, and must choose the top 5 designs by Tuesday, April 29th.

HELP KEEP THE PULSE GOING!

Do you have a question for Miss Management, an opinion you’d like to share or an idea for a story? We plan to publish two printed editions of THE PULSE each year, supplemented by electronic newsletters in between the printed editions. To keep THE PULSE going strong, we need your contributions, ideas, opinions, criticisms, suggestions, questions, as well as any information about your own accomplishments, activities, or milestones you’d like to share.

If you have something you’d like to submit for publication or an idea about what you’d like to see in THE PULSE, please let us know. Send your ideas, stories, opinions, photos, artwork, or comments to us at prostaff.union@umb.edu or send a hard copy to Sarah Bartlett, in the Registrar’s Office.

And, even better, if you’re interested in working with the newsletter committee, we’d love to have you! Just send an email to us at prostaff.union@umb.edu and we will sign you up.

THANKS!

PSU MEMBERSHIP MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16
RYAN LOUNGE
GET YOUR VERY OWN PSU CONTRACT!