

Office Hours Out in the Cold

Just like Public Higher Education in Massachusetts

Public Higher Education in Massachusetts is in peril due to a debilitating lack of financial support. In protest of this lack of support and to help educate people about this travesty, **I will be holding all of my spring '05 office hours outside of the main entrance of Parenzo Hall.** Please find me there for my office hours; join me if you would like to show your support.

Here are a few examples of actions which undermine the viability of public higher education in Massachusetts:

- In terms of personal income, in the year 2004 **Massachusetts ranked 49th out of the 50 states in its support of public higher education.**¹
- Yearly state appropriations for Westfield State College were 30\$ Million in 1994 but have dropped to less than 20\$ Million in 2004: **10\$ Million = 33% cut in 10 years!**
- APA and AFCSME, the unions representing all those who work at the state college and universities whom are not faculty or non-unit administrators, ratified contracts two years ago whose funding has been repeatedly vetoed our Governor. **On average each of these dedicated members of our college community is owed over \$5,000 in back pay raises!**
- Faculty members at all 9 of the state colleges – represented by the MSCA (Massachusetts State College Association) - have been without a contract since 1 July, 2003. **That is, faculty at the state colleges have been working for over 500 days without a contract!**
- A 2004 study commissioned by the State College Presidents² showed that **“Massachusetts State College Faculty earn \$13,367 annually less than their peers”!**
- The Massachusetts Board of Higher Education, whose role is to nurture public higher education, has refused to bargain in good faith with the MSCA in negotiations. Their salary offer is for five years - the two years we've been without a contract and three years hence. **Their financial offer is 0%, 0%, 1%, 1%, 1%!**
- As if the Board of Higher Education's economic offer isn't insulting enough, they have included in their unchanging, unilateral proposal draconian language that is unparalleled in higher education – for example, removing the MSCA agency fee and abolishing promotions.
- In 2004, for the first time in decades, **Massachusetts spent more money on prisons and jails than on public higher education.**³

Public Higher Education in Massachusetts Left Out in the Cold

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18 January, 2005

¹ Center for the Study of Education Policy Illinois State University http://coe.ilstu.edu/grapevine/table5_05.htm .

² Massachusetts State Colleges Faculty Salary Analysis, September 2004.

³ Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation; see <http://www.masstaxpayers.org/data/pdf/bulletins/11-24-03%20Corrections%20Bulletin.PDF> .