

NORTH HARRIS COUNTY COLLEGE UNITED FACULTY

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THE ADVOCATE

NHCC United Faculty
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Edited by Olin Joynton
Secretary, NHCC UF

"Thoughts on Teaching" Seminars

In April the NHCC United Faculty (AFT) sponsored two seminars, one on South and one on East, in which faculty recognized as excellent teachers shared their classroom methods and emphases. Here are some of the highlights from each presenter:

JEAN HAYDEN: The course syllabus must be explicit as to what is expected of the students and what they may expect from us . . . Discipline problems (e.g., tardiness, sleeping in class) are disruptive to the educational process and should be discouraged . . . Variety is the key to student interest and can be achieved by using guest speakers, group work and other approaches.

JIM HENDERSON: Students deserve to be recognized as individuals . . . Personal attention must be paid to them . . . This may be accomplished by the instructor's quickly learning the students' first names and using them . . . Short, informal conversations with students before class lets them know that they are important . . . Course content must be rigorous and clearly emphasized.

ALLEN VOGT: The goal of teaching is the enlightenment and liberation of students in a general sense . . . A teacher's experience and intuition can be a more useful guide to good teaching than formal courses in education . . . "Be yourself," which in teaching means staying with the things you do well and not attempting to imitate another teacher who has quite different gifts . . . Properly taught, any subject is irresistible.

MARILYN RHINEHART: Sensitivity to the audience, but not oversensitivity, is very important, so be prepared to change the classroom activity if things aren't going too well . . .

"Education for Democracy — Democracy for Education"

Sound academic training in your subject and good organization are also essential . . . A teacher must demand respect from students, even if it means having a list of unacceptable behaviors in the syllabus . . . Eye contact and tone of voice are instruments for commanding the attention of students . . . Try to convey a sense of caring for the students.

GARY CLARK: You're only as good as your last classroom performance, and always try to make your next class your best one . . . The classroom is not isolated but dependent on the goodness of one's colleagues, one's college, and one's community. A good teacher has to be committed to making the whole environment conducive to learning . . . In managing one's time remember that one's classes always have to come first . . . Watch other faculty members in action and learn from their strengths.

Our thanks to all the presenters and to Steve Davis, who organized and moderated both programs.

AFT Members Garner Teaching Excellence Awards

Speaking of good teaching, two of our members were recognized by the College this spring for quality of their classroom work. Congratulations to Thelma Jones and Michael McFarland, both of the South Campus English department. The NHCC United Faculty is proud to have had winners of this award every year from its inception.

AFT/Senate Cooperation on Benefits

The Faculty Senate has traditionally done the bulk of the work towards presenting faculty proposals for salaries and benefits to the Board every May. The AFT appreciates this work of the Senate and this year decided to involve itself more in the process by approaching District Benefits Committee Chair Paul Beran with an offer of help, which he accepted. The details of the cooperation include:

1. The NHCC United Faculty polled its members on four key benefits topics (salary step increases past sixteen, the bachelor's/master's salary split, on-campus employee smoking, and job-sharing) and turned the poll data over to Paul.
2. Paul met with the NHCC United Faculty officers in late April to review the Senate's benefits proposals.
3. The NHCC United Faculty will make a presentation to the Board of Trustees in May expressing our support of the Senate Benefits recommendations.

Though the two faculty organizations have separate identities, we are heartened when a topic of common concern can foster mutual assistance.

As district AFT president, I have spent a good deal of time visiting with the members of the NHCC Board of Trustees on various issues. Since January, I have focused our discussions on salaries, benefits, and working conditions. I have lobbied for continued board attention to the salary schedule. The board has made serious efforts to put faculty in a good position relative to other colleges in the state, and we must continue these efforts if NHCC is to reach its goal of being the best community college in Texas.

In addition, I have asked that we increase the steps on the salary schedule beyond sixteen years. A number of employees have or shortly will reach the current maximum. The college needs to recognize and reward the value of long-term service to the district, a common practice at many community college in the state.

Finally, we have discussed the teaching environment in which faculty must work. A particular problem in this area on South Campus is the noise level from hallways and adjoining classrooms. Faculty often find it difficult to be heard under these conditions, and students find it hard to pay attention to their work, especially when taking examinations.

I am pleased to report that I found board members to be interested in our concerns and openly willing to discuss them and find solutions. I believe that the AFT's involvement in board elections is beginning to pay off because the current board understands the importance of what happens when the faculty can do their job correctly. I look forward to the actions the board will take on these issues.

How About Joining AFT?

For \$18 a month fulltime faculty can enjoy the benefits of formal association with other faculty members committed to making NHCC an excellent place to practice the craft of teaching--and the benefits of strong legal and professional liability protection should you ever need them. The rate for adjunct faculty is \$9 a month for the same benefits. Any of the following AFT officers would be happy to discuss membership with you.

Alan Hall	President	443-5544
Gary Clark	South Campus Vice President	443-5717
Steve Davis	East Campus Vice President	359-1645
Olin Joynton	Secretary	443-5547
Allen Vogt	Treasurer	443-5583