

NORTH HARRIS COUNTY COLLEGE UNITED FACULTY

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THE ADVOCATE

APRIL 1991

Edited by Steve Davis

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN---STEP 16 REVIEW CONTINUES

Since, September, 1990, the Faculty Compensation Committee has been meeting in an effort to resolve the problem of compression at Step 16. I serve as a member of the committee, which has been meeting regularly with Dr. Mort McPhail of Jenrette and Associates, the consulting firm hired by the college to study the problem.

Committee members were told in September that no one in the upper administration nor any Board members had any hidden agenda. We were charged with proposing several options to alleviate the problem. The AFT spotlighted this problem in September of 1989 and has continued to keep attention on it to the point that it is now universally acknowledged. No limitations were placed on the types of proposals the committee might recommend, including increasing the number of steps.

The committee first framed a philosophy of compensation statement, reviewed literature on compensation across the country and actual systems in place at other colleges, and is finalizing several proposals. Plans are for the committee to meet with Dr. Pickleman to review the proposals. Hopefully, committee chair Brenda Steuer will make a formal report to the Board in May.

I will not comment on the specifics of the proposals until they are made public, but I can make two observations. First, I think the faculty generally will be pleased with the recommendations, which are fair, reasonable, and affordable. I might add here that the committee found Dr. McPhail's services invaluable to its work. In a District that is "consultant happy," I was doubtful that a consultant was really necessary for our task, but I was wrong. A second comment I'd make is that the recommendations reflect comments that the committee received from faculty. The majority of those comments directed us away from merit pay, and our proposals reflect that sentiment.

"Education for Democracy — Democracy for Education"

Much of the literature on merit pay suggests that such a system is rife with favoritism and abuse, harmful to morale, and a nightmare to participate in and administer. In spite of that literature, and the assurance to the committee that the options are entirely open, I get the uneasy feeling that "merit" is in the air. That idea runs counter to the philosophy of the compensation committee. It remains to be seen whether upper administration and the Board will listen.

Alan Hall

STAFF AND FACULTY AWARDS

NHCC's annual awards dinner is being held Friday, April 26. It has been the AFT's tradition to recognize and congratulate those employees who are receiving recognition for their outstanding contributions to the college. We are especially proud (naturally) of those award winners (*) who are members of our union. We commend these and all employees who continue the effort to make NHCC the finest community college in this state.

SUPPORT STAFF EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Sandy Chance*
Carol Daugherty
Shirley Grant
Irene Ramirez

Michael Richard
Joan Roberts
Jackie Spillman
Alice Winslow

TEACHER EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Elizabeth Chapman
Steve Davis*
Thomas Hobbs

Ruth McDonald
James Polito
Brenda Wellmeyer

WRITING AWARDS

Robertta Dohse

Susan Orr

Ann McCormick*

HOW ABOUT JOINING AFT?

All faculty and staff can enjoy the benefits of association with other employees committed to making NHCC an excellent place to work and teach--and the benefits of strong legal and professional liability protection should you ever need them. Monthly dues rates are \$18.85 for fulltime faculty, \$11.70 for fulltime staff and adjunct faculty, and \$8.60 for part-time staff. Please discuss membership with Alan Hall (443-5544), Greg Mitchell (359-1640), or any other of the usual suspects (Cher Brock, Marge Shotwell, Steve Davis, Bob Locander, Mel McFadden, Allen Vogt) on the union executive committee.