



THE HARPER ADJUNCT ADVOCATE

**HARPER COLLEGE ADJUNCT FACULTY ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER**

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Social Security Fair Act Will You Receive Your Full Pension?

The Social Security Fairness Act is before the US Congress. Many adjuncts are unaware that their social security benefits will be offset or reduced by the SURS pension. Federal law currently has two offset provisions that negatively impact educators:

1. The Windfall Elimination Provision reduces an educator's earned Social Security from previous employment. If in addition to paying into SURS at Harper, you have worked and paid into social security for 40 quarters at any time in your life, when you retire, instead of receiving two full pensions, you will receive the full SURS amount owed you but Social Security will reduce the amount they pay you by up to 2/3 of what SURS has paid.
2. The Government Pension Offset basically eliminates much of an educator's Social Security benefits from a spouse. If you are married and have not worked enough to claim benefits in your own right from Social Security but are entitled to benefits under spousal rights, Social Security will reduce those benefits by up to 2/3 of what SURS has paid.

Contact your U.S. Senators and U.S. Congress representative and tell them to support the Social Security Fairness Act (House Bill 235 and Senate Bill 484) which repeals the Social Security Offsets! Urge them to stop this unfair discrimination. For email ideas and links to your legislators, go to <http://capwiz.com/nea/issues/alert/?alertid=7217266>.

IEA-Regional Assembly

Candace McCreary and I went to the IEA-RA, where decisions are made about dues, legislative platforms, and so on. It was fascinating to see the inner workings of IEA from verbal fights over issues to creativity (we were serenaded with an impromptu IEA song!) to networking with people from our local area and all over the state. Both of us are happy to have gone and thankful for the opportunity to have been representatives for HCAFA. JJ Pionke

The Summer Leadership Academy (SLA)

Many adjuncts (and I mean you) would love to be stronger in the classroom, better speakers, and even take heady jobs but are held back by lack of self-confidence. Some of us are simply afraid to speak up and say what we feel.

The SLA which is being held this summer and every summer will help alleviate some of that fear. I guarantee it. This academy has scores of classes aimed at making you a better instructor, a better negotiator, a better leader. Go to www.ieanea.org. Soon there will be an online booklet for this summer's choices of at least 100 topics, some going into great depth, outlining the three days of fun-filled excitement in teaching techniques, retirement, grievance, negotiations, technology and so much more.

I'll see you there with the rest of the movers and shakers: Keep watching the IEA website and be one of the first to register. Spots fill quickly. Members' expenses will be covered by scholarships from our region and IEA. YOU WILL LOVE IT.

Ilona Sala, President HCAFA

HCAFA Welcomes All Members to All Executive Committee Meetings

Friday, April 17, 4:00 – 6:00

Friday, May 8, 1:30 – 3:30

At the IEA Office, 553 N. North Ct., Palatine
We value your input! Give HCAFA the opportunity to learn from you & get to know you. In the process, you'll help the union gain strength and make new friends. Our meetings are stimulating and fun. Exec committee meetings are the place to learn a lot about Harper and your fellow adjuncts. Come once and you may decide to become active. Call Amy or Mary Ellen at IEA (847 359-0300) for more information or directions.

HCAFA Election Soon Reps Needed

Please consider being a representative for your division. Division Reps are members of the executive committee and play a critical role in facilitating meaningful communication between HCAFA and its members. The time commitment is small. It may be as small as attending monthly meetings of the exec committee. Adjuncts are interesting people. Being a rep will give you the opportunity to meet more of them. Please email Taimi at AELS4@harperadjuncts.org or call her at 847-259-5441 if you are interested.

Members will receive their ballots after April 18.

Teaching Adjuncts, Know Your Contract Article IX Compensation

I have received numerous emails from adjuncts who are unsure if they are being paid correctly. It's my hope that this brief explanation will clarify the procedure governing our pay. My advice to you is to save all notifications of class assignments, pay slips, and paperwork regarding compensation in case you need them in the future.

Your position on the pay scale depends on 2 things:

1. Degree Status:

Do you have a Bachelor's, Master's, or PhD?

(Note: a Master's + 60 hours = PhD)

If you have a Master's, move one lane to the right.

If you have a Master's + 60 hours move 2 lanes.

2. Number of Credit Hours Taught at Harper

Every year, prior to the start of the fall semester, your number of credit hours taught at Harper is divided by 54. For each full additional number, you move a lane. For example, if you have taught 81 credit hours at Harper, the result would be 1.5. As that is more than 1 but less than 2, you would move 1 more lane to the right for your placement for the full academic year. If you had a Master's Degree (which would have placed you in the second lane), you would now be in the third lane getting \$832 per credit hour this semester. If you had a PhD, (which would have placed you in the third lane), you would be in the fourth lane earning \$864 per credit hour.

If this does not make sense to you or you still have questions, please let me know. It is certainly possible that you are in the wrong pay category, in which case you would need to contact Harper Human Resources. *Janice Cutler, Treasurer HCAFA*

More Than \$13,000 Remaining in Adjunct Teachers' Professional Development Fund Less Than 1/3 of Fund Spent



Teaching Adjuncts apply for: Professional travel, Workshops, Books, Tuition and fees for college credit courses, Conferences, Professional Journals, Professional Organization Memberships

Remember:

Items must be discipline-specific or improve teaching.

Your benefit per year must not exceed \$320.

You must be teaching at time of application.

The Application Process

1. Apply to your Dean for pre-approval by filling out p. 1 of the professional development form. (Note: The form is on the Harper website.)
2. Gain pre-approval from your Dean before paying
3. Pay for the approved items by the end of finals.
4. Submit p. 2 of the form along with the original receipts for reimbursement to your Dean as promptly as possible..
5. June 10 = the reimbursement request approval deadline for the spring term.

If you have applied for money this academic year but have not used all of your allowable money (\$320), we hope you will take advantage of the benefits HCAFA has gained for you and apply again.

(Note: The professional development fund is a use-it-or-lose-it fund; money not used will revert to the College.)

Dual Credit Quality Act

Dual Credit is when high school students take college classes for both high school and college credit. Our new President, Dr. Kenneth Ender, strongly endorses Dual Credit programs and we can expect to see a Dual Credit initiative from him. HB 1079 in the IL legislature is designed to standardize credential requirements, quality of programs, and student assessment. Please contact your state representative and tell him or her that you endorse HB 1079! Go to ieanea.org and click on Legislative. There will be links there to find out who to contact for your area.

UNDERSTANDING GRIEVANCES

Why does HCAFA file grievances?

Filing a grievance is obligatory any time there has been a violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of any provision of our Contract.

Aren't grievances bad?

No, grievances are attempts to resolve problems through informal and formal procedures. It offers the union and the college the opportunity to work out problems by focusing on a problem using agreed upon guidelines.

What are some of the issues affecting adjunct teachers that are currently going through the grievance process?

1. The definition of what a "break in service"* means with regard to fair share.
2. The requirement to give an adjunct a "class most likely to run"***and if that class does not run "make a reasonable effort to assign the adjunct faculty member to another course for which he/she is qualified to teach."****
3. Dismissing an adjunct without following the guidelines in our contract regarding discipline.

*Quote taken from the Memo of Understanding to our Contract

**Quote taken from Article 8.2 of our contract.

***Quote taken from Article 8.3 of our contract.

HELP US PLAN OUR FALL CALENDAR WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Some events already planned include:

SURS/Social Security Meeting for Adjuncts Only

Monthly Executive Committee Meetings

Region 42 Meetings

Adjunct Sushi and Sandwich Soiree,

(A Mostly Social Get-to-Know-You Event held during Harper's Orientation Week)

General Meeting

Winter Advocacy Conference (WAC)

Illinois Education Association Higher Ed Meetings

IEA Representative Assembly

NEA Representative Assembly

Holiday Party

Are there other programs or social events that would interest you? We welcome your ideas. Please email Janice at treasurer@harperadjuncts.org with any suggestions. We hope you'll participate in as many activities as possible.

RUMORS YOU MAY HAVE HEARD THAT ARE NOT TRUE

Rumor: *Because of the union, adjuncts are not allowed to teach as many hours as they had taught before there was a union.*

Fact: **There has been no change since the formation of the union. Our contract requires the College to give at least a 3-credit-hour class to all unit-eligible adjuncts. There is nothing in our contract that would cause your hours to be fewer than in the past. Many adjuncts continue to teach two, three, or four classes a semester. If you have fewer hours, you need to understand that it was the Dean's decision to limit your hours as it is only the Dean that can decide which classes you will teach.**

Rumor: *The College can offer to pay you less than your negotiated rate of pay for credit classes with low student enrollment.*

Fact: **The College must pay you your negotiated rate of pay for all classes regardless of the number of students. The correct rate of pay is listed in the contract.**

Rumor: *Adjuncts must wait until 3 days before a class starts to register for a credit class at Harper.*

Fact: **You may get a tuition waiver and register for a credit class whenever you want.**

Rumor: *Adjuncts must find their own subs.*

Fact: **You are not responsible for finding your own sub, but most adjuncts do because they prefer to.**

If you have any questions, please check your contract and/or feel free to contact your union officers or reps.

In Memoriam

The Harper College Adjunct Faculty Association would like to extend sympathy to the family of Naim Elias. Naim taught mathematics at Harper for many years and was a charter member of our association. He will be missed by those who knew him.

Attention Fair Share Fee Payers

If you currently pay a fair share fee, think about becoming a full member of HCAFA for only \$10 more per semester. The value to you and your fellow adjuncts is enormous!

HCAFA OFFICERS and DIVISION REPRESENTATIVES

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