



**THE HARPER**

# **ADJUNCT ADVOCATE**

**HARPER COLLEGE ADJUNCT FACULTY ASSOCIATION  
NEWSLETTER**

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Adjunct Colleagues,

As we wrap another year, hard to believe, I wanted to thank the contract negotiation team for all their time, effort and patience. HCAFA is lucky to have such dedicated teams, so thank you Steve Titus, Charmian Tashjian, Karl Buschmann, and Amy Kunz. I also want to thank Dwain Thomas for getting voting materials out so quickly. As for all our awesome members I want to wish each of you a very safe and happy holidays! **P.S. Don't forget to vote on the contract extension by December 12. See more information below.**

Robert Allare  
President – HCAFA

## **HCAFA THANKS YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

For membership: Charmian Tashjian at [bctashjian@gmail.com](mailto:bctashjian@gmail.com)

For member engagement: Christy Carter at [christyncarter@gmail.com](mailto:christyncarter@gmail.com)

## **Tentative agreement on two-year adjunct contract**

In early December HCAFA reached a tentative agreement with Harper College's negotiation team on a two-year contract extension with some significant changes. The contract is retroactive from the start of the fall semester 2021 and will run until the end of the summer semester, 2023. After six months of difficult negotiations with the college, HCAFA and IEA representative Amy Kunz feel that we have produced a contract that is agreeable and beneficial for adjuncts going forward. Here are a few highlights of the contract...

**Compensation:** Year one (retroactive to the start of fall semester) – all adjuncts, increase of 4.25% of compensation. Additional, one-time increase, of 2.5% for Level II adjuncts will be added to the 4.25%. Any new Level II graduate going forward will receive a 5% pay bump.

**Just Cause:** Seven guidelines are applied to adjuncts and protections for adjuncts which include: reasonable rule or work order, notice, sufficient investigation. Fair investigation, proof, equal treatment, and appropriate discipline. HCAFA has been bargaining for Just Cause with no success for over ten years. To win this in the contract is a tremendous victory for HCAFA and adjuncts across the board.

**Workload:** The college and Board of Trustees agreed to work on expanding workload for a two-semester academic year from 23.5 hours to 24 hours. This will allow many adjuncts, especially those with labs, to take on more classes.

**Union eligibility:** An adjunct can automatically become part of the HCAFA union within the first year. In the past, an adjunct had to wait two years before becoming a member. This allows us to have strength in numbers. Adjuncts will still be in an observation period with the college during years one and two at Harper.

## How can I vote on the contract?

The period of eligibility for members to vote on the tentative contract agreement runs from Wednesday, December 8<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup>. Emails have been sent out to available addresses titled **“Harper College adjunct faculty association contract ratification vote”**. As soon as you can read through the more comprehensive details of the contract before voting. We need your vote before Sunday, the 12th! We do apologize for the rush in the voting, but we are up against a tight timeline at the end of the semester.

President Robert Allare has also created a video link in the email explaining how the contract is set up.

## What will happen next after HCAFA members ratify the vote?

The contract will be on public record for viewing for 48 hours before the Wednesday, December 15<sup>th</sup> Board of Trustees meeting at the Wojcik Conference Center at Harper College in Palatine. The December board meeting, the last of the year, will start at 6pm. If you can join the Executive Team in solidarity at the 12/15 meeting at 6pm, your presence can be made and felt by the Board! If you do choose to come, please contact any member of the executive team such as President Robert Allare ([robballare@comcast.net](mailto:robballare@comcast.net)) or Secretary Steven Titus ([satitus@gmail.com](mailto:satitus@gmail.com)). When showing up at the conference center, sign in under HCAFA member.

If the contract is ratified by the Board of Trustees, it will be immediately active. The college has provided some preliminary details on retroactive pay. It is likely that the retroactive pay for fall semester classes will not go through until sometime in late January of the new year.

## RECENT ISSUES

### Reduction to social distancing

In late November, President Dr. Avis Proctor and Provost MaryAnn Janosik announced to the college about reductions in social distancing on campus. Going forward, social distancing suggestions and classroom set-ups (chairs, tables, etc) has been reduced from six feet to three feet. If there are any changes with safety members on campus the college and HCAFA will inform you of these.

### Ending of remote work stipend for employees

Since April 2020, Harper has compensated employees (full-time, adjunct, and staff) with a \$30 per pay period stipend for remote work. The stipend was to be used as a compensation for utilizing personal computers, devices, and the use of communication platforms like Zoom. This stipend, commonly titled “Remote Work Reimbursement”, will be discontinued as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. The soon to retire H.R director Roger Spayer described this in an email from December 8<sup>th</sup> as follows: “This aligns with our phased return to campus as remote work is no longer required and employees have access to college equipment and supplies.”

### Postings for full-time positions at Harper College

Harper College has posted many open positions for full-time instructors for multiple departments. These positions would begin in the fall of 2022. We strongly encourage any adjunct qualified for these positions and in the departments to put your best foot forward and apply. These are the full-time, tenure-track positions listed as of 12/09/21

- Music faculty
- Economics faculty
- Business administration faculty
- Nursing faculty/CAN Coordinator
- Biology faculty
- Mathematics faculty

-Chemistry faculty

These positions, and the details on how to apply, can be found here: <https://jobs.harpercollege.edu/en-us/filter/?job-mail-subscribe-privacy=agree&search-keyword=&work-type=full%20time>

### **Open library representative position**

*\*Note: This statement ran in our previous adjunct newsletter\**

Our recent adjunct faculty representative, Jennifer Lau-Bond, was recently promoted to a full-time library position by the college. We want to congratulate Jennifer on the position and wish her the best going forward.

If you are an adjunct within the library and would like to be part of the Harper College adjunct faculty union, we strongly suggest that you contact us regarding the now open library division representative position. This division representative will be responsible for reporting back to the HCAFA executive team and adjuncts about the comings and goings within the library as well as attending monthly HCAFA executive team meetings.

### **End of year note**

We at HCAFA appreciate your efforts and commitments to the lives of Harper's students. Without you, the college does not run, and lives are not positively impacted. Take stock at the end of the semester to appreciate the work you have done in 2021 knowing how many obstacles have been thrown our way from COVID to social distancing, remote learning, and returning to in-person instruction. The executive team of HCAFA is thankful to have the opportunity to represent you. We hope this is reflected in the hard-fought efforts and wins in our tentative two-year contract.

To you and your loved ones and friends, we wish you a Happy Holidays and a wonderful New Year.

### **A message from HCAFA member Karl Buschmann**

A couple of days ago, a fellow adjunct colleague asked me: "What's in it [our union] for me?" Great question.

Some of us teach because we love learning and our subject matter. It's a hobby. Some of us teach because it's our only source of income. It's our job and our passion. At the end of the day, we are contingent workers. We're temps and there is no reasonable assurance from semester to semester that we have a class to teach.

Thanks to our collective bargaining right, we have strength in numbers - all of us together. Our employment is not 'at will,' as in the private sector, where one can be terminated for any reason or no reason with or without notice.

Great news. Your contract negotiations team has been hard at work since May 2021 bargaining with the College. We have achieved significant new benefits:

- Compensation increase for all adjuncts, particularly Level II recipients
- Just Cause – a precedent setting addition that helps ensure that a structure is in place for due process, which is a guardrail against arbitrary and retributive actions
- Strengthening the benefits of being a Level II adjunct

That's the first benefit of being a member and paying dues.

A second benefit is the formal contract ['Agreement'] that we have with the Board of Trustees that spells out terms and conditions of employment in 10 articles. I invite you to review the Agreement and to take advantage of all of its provisions, including paid leave, professional development, and compensation for cancelled classes. Download a copy from our web site. And, wait, there's more!

A third benefit is the Level II promotion process that debuted in 2018 and subsequent to the current contract. This is why we should always think of dues as investments, not expenses -- an investment in maintaining – and recognizing - the high standards that we have for ourselves as professionals, for our students, and for our College.

These high standards must be defended. Fortunately, the Agreement has formal procedures for discipline, grievances, and compensation. Just as an insurance policy mitigates risk, our Agreement protects us against arbitrary, unfair, and discriminatory practices, which still occur all too often and in violation of Agreement provisions.

Ladies and gentlemen, let's keep in mind the NFL principle – there is No Free Lunch in life. It costs money to have these benefits. Your continued investment in our union is necessary. We don't go without auto and medical insurance: don't go without the insurance of union membership.

What's in it for you? A lot.  
-Karl Buschmann

*Adjuncts are encouraged to know their rights under our contract. If they are concerned that one of their rights is being violated, they should contact HCAFA as soon as possible.*

**Problem? HCAFA is here to help!**  
**WHAT ARE MY WEINGARTEN RIGHTS?**

If you are ever in a situation that you believe could lead to any kind of disciplinary action, you have the right to have a union representative with you.

In a situation like that, to protect yourself, say, “If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my union representative be present at the meeting. Without representation, I choose not to answer any questions.” Under no circumstances should you lose your cool or walk out of the meeting.

Www.harperadjuncts.org, the HCAFA website, has an in-depth explanation of these very important rights. Go to our site and click on “union representation” under the “documents” tab.

**HCAFA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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**DIVISION REPRESENTATIVES**

**Liberal Arts**  
-Christy Carter

**Division library rep**  
- Open

-Charmian Tashjian

**Career Technical Programs**

-open

**Math and Science**

-Mary Van Opstal

**Business and Social Science**

-Robert Allare

-Richard Krupa