



THE HARPER

ADJUNCT ADVOCATE

**HARPER COLLEGE ADJUNCT FACULTY ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER**

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Harper adjuncts,

In the first half of the semester, the union has been hard at work for you! HCAFA has been in back-and-forth deliberations with Human Resources on the part-time leave act law. President Steven Titus has been working as a facilitator on the Outstanding Adjunct Award with Harper administration and the Honors committee. HCAFA held a free luncheon outside of Subway on February 19th for members. We have also lobbied concerns and had our voice heard in union meetings with the President's Executive Council and in meetings with the Provost's office!

I want to make sure that our executive team gets the appreciation they deserve. Our VP, Jenn Merritt, is hard at work every month, committing to representing adjuncts in meetings with Division deans. David Bergmann has modernized and streamlined our approach to the Treasury. Cory Long has made considerable efforts guiding new members through the application process to HCAFA. We also have a new executive team member – Marybeth Kuhn, our Secretary! Without them, the union does not function – period!

Steven Titus
HCAFA President
stitus@harpercollege.edu

Introducing Marybeth Kuhn – HCAFA's new Secretary

I have been teaching within the Phlebotomy Program at Harper since 2015, and working in the medical field for 20+ years. Seeking ways to feel a bit more grounded within Harper, I felt this was a wonderful opportunity to take on! Moving forward, I will be writing all future newsletters, with a bit of assistance from Steven. Any questions, concerns, or help needed, please feel free to email me at any time, and I will help and guide you in any way that I can! Outside of campus, I have a 5 year old daughter and 8 year old special needs son. I look forward to this new role and the opportunities that come along with it!

Recruiting new Division representatives

Section 1 – Duties A. The Division Representatives and a Member-at-Large will be members of HCAFA elected to provide communication between HCAFA leadership and the members, distribute materials to members and conduct informative meetings. The Divisional Representatives and Member-at-Large will recruit volunteers for HCAFA jobs and activities and generate support for HCAFA positions and programs.

We are seeking to fill a few vacancies within our Division representation. In joining, we can work as a team to support fellow adjuncts, revitalize our system so we have more ears and voices within the campus, and (if available, not mandatory) aid in helping at union functions.

We have vacancy spots in the Liberal Arts division, as well as the Student Engagement division. If interested, please contact myself or Steven Titus.

Administrator searches at Harper

- Dean of Health Careers (Ongoing...interviews in March)
- Assoc Provost of Student Affairs (in March) NOTE – Interim Associate Provost Megan Dallinas will be leaving the college in March.
- Dean of Teaching of Learning (also will help with SOI, accreditation) – interviews in April
- Associate Provost of C & I interviews in April

Additional information

UPDATE! – The Illinois part-time paid leave act

HCAFA has worked extensively with IEA to discuss the implementation of this law at Harper. Initially, Harper and the HR department were unwilling to offer any paid time leave within the parameters of our 2023-2027 collective bargaining agreement. After pushing Human Resources to offer a solution in compliance with the law, Harper responded with an offer – benefits starting in 2025. President Steve Titus’s work with local IEA/Uniserve director Amy Kunz has found out that there are many loopholes in the law and a lack of regulatory oversight. Our conversations on how the law could be implemented at Harper went all the way to one of the head Illinois Education Association lawyers in the downtown Chicago office.

IEA and President Titus agreed that accepting the benefit proposal on the implementation of part-time paid leave from Harper, starting in August of 2025 was the best option. HCAFA did not want to reopen the contract and have a long, drawn-out fight where we would lose the gains made when the contract was signed in 2023. **It should also be known that colleges across the state are working with lobbyists to carve out another exception to benefits, this time adjuncts and other part-time workers in higher education. HCAFA and IEA are working at the County and State level to make sure the law remains as written!**

From our January newsletter “On January 1st of this year, a new Illinois law kicked into motion. The Paid Leave for Workers Act (Illinois bill 820 ILCS 192) requires employers to provide up to 40 hours of paid leave in a 12-month period; however, like any law, there are caveats. As adjuncts, we do not work in 12-month windows, merely semester-to-semester. Also, school districts are exempt from the law as demonstrated here – “Public school districts organized under the School Code are exempt from the Act. A private school, not organized under the school code, is not exempt from the Act. (See 820 ILCS 192/10.)”

Blackboard landing page

- There have been issues with phishing scams that have targeted students.
- Blackboard will eventually have a singular landing page for their classes. This will be controlled by the Academy and Marketing/Communications.
- More information coming on this in the Spring semester.

Learning management system at Harper

- To stay current with the most user-friendly technology, Blackboard in its current form is going away in 2026.
- This will be a much-needed upgrade for staff as well as students, as we have observed the need to update our system since the pandemic.
- The upgrade will be to the highest system available through Blackboard - Blackboard Ultra. The college, working with the Academy for Teaching Excellence, will start transitioning faculty and staff in 2025.

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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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-Adrian Fleischer

Student Engagement

-VACANT

Library representative

-Kristin Allen

Business and Social Science

-Robert Allare

Health Careers

-Marybeth Kuhn