

# The KFT Voice

Volume 9 • Issue 1

September 2004

Kean Federation of Teachers • An Association of Professors, Professional Staff and Librarians • Kean University • Union, NJ 07083-0411

## Local Negotiations Update

By James Castiglione  
KFT Local Negotiations Chair

I am pleased to welcome Charles Kelly of the political science department as assistant local negotiations committee chair.

Charlie brings a wealth of experience to the table as a result of his consulting work in labor-management relations and contract negotiations. He has also held previous leadership positions in the KFT, including a term as president.

Moreover, as a longtime faculty member and former department chair, he has helped to provide valuable insight and guidance in shaping our negotiations.

Welcome aboard, Charlie!

The local negotiations committee had a busy summer. Progress was made in varying degrees on a number of issues.

Notably, we signed two letters of agreement, one of which—No. 105, *Review and Reappointment of First-Year Faculty*—should be of special interest to the large class of new faculty, since it formalizes the expired memo of understanding on this issue while incorporating many needed changes.

Key is the addition of a teaching statement to the previously existing research statement. This will help to enhance junior faculty members' pedagogical development while reinforcing teaching as Kean's primary mission.

There is now also a mechanism in place to deal with evaluation of faculty appointed at mid-year that ensures fair process.

The committee has presented the administration with a formal proposal for a letter of agreement on chairpersons' compensation for the academic year that attempts to properly remunerate chairs for the multitude of demands on their time and what is an ever-increasing workload.

We are expecting a counterproposal from the administration at our next negotiating session, which comes up shortly.

Interestingly, three years ago the university had agreed to increase chairs' released time to 9 credit hours per semester, explicitly recognizing the

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## President's Message:

## No man is an island

By Dean Casale  
KFT President

The opening day of this semester served as a mild revelation to me. It is all too human to see the world from one's limited perspective—and, to be sure, a certain myopia of self-interest may be necessary to survive and prosper.

But as the saying goes, no man, or no one constituency, is an island unto himself, or itself. And the larger view—especially for educators and unionists—needs not to be forgotten.

At my department's first meeting of the semester, we tackled a lengthy agenda that dealt with issues ranging from curriculum and personnel to room assignments and new keys for the "smart" classrooms.

But no single issue received as much discussion as the newly mandated five-office-hour, three-day workweek schedule for faculty. A solid half-hour was dedicated to debating this issue.

As KFT president, I was asked by my department colleagues what had been done to deter this new policy. I dutifully explained that the union and the administration had been involved in a tug-of-war over the policy that had already stretched out over 17 months.

The departmental discussion ended to no one's satisfaction, with expressions of frustration and even outrage.

One hour later, at the KFT meeting, after delivering my opening-day speech, I fielded questions from the audience. Again, questions about the five-office-hour, three-day workweek dominated the discussion.

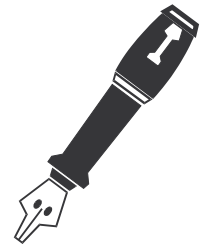
And as at my department meeting, this discussion ended to no one's satisfaction, with expressions of frustration and even outrage.

But as the discussion was progressing, I happened to look around at our members—faculty, professional staff and librarians—and began to think about the KFT in its totality, about *all* its members.

And the narrowness of our present focus began to trouble me.

Professional staff members still work under the

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# Treasurer's Corner



By Ellen Comerford  
KFT Treasurer

The financial review of the KFT for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2004, has recently been completed and will be mailed to all members shortly.

Highlights of the review include the following:

- The KFT Scholarship Endowment Fund was established with a contribution of \$50,000 to the Kean University Foundation. This donation from the KFT's reserve flows through the income statement as an expense.

- Following cash-basis-of-accounting rules, the final dues payment to the Council of New Jersey State College Locals and the national AFT for fiscal year 2003, which was paid in July 2003, was properly reported as an expense for fiscal year 2004.

Likewise, as the final salary payments for fiscal year 2004 were received in July 2004, the payment of membership dues from Kean University to the KFT will be reflected in fiscal year 2005.

- The KFT is currently operating with a balanced budget in spite of the fact that its national and state dues have increased. The KFT has been able to keep its dues structure at 0.95 percent of gross salaries, the lowest rate in the state college system for the past few years.

Although this decision no longer enables us to add to our reserve, this reserve, if prudently managed, is strong enough to cover shortfalls for the immediate future without having to increase annual membership dues.

- All other expenses in total (excluding dues to state and national, and the establishment of the KFT Scholarship Endowment Fund) were actually less in 2004 than in 2003.

Let's now turn to the current fiscal year. Salaries have increased by 2.9 percent, starting July 1, 2004. The KFT leadership has proposed new initiatives for 2005. By working together, we can accomplish these goals. The fiscal 2005 budget will be presented at the general membership meeting Oct. 13 at 3:30 p.m. in New Academic Building 113.

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notorious "no limit" clause of the master contract, which means, because they are categorized as salaried professionals, there is literally *no limit* to the hours or the days that they may work.

It is not unusual for professional staff members to work 50- or 60-hour weeks or to work on Saturdays and Sundays. They work on an "as-needed" basis at the discretion of their managers. And following the downsizing that accompanied Kean University's recent budgetary crunch, many professional staff members are experiencing *expanding* job responsibilities.

As overtime is not applicable to salaried employees, compensatory time is supposed to be offered to professional staff employees when they work extra hours.

Good, fair managers compensate professional staff employees by accommodating them with time off when things are slow. But exploitive managers seldom, if ever, offer such compensation.

Moreover, professional staff employees are *not* tenured. They work with either single- or multi-year contracts and are subject to annual reviews by their supervisors and managers.

With their jobs often hanging in the balance, it is near impossible for them to voice their frustration or even outrage when they are treated unfairly. Yes, the five-office-hour, three-day workweek policy is poorly conceptualized, and an insult to faculty professionalism. And certainly the KFT does not endorse it.

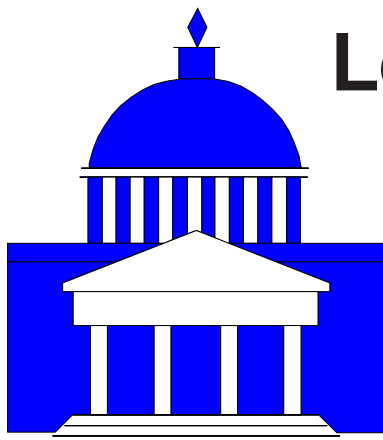
But as this issue—by contract—falls outside the scope of our negotiations, it is time to move on. It is time for faculty members to broaden their perspectives and see the struggles of their professional staff colleagues.

Some considered empathy and concerted outrage should be expressed on their behalf as well.

I know that the KFT is going to give this issue the attention it deserves.

### KFT FALL 2004 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

- Wednesday, Oct 6: Executive Council Meeting, 3:30pm, UC Blue Room
- Wednesday, Oct 13: General Membership Meeting, 3:30pm, N-113
- Tuesday, Oct 26: Librarians Luncheon Meeting, 12pm-2pm, UC-226A
- Wednesday, Nov 3: Executive Council Meeting, 3:30pm, UC Blue Room
- Tuesday, Nov 9: Faculty Luncheon Meeting, 12pm-2pm UC-226A/B
- Tuesday, Nov 16: Professional Staff Luncheon Meeting, 12pm-2pm UC-226A/B
- Wednesday, Dec 1: Executive Council Meeting, 3:30pm, UC-337B



## Legislative Update

**By Jon Erickson**  
**KFT Political Action Chair**

**T**he Council of New Jersey State College Locals, of which the Kean Federation of Teachers is a member, has identified and is promoting seven bills in the state Legislature as priority legislation. These bills are:

*A-2795: Union Representation on Boards of Trustees*

■ Introduced by Assemblyman Patrick Diegnan (D-18), this bill would add two union members to the boards of trustees of all state colleges and universities. The union members would have to be employees of the institution and would enjoy full voting rights, except in personnel matters. The bill is currently in the Assembly education committee.

*A-693: Fair Bargaining*

■ Introduced by Assemblyman Robert Smith (D-4), this bill would prohibit public employers from imposing a contract on public-employee unions even if negotiations have reached an impasse. The bill would require that the terms of the previous contract remain in force until the parties reach agreement on a new contract. The bill is currently in the Assembly labor committee.

*A-1908: Subcontracting*

■ Introduced by Assemblywoman Sheila Oliver (D-34), this bill would protect our jobs by prohibiting public-sector employers from subcontracting work performed by bargaining-unit employees during the term of the union contract. After the contract expires, the employer and the union would negotiate the decision and impact. The bill is currently in the Assembly labor committee.

*A-2138: Pension Equity*

■ Introduced by Assemblyman Reed Gusciora (D-15), this bill would eliminate the double taxation of public-sector employee retirement plan contributions. The result would be to treat public-sector employees the same as private-sector employees participating in

retirement plans. The bill is currently in the Assembly appropriations committee.

*A-1250, S-775 and S-847: Tuition Assistance*

■ These bills, sponsored by Assemblyman Craig Stanley (D-28) and Sens. Shirley Turner (D-15) and Robert J. Martin (R-26), would expand the state Tuition Aid Grants program to include part-time undergraduate students. The bills are currently in the Assembly and Senate education committees.

*A-1268 and S-986: HOPE Scholarship Program*

■ These bills, sponsored respectively by Assemblyman Craig Stanley (D-28) and Sen. Shirley Turner (D-15), would guarantee free state college or university tuition for all students who maintain a B average. The bills are currently in the Assembly and Senate education committees.

*A-173, A-1892 and S-239: Paid Family Leave*

■ These bills, sponsored respectively by Assemblywoman Sheila Oliver (D-34) and Sen. Joe Coniglio (D-38), would provide up to 12 weeks per year of paid family leave for employees who need to care for a new child or sick relative. The bills are currently in the Assembly and Senate labor Committees.

*A-318 and S-983: Anti-Privatization*

■ These bills, sponsored respectively by Assemblywoman Loretta Weinberg (D-37) and Sen. Shirley Turner (D-15), would establish strict criteria for privatization of state services. The criteria include demonstration of cost savings (other than labor costs). The bills would require public hearings, equivalent wages and benefits for employees of privatized services, and preferential hiring for affected workers. The bills are currently in the Assembly labor and the Senate state government committees.

The Council of New Jersey State College Locals is also working to secure sponsorship for two additional legislative measures.

The first would establish an office of accountability in the Commission of Higher Education to monitor the administrations of the state colleges and universities.

The second would expand the scope of negotiations to include a wide variety of subjects that currently cannot be negotiated, such as health care benefits and those items often deemed management prerogatives.

If you want to contact your district legislators or committee members about any of the above bills, you can find a legislative roster with names, addresses and phone numbers at <http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/members/roster.asp>. You can also download copies of the bills at this Web site.

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undercompensation of department chairs, until the “budget crisis” scuttled its implementation.

In light of that past position, and with the university’s coffers overflowing, if the administration’s rhetoric about better serving students is to be believed, then resources need to be targeted toward the academic departments—especially the chairs whose job places them in the frontline of those addressing students’ needs.

Regarding issues of interest to professional staff, we have presented the administration with a formal proposal for a letter of agreement on compensation time for professional staff in non-limited (NL) job titles—and are awaiting a response.

Thanks to Linda Bradbury, Cherrylon Brown, Cristina Damiao, Tyler Harrison, Nicole Rodriguez and Tim Sensor for their help in formulating our position.

We have also signed Letter of Agreement No. 104, *Internal Hiring Practices for Professional Staff Positions*, which gives “first crack” at newly opened positions to current employees, thereby helping to enhance our members’ career development.

We have opened discussions with the administration on possible formats for a 9+3 reassignment teaching load letter of agreement.

Our vision is that each faculty member would teach 9 credit hours per semester and choose how the remaining 3 credit hours would be assigned. Options might include: research and scholarship, internal or external service, departmental advisement duties and teaching a fourth class.

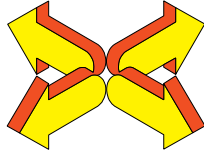
The important point is that this is a decision that is best left to the professional discretion of the individual faculty member. If you have any ideas or input, or if you wish to be part of our on-going advisory group on this issue, please contact Charlie Kelly or me.

Other issues that have been added to the local negotiations agenda are revision of the range adjustment program and a librarian promotion procedure. For these, as with all the above issues, direct input from the membership—especially the constituency affected—was instrumental in formulating a position.

In particular, plaudits go to librarian Shirley Horbatt for taking the lead in researching and drawing up a draft proposal for a letter of agreement on librarian promotions.

While Shirley’s work goes above and beyond the call of duty, it is certainly true that membership involvement is important for the success of any negotiations.

Participation in any form is strongly encouraged. Anyone interested in contributing on the local negotiations committee is urged to contact Charlie Kelly or me, or the KFT office.



# The KFT Voice

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