KFT Blog

The KFT Blog allows the membership to communicate with each other, and give comments on issues. In order to post comments on the KFT Blog, you must receive an invitation to join the KFT Blog. Once you click on the link and create an account or login if you already have an account, you will be allowed to post to the Blog. If you deleted your invitation or did not receive an invitation, please contact Janelle C. Alexander at kft_webmaster@yahoo.com.

Kean University: what it is and what it could be

A few lessons that we can learn from the penguins

Summer is a fantastic time for reconnecting with our families, catching up on our favorite readings, traveling to favorite destinations or simply going to the movies. Recently, I went to see a documentary on the emperor penguin The March of the Penguins. One can clearly see their efforts in sustaining their families in the most hostile weather on Earth. These animals display their persistence, discipline, commitment and group solidarity to create and sustain their newborn. They engage in amazing role reversal, battle average temperature of 80° below zero and face ferocious winds, predators, months without food to the table.

At the KFT-sponsored luncheon on August 10, includes the agreement reached and presented to the professional staff in NL (Non-Limited) Job Titles. The negotiations occurred with the issue of Compensatory Time for Professional Staff in NL (Non-Limited) Job Titles. The agreement reached and presented to the professional staff at a KFT-sponsored luncheon on August 10, includes the following:

1. Flexible work schedules for those who worked beyond the normal work day.
2. Compensatory time for hours worked on an employee’s scheduled/normal day off.
3. Timely notice by supervisor to the employee when need for overtime assignments arises.
4. Compensatory time on an hour-for-hour basis.
5. Guaranteed 3 hours compensatory for employee called in on day off.
6. A design to encourage the use of compensatory time fairly.
7. A design to encourage collaborative planning for use of compensatory time.
8. A design to encourage collaborative planning for use of compensatory time.
9. A guarantee that compensatory will not be lost due to disputes over planned use.

The weather extremes that we confront are limited to our ability to adapt.
The University's budget priorities shifted in 2000 from academic support for its undergraduate students and full-time faculty, toward marketing, public relations, campus beautification and construction. At the same time, university revenues have increased, primarily the result of whopping increases in enrollment and student fees, now the highest in its state sector.

Yet, student-retention rates have dropped for three years in a row for every entering class since 2001. We have no data yet for 2004 student-retention rates. At the same time, the number of full-time faculty members dropped from 383 in 2001 to 359 at the end of the spring 2005 semester, while the number of adjunct instructors rose from 433 in 2001 to 784 last fall. The attachments below show how Kean’s faculty and librarian ratios compare to our sister institutions. The comparison is shocking.

These figures demonstrate that Kean students are paying more for less. More graduate programs, more marketing, slicker packaging, more landscaping, more expenditures peripheral to Kean’s core undergraduate mission will make matters worse.

Chancellors and university presidents at CUNY, SUNY, the state universities of Virginia and Mississippi, the presidents of Temple, New York and Harvard universities are moving their institutions in the opposite direction. They have, or plan to, cut back on graduate programs and demands for scholarship as they put their resources into undergraduate teaching by increasing full-time faculty and cutting back on adjuncts.

Chancellor Goldstein of CUNY testified this past spring before the New York State Assembly Ways and Means and Finance Committees that CUNY has cut back on adjunct faculty and increased full-time faculty by 10 percent over the past two years. CUNY’s retention rates are now increasing. At Kean, the administration is turning its back to our students while claiming to serve them.

The administration says morale is high. All that’s high are student fees. Student retention is at new lows and sinking. Five more first-year faculty and two tenured faculty members resigned from Kean over the summer to add to the June retirees and to the seven second- to fifth-year faculty who were fired.

Yes, full-time faculty members have had to add office hours so the administration can pretend to its Board that students of adjuncts with no offices are also thus served. The administration must think neither Kean’s Board nor Kean’s students can tell an adjunct instructor from a full-time professor.

Kean has a great undergraduate mission. We have highly qualified and dedicated employees. We need an administration willing to put its money where its students truly are, in the classroom.

Richard Katz
English

### Full-Time Faculty, Adjunct Instructors and Librarians at Kean, Montclair, Paterson and Rowan Universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Enrollments*</th>
<th>Full Time</th>
<th>Adjunct</th>
<th>Librarians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kean</td>
<td>12,978</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>784</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montclair</td>
<td>15,204 (+16%)</td>
<td>452 (+24%)</td>
<td>590 (-25%)</td>
<td>15 (+150%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Paterson</td>
<td>11,210 (-14%)</td>
<td>363 (0%)</td>
<td>547 (-30%)</td>
<td>17 (+183%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rowan</td>
<td>9,667 (-26%)</td>
<td>409 (+13%)</td>
<td>393 (-47%)</td>
<td>12 (-100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Enrollment numbers are for fall 2003, latest available from New Jersey Commission on Higher Education

Full-time, adjunct and librarian numbers are those reported for fall 2004 to the New Jersey State Council by the payroll offices of the respective universities.

Percentages in parentheses show divergence from Kean University
Kean needs commitment to professional development

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learned that administrative support, including secretari-
al support, has been taken away. With student numbers increas-
ing and student retention falling, this move to undermine faculty professional development could not be more short-sighted, though it is indicative of the dis-
dain that the administration has for faculty.

Therefore, the KFT calls upon the administration to
reaffirm its commitment for professional develop-
ment by reinstating this office and selecting a director
without regard to political considerations. It is of
utmost importance, given the worsening full-
time/faculty-to-student ratio, that this office continue
uncompromised and that Bev’s replacement be some-
one of the highest ability, experience and integri-

ty.

To ensure that the holder of this office will have the
faculty’s confidence, a number of obvious criteria
must be met. First, this position is a faculty position
and must not be converted to be a full-time adminis-

trator. The person must be a tenured, full professor
and should not serve on retention, tenure or pro-
motion committees at any level.

The individual must have the ability to observe
classes from a variety of vantage points and to give
objective feedback to the faculty member. The person
should be able to work with faculty both one-on-one
and in groups. A demonstrated ability to design,
organize and/or present workshops, panels or discus-
sion meetings is crucial. In addition, the director must
have expertise in scholarship, time management and
writers’ issues.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, the individual
must be adept at human relations: being a good listener
and having a reputation for maintaining absolute confi-
dentiality are absolutely essential. Without these traits,
the trust that is necessary for sound, productive profes-
sional development cannot exist.

Dr. Beverly Amick has set a high standard. We thank
her for her dedicated service and wish her the best in her
retirement. And we call on the administration to recom-
mit itself to professional development and to find some-
one of commensurate abilities to replace her in this most
important faculty position.

Student Reaction

A number of actions need to be taken by the students
of Kean University to ensure that they are not being
taken advantage of by both the administration and the
Student Organization.

Regarding Student Organization, there are monetary
incentives for joining. The total of all money given to
Student Org. ranges into the thousands. This creates a
temptation for people who may not have the students’
best interests in mind. Some may see only the money,
which creates a problem for the student body and those
in Student Org. who do wish to do good.

Student Org. needs to remain wary of all actions
taken by the administration. It cannot allow itself to
become complacent. The best example of this was about
two years ago when 32 non-tenured faculty faced termi-
nation. A small group of professors appealed to the
Student Org. to do something. Certain leading mem-
bers of Student Org. were told that these faculty were
lazy and did not do what was needed to keep their jobs.
Even if this were the case, the leading members of
Student Org. should have taken it upon themselves to
investigate the whole story. Luckily, an independent group
of students were there to help pass out flyers and alert
the student body. A rally was held, and about 26 of the
32 were reinstated. Thirty-two professors almost lost
their jobs because certain people did not do the job they
were elected to do. What Student Org. needs to do is
release a detailed newsletter of the different policies and
actions they are taking and hold open discussions for the
students to attend.

It is of the utmost importance that a student union be
formed independently of both the University and
Student Org. Its leadership and members need to keep
a close eye on both organizations and serve as a watch-
dog in case of any wrongdoing. This student Union
should be closely aligned with the teachers’ unions on
campus so that both teacher and student can come
together and tell the administration what policies are
best for the classroom. Above all else, Kean is a
University. The students’ union must be like a vice,
constantly applying pressure.

Christian Perez
Student

President’s Message

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ied to a few months a year. In that sense, we are truly
lucky. Still, we do face considerable odds on any day
at work. Both our career skills and human strengths are
tested every day. Despite these challenges, most
workers have their own interests and the interests of
the university at heart and honor both every day at
work. To prove this statement, let’s present some
eamples.

Most faculty members teach with dedication and
joy despite not having basic supplies readily available
and with insufficient access to promotion. Professional staff give their best despite receiving
negative marks on their periodic performance reviews.
Chairpersons work during summer months providing
essential services such as program coordination,
advisement, class scheduling, grant overseeing and
general office work without getting fair compen-
sation. Librarians engage in action-oriented research
and train staff, administrators and students in many
technologies and services available at the library with
pride and dedication despite getting about one pro-
motion in 15 years.

Joanne Seals (2nd-year faculty) generously shared
her computer expertise with great enthusiasm and joy.
She is no longer with us. Another member, Sara
Torres from EEO, spent a considerable number of
days with a newly admitted student. This young male
missed his orientation. Sara taught him that he need-
ed to show professionalism even when not attending
his activities related to his new college life. Beverly
Amick, director of the Center for Professional
Development, is a true mentor. She and her staff have
put together many training programs that have
enriched the excellent teaching at Kean University.
Beverly and her staff did their job when budget allo-
cation and recognition were available and continued
to do so when budget was insufficient and their work
was taken for granted. Kean librarians work diligent-
ly, maintaining library holdings, cataloguing, organ-
izing, offering courses and advising patrons every
day. They do all of this despite being in an environ-
ment that rarely acknowledges their expertise and
experience.

Christian Perez
Student

Maria del C. Rodriguez
Counseling
Grievance Report

On behalf of the KFT Executive Council and the membership, I wish to thank Cristina Damiao for her service with me as co-chair of the KFT Grievance Committee. As many of you have heard, Cristina has left the university to pursue other avenues in her career. We wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

In her place, I am excited to welcome Sherrell Holdeman and Mary Wuerthrich as co-chairs of the committee. Mary and Sherrell will handle grievances related to professional staff issues. They both bring a wealth of experience to the committee and their service is much appreciated.

While the Grievance Committee hopes that you had a relaxing and uneventful summer, we can assure you ours was anything but. In addition to a handful of individual grievances, there was one “class action” grievance ours was anything but. In addition to a handful of individual grievances, there was one “class action” grievance.

Just prior to the start of the summer sessions, the administration began implementing, without prior consultation or negotiation, a cap on the number of credits that members could earn during each of the two summer sessions. We immediately grieved the issue. At the subsequent Step-One Hearing, the KFT informed the administration that we intended to proceed with an Unfair Labor Practice unless our members were made whole. At that, the administration indicated its interest in negotiating a settlement.

For the KFT to properly pursue this matter, it needs to know the full list of individuals harmed by the administration’s action. If you or someone you know lost or was denied teaching credits this summer on the basis of this policy, please e-mail the KFT office at kf2187@rcn.com with ‘summer issue’ in the subject heading as soon as possible. Note: this includes situations where courses that otherwise would have run were cancelled due to this policy, a problem that particularly harmed chairpersons. Should a fair resolution not be forthcoming, the KFT has retained the right to move forward with the Unfair Labor Practice.

The KFT has, in fact, filed Unfair Labor Practices against the administration regarding the summer issue on other issues. For a full discussion of these, please see the accompanying Negotiation Report by Charli Kelly.

Lastly, we would like to remind the membership that grievances are time sensitive. If you believe you may have a grievance, you should consult the Master Contract and contact a KFT grievance officer or other officer immediately via e-mail at kf2187@rcn.com or by phone at (908) 737-3925. For any alleged violation, you should consult the Master Contract, specifically Article VII for all of the details of the grievance procedure.

The KFT has grave concerns about the future of this office and the organizations it supports, as we have defined our jobs as supervisory personnel. It is clear the administration a yearly evaluation system for chairpersons and to cap when scheduling this fall and next spring.

The KFT has, in fact, filed Unfair Labor Practices against the administration regarding the retirement. On behalf of our membership, the KFT wishes to thank Cristina Damiao for her service with me as co-chair of the KFT Grievance Committee.

Kean needs commitment to professional development

The KFT is saddened to hear of Dr. Beverly Amick’s decision to retire from Kean University effective September 1. We are sure this decision was not easy and wish her all the best in her well-deserved retirement. On behalf of our membership, the KFT thanks Bev for her many years of professional service to the university in a number of capacities.

Bev, arguably, has had the greatest impact as director of the Center for Professional Development, now known as the Office of Teaching, Learning and Scholarship. In this position, she has overseen the growth and development of the Kean Instruction Team, the Untenured Faculty Organization and the Faculty Writers’ Group into stable, effective mechanisms of faculty support in good times and in bad, not to mention her good work developing the now defunct Mentor Program. On top of all this, she has advised countless faculty, individually and confidentially, through her Teaching and Scholarship Consultations. In short, Bev has served as mentor, confidante and friend to several generations of faculty.

The KFT has grave concerns about the future of this office and the organizations it supports, as we have.

Kean needs commitment to professional development (continued on page 6)

The KFT has, in fact, filed Unfair Labor Practices against the administration regarding the unilateral implementation of a cap on overload. This issue was one of the issues the KFT filed in an earlier ULP. The administration agreed when the Office of Employee Relations (OER) became involved (OER represents management at the state-level) to bring the issue back to the negotiation table.

The above agreement covers all NL employees except those in titles in the following areas:

• Professional Staff Titles in the Department of Athletics
• Residence Life Professional Staff Titles
• Wilkins Theatre and Little Theatre Professional Staff Titles
• University Relations Employees Professional Staff Titles

Negotiation Report

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10. A Union-Administration Review Panel to resolve disputes.
11. A record-keeping process.
12. Protection of compensatory time earned with changes in work position, i.e., new supervisors or new assignments.
13. Protection of compensatory time earned for employees planning retirement and/or separation.
14. Protection of compensatory time already accrued and recorded.
15. Protection of practices already established that exceed the terms and conditions outlined above.

The above agreement covers all NL employees except those in titles in the following areas:

• University Relations Employees Professional Staff Titles

The union and the university agree that an addendum to the above agreement with respect to titles in that the aforementioned areas will be negotiated by December 2005. It is the union’s position that the NL agreement is a good one that can work for almost everyone with very few exceptions. The university basically wants more time to ascertain whether the union position of inclusiveness is correct. The KFT advises all employees to assure that accurate records are kept regarding overtime regardless of whether they are covered by the agreement or are in the excluded areas.

In regard to other issues, there is little progress. The KFT is likely to sign a Letter of Agreement regarding the Faculty Senate’s recommendation modifying the promotion calendar, the application form and the appeal process. The modifications will reduce the possibility of inappropriate student evaluations and/or peer observation data. The KFT and the administration have had extensive discussions regarding the Tenured Faculty Research Initiative (TFRI).

The constructive dialogue at the table regarding the TFRI stands in sharp contrast to the inflexibility and unilateral approach used to implement TFRI this past year.