

DSC NEWS

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MURPHY'S OPTIMISM

MEETING WITH CHANCELLOR MURPHY

On October 27 at 4:00 p.m. Joseph S. Murphy, CUNY's Chancellor, and Leo Corbie, CUNY's Acting Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Special Programs, met with the Officers and Steering Committee of the DSC to discuss the economic conditions affecting the 2,800 doctoral and masters students enrolled in the programs administered at the Graduate School and University Center. The meeting was arranged with the help of Jay Hershenson, Executive Assistant to the Chancellor, and Henry Hewes, Vice Chair for Graduate Affairs of the University Student Senate and a student in the GSUC Political Science Program.

Our group was comfortably seated at a round table on the 18th floor of the Center with a modest assortment of alcoholic beverages, fruit, cheese, and crackers. The ambiance was fostered by an optimism generated through a series of letters and re-

plies initiated by me with the Chancellor. I have found Joseph Murphy to be a very concerned and receptive individual. When I asked him what expectations or hopes he had brought to the meeting, he referred to the six years he had spent as a graduate student (which culminated in receiving a Ph.D. in philosophy from Brandeis University) and the compassion he felt for us who are now experiencing the difficulties of graduate student life: he was here to help us.

We were delighted with his sincerity, and after an hour and a half of lively discussion on a wide range of topics the Chancellor enumerated three things that he promised to do for us: 1) Agreeing that the long delay undergone each semester by adjunct lecturers who wait anywhere from 5 to 8 weeks from the start of classes before receiving their first paycheck was a hardship he would not want to bear, the Chancellor promised to do what was possible to

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ADJUNCTS ORGANIZE

ADJUNCT FACULTY AND UNIONIZATION

In today's economy part-time labor is the fastest growing sector of the work force: so, too, the fastest growing segment of academic instructors is adjunct faculty. Actually, the term adjunct is a misnomer, since adjuncts presently constitute over one-third of the teaching work force in universities and colleges.

Part-time workers usually do not receive any benefits. They are poorly paid because they are not unionized, and this is precisely why such work is expanding. This is also true of adjunct faculty in universities: on June 25, 1982, the New York State Board of Regents eliminated the rule that more than half the faculty of an institution should be full-time.

The working conditions of adjunct faculty are demeaning. If you refuse to teach a course, you are damned forever as ungrateful. You are hired by people who apologize for the poor salary you receive, but never do anything to raise it. You are often without an office or library privileges. Often you may not choose your course texts or even get a parking sticker. Often you will not have access to copying machines or films. Chalk can be a problem. You can get courses you never taught on a moment's notice. You learn that you can carry the load of a full-timer and much more as you move from University to university and still you remain a part-timer. You can even carry a full-time course load at one university and still be

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"Murphy" [cont'd from p. 1]

change the long delay. 2) Much concern had been expressed during the meeting over the enforcement of the late Chancellor Kibbee's hiring policy which called for priority to be given to CUNY's graduate students when appointing part-time faculty within the CUNY system. Dr. Murphy agreed to continue the old policy and look into improving its enforcement. 3) Lastly, he agreed to meet with us again at which time he would accept a formal list of demands for improvements in our working conditions. I took that to include some possibility of lessening the disparity between the salaries of the part-time and full-time faculty. That is an issue I have discussed in detail in previous articles in the DSC News. Those of us present at the meeting appreciate the Chancellor's right to be cost-effective, but we underscored that beyond a point the exercise of that right conflicts with his commitment to excellence in graduate education since poor financial support increases the time to complete the degree and inhibits the University's mission to educate the people of the city it serves. On another occasion Dr. Murphy said, "The City University is not just a place where knowledge and culture are disseminated. It is also a place with a great sense of social justice." It is our hope that he will be a man of concrete changes and not merely of words.

As of this printing it appears that the first promise to alter the delay in receiving pay is on its way to being fulfilled. Also Mr. Hershenson informed me that Mr. Catalano, Vice Chancellor for Faculty and Staff Relations has been instructed to look into the issue of hiring policy. At the time of our meeting the Chancellor and our group were unaware of the following outrageous statistics:

TEMPORARY POSITIONS THROUGHOUT CUNY
SPRING 1982

	GSUC	OTHER	% GSUC
Grad Asst. A	181	105	63.3
Grad Asst. B	362	150	70.7
Lecturer	21	817	2.5
Adj. Lecturer	596	4644	11.5
Adj. Asst. Prof.	10	1224	0.9
Adj. Assoc. Prof.	3	379	0.8
Adj. Prof.	0	253	0.0
	1173	7572	15.7

The table reveals an unfavorable balance of positions held by GSUC students.

From the data it is hard to tell just who the men and women are that figure in the Non-GSUC column. It is important to find out. Nevertheless, in view of these statistics I have difficulty restraining my fury. At the very least our University should gain some control over the hiring practices of the college departments so that CUNY's own Ph.D. students can obtain the experience necessary to enter the teaching profession. Dr. Proshansky has claimed that there is no justification for hiring someone other than a CUNY Ph.D. student where the course to be taught clearly falls under the domain of our Doctoral Programs. The quality of our Doctoral Programs is too high to seek elsewhere for competence in teaching such courses.

I believe that the Chancellor will respond to these statistics as we would like, but the time has come for organizing our ranks into a Graduate Students Union. This process has begun at the Center, so please prepare to join a serious effort to institute just conditions in our University. Any fears you might have of becoming active must be put to rest. Behaving like good fledgelings will not get you one of the few full-time jobs. In case your vision is clouded the prospects are very poor in that regard. The times really demand the highest moral stance we can muster. Sitting by while others do the work is unconscionable. Watch for information on the Graduate Students Union in the next issue, and join!

Jonathan Lang
Chair

A REMINDER FROM ROBERT GILLECE, DIRECTOR
OF FINANCIAL AID

Financial Aid applications for 1983-84 were mailed to all enrolled students on December 1. The filing deadline for all types of financial aid for 1983-84 is February 1, 1983.

KGB CONNECTION

On December 17 at 6:30 p.m. in Room 207 the DSC and the Foreign Students Chartered Organization will jointly sponsor KGB Connection, a documentary by Canadian TV and ABC on KGB activities in North America. All students are invited to attend.

For further information contact Robert Kostrzewa, History Program and Polish Students Association, at (212) 730-7744x289 or 873-4351.

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"Organize" [cont'd from p. 1]

an adjunct. I did so twice. Naturally, you have no say in departmental policy or in the university proper. The faculty union supposedly represents both the full-time and adjunct faculty, but when you seek their protection you learn that you are an impudent trouble maker. Full-time faculty benefit from the existence of adjunct faculty under present conditions. Adjuncts teach the ever larger introductory courses. They teach at unpopular hours and during unpopular times of the year.

ONLY THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDEPENDENT ADJUNCT FACULTY UNIONS WILL THE CONDITIONS OF ADJUNCT FACULTY IMPROVE.

I have been actively involved in adjunct union organizing at several institutions. Fear of reprisal permits me to mention only two institutions. I am presently the Vice President of the Hofstra University Adjunct Faculty Association. I lost my teaching position at Hofstra because of my organizing activity. The managers of academic sweatshops do not take kindly to adjuncts seeking human working conditions. First my course load was reduced. When that failed to stop me, I was hit with the "collegial" ruse of credentials. I woke up one day to learn that it was a dire necessity for the Sociology Department at Hofstra to find someone--naturally anyone--more "qualified" than I to teach. Despite several semesters of impeccable work at Hofstra, I was singled me out for special "academic" reappraisal. I now have a case against Hofstra for unfair labor practices at the National Labor Relations Board and hearings will begin in February 1983.

Full-time faculty unions are hostile to adjunct union organization. At Hofstra out of 325 adjuncts 198 signed decertification cards to call for an election supervised by the National Labor Relations Board to determine who should represent them as a collective bargaining agent. (Only 30% of the adjunct faculty must sign cards for an election.) When you attempt to organize adjuncts you learn that adjuncts can only depend on adjuncts. We foolishly chose to work with the American Federation of Teachers, who deceived us with smiling faces from the start. The Adjunct Faculty Association at Hofstra did not realize that the AFT was helping us so that they could gain control of the full-time faculty union at Hofstra. Yes, the AFT helped send out newsletters and decertification cards. The AFT helped us scare the moribund American

Association of University Professors into joining the AFT in New York. On June 24, 1982, the AFT informed us that the AAUP invoked a "no raid" agreement, and we were left without an organization. Worse yet, the AFT was on our decertification cards. We had till June 30, 1982, to file our cards. The NLRB declared our cards invalid. People had signed to join the AFT. We appealed to Washington over the matter and lost. Hofstra adjuncts now have an even more regressive and weaker contract. You have to work four years before you officially become adjunct faculty. The very pathetic leave of absence and miserable mentions of adjunct seniority in the old contract have been eradicated.

At Nassau Community College the situation for adjunct faculty is very different. We went on strike at Nassau Community College. We were informed that if we continued to strike scab faculty would replace us. But we have a seniority clause to protect us at Nassau. All courses beyond full-time course load are covered under the adjunct contract. We have paid sick leave. We have strengthened our seniority system and have received a 17% pay increase. We got all of this not because of the kindly administrators at Nassau or the "collegial" concerns of the full-time faculty for we fellow faculty members. We accomplished what we have at Nassau because we have our own independent adjunct union. We have won our strike.

Willard Petry

HOW NOT TO BE AN ADJUNCT

The first way to avoid being an adjunct is to choose a career other than university teaching. By taking this option, you escape the everyday travails of the adjunct life as well as the health and safety hazards of overstuffed bookbags and extraordinary hours in the subway between campuses.

Many people select this option only after having suffered "terminal adjunctivitis"--a syndrome characterized by a) courses canceled at the last minute, b) delayed paychecks, c) a schedule which includes three or more classes at three or more institutions in three or more boroughs in the same day, d) a paranoid fear of illness, doctors and hospitals caused by non-existent or inadequate insurance coverage.

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"How Not To..." [cont'd from p. 4]

If, however, you are determined to "stay the course" in university teaching, you might consider option #2. This involves a long-range game plan, and in order for it to succeed, you as the player need stamina, perseverance, and (ideally) an independent income from stocks and bonds or a fat bank account.

The first step in not being an adjunct is to get yourself hired as a full-time, tenure-track instructor or professor. Failing that, get yourself hired as an adjunct.

* Never complain about paperwork; read and respond positively to all memos. Whenever possible, praise the memo-writers for their clarity.

* Never question the absence of supplies or reproduction facilities. The adjunct who gets ahead is the one who is "cost-effective." This may include buying your own chalk and paper, and paying for your own Xeroxes. Gently chide colleagues who are so insensitive as to expect material aid at an institution undergoing a "budget crisis."

* Take a positive attitude towards your schedule. Practice smiling while you say, "It's great having one class at 8 a. m. and the next at 6:15 p.m. There's lots of time for committee meetings and office hours in between," or "I don't mind covering that 40-minute section at 5 p. m. on Fridays. The students need it and the subway ride from my house is terrific."

* Never see the adjunct employment situation as a problem because your goal is to rise within the system, not to change it. Never identify with other adjuncts because you want to leave their ranks as soon as possible.

* Attend all department parties and social functions. Volunteer to be on the planning and clean-up committee. This strategy is known as "collegiality."

* Never call in sick, and don't even think about having children.

* Volunteer to work at registration, administer placement tests, develop curricula and syllabi, chair committees. Never ask to be paid for your time.

Nancy Erber

NATIONAL COALITION OF GRADUATE STUDENT ASSNS

For several months a new organization called the National Coalition of Graduate Student Associations has taken the lead in mobilizing graduate student groups across the country in a united response to the Reagan administration's attempts to cut appropriations for education. NCGSA's efforts have specifically focused on the establishment of a national political action committee known as the Student Alliance of Voters for Education - United States (SAVE US).

SAVE US strategy is based on the assumption that the population of "education-concerned" voters (college students, faculty, administrators, active college and university alumni, and parents of college and university students and faculty) constitutes over 20% of the voting population. By promoting education as a "special interest" vote in key districts and states, SAVE US believes that voters will respond to the appeal and support pro-education candidates over others.

Promotion of education as an issue will also serve to turn out voters who are already decided on support of one or more candidates but who otherwise might not vote on Election Day. If these voters, such as college students and university employees, are the target of voter education, then they can be brought to realize that pro-education candidates might indeed lose if they don't vote this year. By tying an election issue directly to the livelihoods and futures of these voters, or these voters' children, they are more likely to turn out on Election Day. For students federal financial aid is such an issue. For parents of college students the education of their children is of paramount concern and is threatened by federal budget cuts. For faculty and staff employment is contingent on enrollments that are threatened by cuts in education.

SAVE US proposes to promote education as a special interest in a variety of ways: by providing information to colleges in the form of voting records and responses to questionnaires which are now being directed at Congressional and Senatorial incumbents and challengers; by organizing mass national rallies in conjunction with other student organizations; by advertising in local newspapers and on television and radio in support of selected pro-education candidates in key races; through direct mailings to education-concerned voter