

# The Portable

October 2004

## A Message from Adjunct Faculty Association President John Herndon



Dear Colleagues,

I hope you are off to a good start this semester, and that you have a good group of willing and eager students to work with. After all, the students' learning justifies everything we do here at ACC.

As our new school year is getting underway, the adjunct faculty have a number of important issues before us. Having a new president in place presents both risks and opportunities for us, and the officers and representatives of the AFA are working hard to see that your interests are protected.

The Executive Committee of the AFA met September 10, and at that meeting filled the vacant Vice-President position as well as vacancies in campus representation. As you will recall, Caleb Buckley, last year's Vice-President/President-Elect, was scheduled to become president this fall, and I was to be Vice-President/President-Elect. However, Caleb has left ACC for a job in California, so, in accordance with our by-laws, I have moved directly to the presidency. The EC elected former AFA President Kitty Henderson to serve as Vice-President this year, and I have no doubt that Kitty will help provide all-important continuity of leadership during this transitional time. The position of Vice-President/President-Elect will be filled in next spring's election, and I will continue as president for the 2005-2006 academic year.

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## Greetings from Dr. Aguero to Adjunct Faculty



Greetings from Dr. Aguero.....

I have completed two months as President of ACC and I am impressed with the dedication of our faculty and staff and the stellar reputation of the College in the community. In various community meetings individuals communicate overwhelming respect and appreciation for the critical role that ACC plays as an educational resource and community partner.

The Executive Team has met with the AFA Officers to discuss matters of concern and mutual interest and we will continue to work collaboratively. I am committed to shared governance and open communication and hope you will participate in those processes, councils and committees. Adjunct Faculty represent a critical voice in the College and we want your full participation.

As we develop a strategic approach for the College, we must place an emphasis on increasing ACC's enrollment while providing adequate college and student service resources, enhancing facility planning and ensuring effectiveness in our business operations. This is a pivotal time in ACC's history and I feel honored to serve as President. However, it will take the efforts of our entire faculty and staff to meet the future needs of the College as it continues to grow.

I look forward to working with the Adjunct Faculty Association in achieving the mission and goals of the College. I hope you will provide the AFA with your concerns, input and suggestions as we work together to advance the initiatives of the College. Your contributions to the College and our many students is greatly appreciated.

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## News from Human Resources

Gerry Tucker, Associate Vice President, Office of Human Resources

### Adjunct Faculty Represents 64% of New Full-Time Faculty Hires

ACC is proud to welcome the following Adjunct Faculty members as Full-Time Faculty at ACC:

1. Jerry Alexander, Art
2. Susan Pearce, Dental Hygiene
3. Julie Kleinhans, Foreign Language
4. Kris Seago, Government
5. Cameron Addis, History
6. Kristine Boeke, History
7. Calvin Sachers, Student Development

Adjunct Faculty represents 64% of the new regular Full-Time Faculty employed for Fall 2004. In 2003 Adjunct Faculty represented 33% of the new Full-Time Faculty hires. In 2002 Adjunct Faculty represented 53% of the new Full-Time Faculty hires.

This record underscores the value of Adjunct Faculty at ACC and their excellence in teaching.

### Adjunct Faculty Insurance Benefits 45 Employees

ACC reached a milestone in its history by offering health insurance benefits to Adjunct Faculty for FY05 in accordance with a new State law effective FY2005. Of the eligible 600 Adjunct Faculty, forty-five (45) employees signed up for the new benefit program.

Senate Bill 1370, Section 4.04, Subchapter C. Chapter 1551, of the Insurance Code, reads as follows:

#### Participation Eligibility:

An adjunct faculty member is eligible to participate in the group benefits program as an employee if the faculty member:

Has been employed as a faculty member by the same institution and **has taught at least one course in each regular fall and spring semester in each of the preceding three academic years;** and

is under contract or

is scheduled to teach at least **12 semester credit hours in the academic year of coverage** or;

if the person is also employed to perform **non-teaching duties**, is under contract or is scheduled to teach **at least six semester credit hours in the academic year of coverage** and has been approved by the institution to participate in the group benefits program.

The ACC Board of Trustees has instituted the plan at the employee's cost. Employees on the new plan must teach 12 LEH in each year of coverage. When an employee teaches less than 12 LEH in an academic year, the employee is offered COBRA insurance with similar benefits for the next semester, at the employee's cost.

A survey will be sent to those faculty members that did not participate to determine the reasons for non-participation and to determine how we might better meet the needs of Adjunct Faculty. If you have any questions about the plan, please email [jburgess@austincc.edu](mailto:jburgess@austincc.edu).

The officers of the AFA have met with ACC's new president, Dr. Robert Aguero, twice now. Dr. Aguero seems committed to improving communications at ACC, and he places a strong emphasis on serving students. He says he is taking time to listen to ACC stakeholders and to get to know the institution and the community.

In our meetings with Dr. Aguero, we have stressed the importance of fulfilling the three-year compensation plan promised by the administration and endorsed by the board to bring adjunct faculty salaries to market target. Five years ago, the board adopted, as part of their compensation policy, a target for adjunct salaries based on comparisons to other adjunct professors teaching lower-division courses in the Austin metropolitan area. The administration announced a three-year plan to get us there. However, at that time, a budgetary crisis developed, and the AFA agreed to put the three-year plan off a year to allow the college to get its financial house in order. We received substantial market adjustments last year and the year before. The largest adjustment—about 10 percent—was left till this year.

Unfortunately, I am very concerned that Dr. Aguero has given us no confidence that he will support fulfilling the final year of our three-year compensation plan. As well, we have learned that some members of the Board are

rethinking their commitment to bringing our salaries to the market target established by their own policy. The AFA officers are urging and encouraging the administration and the board to fulfill their promises to our faculty. This is an issue, I believe, of integrity and simple fairness.

In this climate of uncertainty, it is imperative that we speak with a clear, strong voice. At our first meeting of the AFA Executive Committee, we announced two themes for the AFA for this year—communication and participation. The AFA Executive Committee will be working very hard to communicate with you about actions and discussions on the part of the administration and the board, and to communicate your interests and issues to the administration and the board. That means you have to communicate with us. Contact your campus representative about your concerns, or contact me or any other officer directly, and I promise you your concerns will not go unnoticed.

Your participation in certain AFA activities will be critically important to our success this year. We must show Dr. Aguero and the board that adjunct faculty are indispensable to ACC's mission. Basically, there are two things that I am asking every adjunct faculty member to do—

- 1) Attend our Fall AFA meeting at 4:30 p.m. Friday, November 12, on the Eastview Campus. Dr. Aguero will attend. This is our chance to impress him with our numbers and our professionalism.
- 2) Vote in the Spring 2005 AFA election. It is your vote that legitimizes all that the AFA does to promote your interests. Again, a large turnout for this election will impress all other interest groups at the college with our commitment to this college and to our interests.

Thus the total amount of time I am asking of you is about two to three hours for the entire year. Invest that much time, and you can help make a real difference for all of

us.

An additional request I would like to make is that you plan to attend the June or July Board meeting when the budget will be deliberated and decided. Our presence in large numbers can be very persuasive to members of the Board.

As well, there are numerous opportunities for you to serve on college committees. The AFA always has more committee memberships to fill than willing professors to fill them. Why not make this the year you decide to serve on a committee? Not only is there a small stipend attached to most committee service, but serving on committees is a wonderful way to get to know the people and processes of the college better.

Finally, consider running for a position as AFA officer or representative next spring. Attending an AFA Executive Committee meeting (open to all adjunct faculty members) is an excellent way to get acquainted with the workings of our employee organization.

#### SACS Concerns

While the SACS review is now behind us, and the preliminary, oral report of the visiting team to our administration suggests that ACC will retain its accreditation in good standing, a number of adjunct faculty continue to have questions and concerns about the process of the SACS review and especially about the results of the review.

If you have been removed from an eligibility list and wish to be returned to that list, contact your department chair and ask to create an action plan which could return you to eligibility. If you receive no satisfactory response from your department chair, contact your dean. If you receive no satisfaction from your dean, contact your appropriate vice-president. And please keep me informed about the status of your case. I will bring individual cases where questions and concerns remain to the attention of the president.

**Next AFAEC meeting:**  
**4:30 PM, October 8, 2004 at HBC 214**

## Minutes of the Adjunct Faculty Executive Committee

September 10, 2004  
HBC 214  
4:30-6:15 pm

In attendance: John Herndon, Don Becker, Laura Hague, Kitty Henderson, Kelly Petkus, Mike Young, Cleburn Zwernemann, Mary Gilmer, Dan Dewberry, Patricia Thompson, Agnes Robinson, Bill Cheek, Michael Martino, Carl Gregory, Nancy Fuentes, Linda Guzzardo

### 1. Welcome

Herndon explained the transfer of the presidency to him from Caleb Buckley over the summer. Herndon will serve 2 years as president, as per the AFA Bylaws. Herndon explained the history of the AFA. Self-introduction by attendees.

### 2. Themes for the year

#### Communication

Herndon asked that representatives and officers make concerted effort to introduce themselves at campus Newsletter should be more effective political tool  
Email and US Mail to be used to communicate

#### Participation

Need representative and officer to attend Board meetings  
Need each representative and officer to bring 10 people to the Fall General Assembly  
Spring 2005 Elections: Goals  
Complete candidate roster  
400+ votes

### 3. Compensation Plan

The average target is \$1025 per leh for a Masters, \$1190 per leh for a PhD, adopted by the Board on November 5, 2001.

Concern that Board and Administration are backing away from target

### 4. Initiative to change official name of adjunct faculty from "instructors" to "professors"

### 5. Empty positions filled

Eastview campus: Linda Guzzardo  
Riverside campus: Mary Gilmer  
Cypress campus: Kitty Henderson  
Pinnacle campus: Nancy Fuentes  
Pinnacle campus : Cleburn Zwernemann

Michael Martino moved that Kitty Henderson be nominated for vice president. Don Becker seconded. Unanimous consent.

Kelly Petkus volunteered for Cypress representative position held by Henderson. No opposition, so position was filled by consent.

Kitty Henderson appointed chair of election committee.

Henderson appointed to handle college-wide committee appointments

## AFA Contacts

### Officers

John Herndon, President, jherndon@austincc.edu

Kitty Henderson, Vice President, khenderson@juno.com

Laura Hague, Secretary/Treasurer, lhague@austincc.edu

Don Becker, Immediate Past President, dbecker@austincc.edu

### Representatives

#### NRG

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Do you have a comment on this issue? A question for the AFA? A news item to share?

Please send submissions to:

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Secretary, AFA

Editor, *The Portable*