

**August 2022**

**Welcome back!**

**Cheryl Thayer, *President***  
**Mary Hope Griffin, *Vice President***  
**Cindy Del Medico, *Treasurer***  
**Linda Berendsen, *Secretary***  
**Phil Prale, *Grievances*; Cheryl Thayer & John Bishop *assisting***  
**Room 2470 DP**  
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### ***What is the AFA?***

It's *your* union, protecting and fighting for the rights of all adjuncts covered under the bargaining agreement between the college and the AFA (anyone teaching at least six LHE's in any of the three previous terms).

### ***Fall 2022 Payroll Dates***

Payroll dates for this semester:  
9/2, 9/16, 9/30, 10/14, 10/28,  
11/10, 11/25, 12/9, 12/23  
AFA dues are taken from  
the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> paychecks.

***AFA Open Office Hours 9-10;***  
***AFA Meetings 10-11:30***  
***8/26, 9/9, 10/14, 11/4, 12/2***  
***On ZOOM***

***Oakton Board of Trustees***  
***meetings: 8/16, 9/20,***  
***10/18, 11/15, 12/13***  
***All meet in***  
***the DP Board Room.***

School's back! And adjuncts are already seeing some of the benefits of the new contract. During Orientation Week, a Power Point summarizing the contract was shared; you can find this PowerPoint as well as the full text of the 2021-2025 contract on [the AFA website](#).

Here are a few highlights of the changes and improvements in [the contract](#), also found on the AFA website.

- Did you attend 3 hours of Orientation Week sessions put on by the college? You've earned .048 LHE's. How is this figured? Find out what "step" you are on if you are unsure. What is a "step"? If you taught 2 out of the 3 semesters (Fall, Spring, Fall) during an academic year, that is a "step." Notice that in previous contracts, summer term was not counted, penalizing adjuncts who might have taught in the summer but in addition to that, just spring *OR* fall. The new contract rectifies that. On page 29 of the contract, find your step, and the pay rate for the current year for 1 LHE. Multiply that by .048 - that is what you earned during Orientation Week. (Do the same for everything - meetings, serving on a committee, etc. that is paid in LHE's.)
- We have also received small raises depending on the step, beginning at a 2.9% raise, which decreases as steps go up. This is retroactive from the beginning of Fall term 2021; we can expect to see this in our paychecks on Nov. 1. We can also expect a \$200 one-time payment in the same paycheck if we teach 6 LHE's and \$100 if we teach 3 LHE's (note: for once, this is a payment that is not counted in our LHE load).
- If an adjunct's class has been reassigned at the start of a term, they can remove their proprietary content from the course shell.
- Adjuncts can receive \$375 for professional development each year – this can cover attendance at conferences, the fee to join professional organizations, and so on. \$200 of this amount can be used for the purchase of technology to aid in your teaching. (Be sure to get the approval of your dean first.) IF you do not spend any of the \$375 during the year, it can be carried over until the following year. Find the form [here](#).
- The Student Success Initiative ("the 12-LHE Project") has been renewed for the duration of the contract. Have a great

teaching idea and want to share it? An adjunct can be paid up to 2 LHE's from the 12 LHE pool. Contact Dean Ruth Williams for more information.

- The Mentorship Program, in which seasoned faculty are paired with new instructors to show them 'the ropes,' has also been extended for the next three years. Contact Tess Lesniak or Shannon Sloan-Spice if you are interested.

***Points to pay attention to:***

- Adjuncts need to provide 1 50-minute office hour per 3 credit hours. Late start classes will therefore require longer office hours.
- Classes must be taught in the assigned mode of instruction (you can't switch to Zoom after a few weeks of an in-person class).
- Adjuncts must respond promptly to students. Email through D2L is strongly encouraged.

***The college promises to:***

- Notify us when a Multi-position Form has been approved by the dean and the division office has sent it on to payroll.
- Any department assessments must be reasonable and assigned at the beginning of the term, not sprung on us half way through.
- Provide a report from payroll showing our service – the information that the college submits to SURS (State University Retirement System). We can request this every 5 years beginning after 10 years of service. The goal is to have an orderly, transparent system of reporting.
- Grant emeritus status to adjuncts retiring after 22 semesters of teaching. Retired adjuncts will continue to be able to use the library services, take one free class per year, and keep the Oakton email for at least 12 months.

***Covid***

Masks continue to be required in all classrooms. If a student cannot wear a mask for health reasons, we need to follow [the process](#). If a student refuses to comply, they should be asked to leave the room and a disciplinary report should be sent to Student Affairs.

***RADAR Reports***

It is important to submit a [RADAR report](#) if a student is disruptive or exhibits uncontrolled behavior, even if you think you have resolved the situation.

***Let's Get Rid of the Windfall***

Even if retirement seems a long way off, the "windfall" is something you should be concerned about. In a nutshell, the "The Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) reduces the Social Security benefit for retired educators that receive a pension from the State Universities Retirement System (SURS)." Because we faculty at Oakton do not pay into Social Security, SURS are not coordinated with Social Security. Per the IEA, "the WEP penalizes educators by reducing the first increment used to calculate a member's Social Security benefit if they qualify for one, from 90% down to only 40%." The impact on livelihoods can be severe. [H.R. 141](#) aims to "eliminate the windfall elimination provision, which in some instances reduces Social Security benefits for individuals who also receive a pension or disability benefit from an employer that did not withhold Social Security taxes." In other words, you. Please contact your

member of Congress and ask them to support this bill, sponsored by Rep. Rodney Davis, R-IL-13. You can easily email them [here](#).

### **Continued Eligibility**

Every five years we are required to show the college our *continued eligibility* to teach. Note that in the contract, one of those three activities needs to help you maintain currency in your field. Looking ahead, I am thinking - What was that workshop I took? Where did I save that certificate for that on-line course? When did I volunteer during Orientation Week and how would I prove that? Life would be easier if I created a file where I could drop notes to myself as I add to my professional development. I still like paper file folders that I can see on my desk at home, but an on-line file would do as well. Start now.

### **Problems with Payroll?**

To communicate with payroll, DO NOT just email payroll. Use the Payroll Portal. Using this creates a record of each communication between you and that office. This is how you find it:

First, go to



#### **Payroll Portal Information**

[Employee Payroll Portal](#)

[Payroll Portal Overview](#)

Then, at the very bottom of the page, go to

This will take you here:

#### **Employee Support Portals**

[Payroll Portal Information](#)

[IT Connect: Information Technology Portal](#)

In addition, when you have a payroll problem, *DO* contact the AFA, as the union can find out where exactly the problem is.

### **Rearrangement in the AFA – New “Grievance email”**

To ensure that no messages concerning a grievance or issue are lost, there is now a separate email for contract or work-related issues: [oaktonafamembers@gmail.com](mailto:oaktonafamembers@gmail.com). Phil Prale will chair the grievance committee, assisted by Cheryl Thayer and John Bishop.

### **Congratulations**

**George Vail** was hired as a new full-time teacher in the automotive area of the Division of Business and Career Technologies.

**Jayne Blacker** is now a full-time instructor in math in the Division of Stem.

**Wayne Marko** was hired as full-time faculty in EAS in STEM as well.

George, Wayne, and Jayne were long-time adjuncts here at Oakton. We applaud their accomplishments being recognized. Congratulations!



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### **Upcoming IEA One Conference**

**IEA (Illinois Education Association)** is sponsoring a [two-day conference](#) offering “a variety of elective sessions and featuring keynote speaker, Mary Kusler, Senior Director, Center for Advocacy – National Education Association, held September 30 – October 1 **at the** DoubleTree Chicago-Oak Brook in Oak Brook. Sessions include topics such as an update on unemployment compensation for adjunct faculty, “Gripes vs. Grievance” in higher ed., and “augmenting expectations for student success.” The AFA will reimburse you the \$20 registration fee *if* you pre-register by noon on Friday, Sept. 30.