Potpourri Part 2

Congratulations

Sabbatical leaves have been approved for the following faculty, for 2006-2007:

- **James Barton**  Spring 2007  Developing New Ways to Use Music to Enhance Literacy Instruction
- **Karl Benziger**  Fall 2006  Imre Nagy Martyr of the Nation: History, Legitimacy, and Public Memory in Post Cold War Hungary
- **Laura Cooley**  Academic Year  The Effect of Polymer Size on the Aggregation of Filamentous Actin Protein
- **Crist Costa**  Academic Year  To evaluate the effectiveness of the SAM 2003 materials
- **Joan Dagle**  Spring 2007  The “New Woman” in Early Film
- **Sharon Fennessey**  Spring 2007  Book title: Drama Lessons to Promote Language Arts Learning
- **Beverly Goldfield**  Fall 2006  Three Related Projects on Language Development
- **Claus Hofhansel**  Spring 2007  Citizenship, Federalism and State Building: A Comparison of Austria, Germany And Switzerland
- **Carol Hryciw-Wing**  Spring 2007  An Investigation of Social Support from Supervisors as a Mitigating Factor in Job Stress Affecting Academic Librarians
- **Jianhong Liu**  Fall 2006  Criminal Victimization in Contemporary China and Changing Crimes and the Law in Contemporary China (two projects)
### Presidential Salary Adjustments: 2004-2005

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### RIC/AFT Newsletter

### Christine Mulcahey

**Spring 2007**

**Learning through and with Art: Art in the Early Childhood Curriculum**

### Richard Olmsted

**Fall 2006**

**Digital Resources and Techniques for Teaching Aesthetics**

### Jeannine Olson

**Academic Year**

**An International Reformer: Nicolas DesGallars**

### Marjorie Roemer

**Fall 2006**

**Contextualizing School Reform**

### Katherine Rudolph

**Spring 2007**

**Conceptual Interval: Between Originality and Reproduction or the Generation of the Real**

### Leslie Schuster

**Fall 2006**

**Hidden from View: Meaning and Representation In the 1894 Trignac Strike of 1894; and Teaching Learning Historical Methods for Undergraduates**

### David Thomas

**Fall 2006**

**The Politics of Higher Education in the Contemporary Muslim World in an Era of Modernization and Islamization**

### Dan Weisman

**Academic Year**

**Action research project: Youth Media Programs in Central and South America**
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Welcome

The RIC/AFT is delighted to welcome Dr. Ivy Denise Locke as the new Vice President for Administration and Finance. Her expertise and competence are matched by her engaging interpersonal style. We wish her well in her new position.

Susan Gracia (CEP) is the newest member of the RIC/AFT. Welcome, Susan.

Faculty Reassigned Time

Under Section 10.27 of the Agreement, at least 48 FLH of reassigned time for scholarship, creative endeavors, public service and/or applied research shall be provided each semester (96 per academic year). In the fall of 2005 and the spring of 2006, 78.25 FLH were allocated. It is planned to carry over the 17.75 unused credits into the 2006-07 year. Therefore, at least 113.75 FLH will be available for these activities in 2006-07. The application period for the fall, 2006 semester will be announced by Vice President Dan King in the near future.

Dues

For the year 2005, RIC/AFT members paid $603.70 in union dues. Agency fee faculty paid $532.90. This expense may be deductible for income tax purposes. Please check with your preparer.

This gives me an opportunity to invite agency fee faculty to become full members of the RIC/AFT, the only all-faculty organization on campus. The difference in dues is $70.60 ($2.72 per pay period). The difference in participation and eligibility for AFT benefits is immense. Agency fee faculty do not vote in Union elections, do not attend or speak at Union meetings, do not vote for the Agreement, and cannot represent the RIC/AFT at state or national conferences. Agency fee faculty are invited to call the office to speak with me about any issues related to joining.

Air Quality: A Follow-Up and Action

Last week, we reported that approximately a year ago, an air quality study on Gaige Hall was conducted by Northeastern Environmental Testing Laboratory, Inc. The report concluded that the air quality in Gaige, which includes criteria for carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, hydrogen sulfide and mold, is acceptable and well below any danger thresholds. However, the report also delineated areas of concern which should be remedied.
To date, most of the recommendations have been implemented. As we reported, there will be a HVAC tune-up, essentially cleaning the system, next month. We will continue to monitor progress on the tune-up and air quality in all buildings on campus. The full Gaige report is available in the Union office.

I walked through at HBS on Monday, March 13. I was astonished to find ducts and vents that had never been cleaned (especially in the gymnasium area), electrical outlets exposed (no plates), no door for the fire extinguisher in the gym, and ceiling tiles throughout the building needing replacement. There is a host of etceteras in HBS. There is a plan in place to correct some of these problems, but start dates are too far off in the future for the health and safety of children, faculty and staff who occupy HBS every day.

We are reinstituting an air quality factsheet, provided to us by the RI Committee for Occupational Safety and Health, followed by a Request for Action Form, to be completed by faculty members across campus, in all buildings. See back page of this newsletter.

Union Advocacy at the State House

The RI General Assembly is considering legislation that would address some of the problems caused by the state’s 2002 extension of health benefits to domestic partners, which the IRS has determined to be taxable income. Among the proposals are an interest-free loan plan, which would be administered by the Department of Administration, and elimination of RI piggyback income tax on the additional federal tax. Meanwhile, the DoA recently announced that COBRA and Family Medical Leave Act benefits will not be granted to domestic partners of state employees.

On all domestic partner issues, representatives of the AFT, AFSCME and the AFL-CIO have advocated at the State House for full benefits. According to the DoA, 222 state employees are directly affected. According to the Providence Journal, the annual cost to the state of eliminating the partner benefit piggyback tax, instituting the loan program, and rescinding the DoA COBRA and FMLA exclusions would amount to less than $60,000 per year. We are proud that the 2002 extension of full benefits to domestic partners of state employees was enacted as the direct result of RIC/AFT advocacy with the state unions and the Legislature. We also have asked the national AFT to address the discriminatory IRS policy.

* * *

The Sovereign Immunity Bill, introduced by Sen. Michael McCaffrey, chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, would allow state employees to sue for infringement of patents, copyrights and ownership of intellectual property, within state courts. Under current law, we cannot sue for compensation in cases where the state illegally violates federal laws delineating workplace rights, including the ADA and other anti-discrimination acts. The only current remedy is injunctive relief. For the past three years, this legislation has passed the Senate and has been held up in the House.

Announcements

The national AFT convention will be held in Boston, July 19-23. We are entitled to four delegates. Anyone interested in attending the convention as a RIC/AFT delegate is invited to contact the Union office. Further details about the convention will be announced as they become available.

Ed McElroy, president of the national AFT, will be inducted into the RI Heritage Hall of Fame on Saturday, April 29, 6 PM, at Rhodes on the Pawtuxet. The RIC/AFT will take a table. Anyone interested in attending should contact the Union office.

Jason L. Blank. President
AIR QUALITY AT RIC: FACTS AND ACTIONS
Indoor Air Quality Factsheet
Courtesy of RI Committee for Occupational Safety

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), an estimated 15% to 20% of people experience health problems related to indoor air pollution.

**Sick Building Syndrome**
Common symptoms of sick building syndrome include:
- Headache
- Dizziness and/or nausea
- Eye, nose, throat irritation
- Sensitivity to odors
- Drowsiness and fatigue
- Dry or itchy skin

Most people report that these symptoms subside when they leave the building. Allowed to continue, however, they can progress to more serious building-related illness.

**Building Related Illness**
Symptoms of building related illness include:
- Coughing
- Heart palpitations
- Chest tightness
- Muscle aches
- Chills and fever
- Allergies and/or asthma

These symptoms do not subside when you leave work, and may develop into chronic illness.

**Causes of Indoor Air Pollution**
Poor indoor quality can result from a variety of sources, most of which can be traced to inadequate ventilation. Building ventilation systems used to provide 15 cubic feet per minute of outside air per occupant, but most systems today provide one-third to one-half of that amount. As a result the level of carbon dioxide rises, causing drowsiness and fatigue.

Indoor pollutants come from sources within the building, including construction and remodeling materials, paints, adhesives, inks, solvents, pesticides, cleaners, lubricants, formaldehyde, and plastics. Volatile organic compounds can escape into the general circulation, causing a range of physical symptoms, including respiratory irritation and sensitization.

Outside sources can also cause indoor air pollution. Air intakes located at street level or near loading docks can draw in exhaust fumes. Intakes located too close to building exhaust vents or plumbing vents can draw in other contaminants. Carbon monoxide can also enter the building from underground parking structures or service stations, causing headache, dizziness and fatigue.

Biological contamination includes bacteria, molds, pollen and viruses. Often the culprit is the heating and cooling system itself. Organisms may breed in water in humidifiers and condensate pans. Water leaks permit molds and mildew to accumulate behind walls or in ceiling tiles. Coughing, sneezing, sinus congestion, and flu-like symptoms are common complaints.

**What can you do?**
If you experience health problems related to indoor air quality, take the following steps: keep track of your symptoms, including time of day and type of work. Talk to your co-workers. Look for possible sources of contamination. Report any maintenance problems promptly, to the RIC/AFT, C-L 229. All reports will be pursued and treated confidentially. Distribute copies of the Air Quality Factsheet to your co-workers.
INDOOR AIR QUALITY REQUEST FOR ACTION FORM

(Detach, complete and return to RIC/AFT or download, complete and email to ricaft@ric.edu)

Name:______________________________  Date:_______________________

Department:__________________________  Campus extension:___________

Building and office #:_________________  Other phone:_______________

Request for Action
Please describe your indoor air quality concern. Include all relevant information: building (if different from your department location), area in building, problems you’ve observed, symptoms you’ve experienced, and how we can reach you, if different from above information.

Return this form to the RIC/AFT, Craig-Lee 229 via confidential campus mail, or download, fill out, and email to ricaft@ric.edu.