

Table of Contents:

- From Your President, Page 1
- From Your President Elect, Page 2
- From the Contract Administrator, Page 3
- From the Legislative Liaison, Page 4

From Your President

David Schimpf

What Our UEA Forebears Did For Us

With political sparring over employee unions a big part of the news, it's a good time to learn more about how faculty unionized on the Duluth campus. Fortunately, some of the faculty who were centrally involved in the process that led to UEA wrote this down years ago. It is easy to take for granted the work environment that one encounters when joining the faculty, but what would the situation have been without UEA? You may think that it would have been like it is for non-unionized U of M faculty, but many of their perks were given to them after we negotiated them for our faculty (we're still waiting for that "Thank You" card – maybe it got lost in the mail) or after they successfully practiced brinksmanship by marching vigorously toward a faculty union in the mid-'90s. Our example gave them more clout.

Because of UEA faculty efforts:

◇ Duluth faculty have a grievance process that provides a faculty member who thinks that a policy has not been followed correctly with representation by experienced advocates, a clear procedure that minimizes foot-dragging, and the potential to seek binding arbitration without personal expense. Moreover, administration cannot carry out a

reprisal if someone uses this grievance process. The University does not have a no-reprisal policy for its non-union faculty, and one of the current Regents spoke in a 2010 Board meeting about the peril of establishing such a policy.

◇ Instructional workload limits cannot be unilaterally increased by administration. If the limit gets exceeded, faculty can receive compensatory relief.

◇ Non-regular faculty have eligibility for multi-year contracts, paid leaves, and retirement contributions.

◇ Probationary faculty undergo an orderly process of annual evaluation. Their tenure decisions are finalized by UMD administrators rather than UMTC administrators.

◇ Faculty are paid for every summer-session credit taught. Formerly, some faculty were blackmailed by being told that they would not get assigned any summer teaching unless they taught more credits than those for which they would be paid.

◇ Salaries were improved, by an amount that more than exceeds what you are charged by UEA. Some of you are struggling financially, and we need to do better for you. But you would be making less, even on a net basis, without us here.

That is not an exhaustive summary, but I hope that by reflecting on this history, those of you who are already voting members will be motivated to step forward to take your turn serving your colleagues across campus. We urge non-members to become voting members so that they, too, can serve and help steer UEA, as well as send a message to the bullies who threaten public higher education. In today's sizzling social zeitgeist, many ask: What can I do? What you can do is take a stand against plutocracy by demonstrating that you will not be conquered by division.

To join, volunteer to serve, or find out more, you may contact me at dschimpf@d.umn.edu or 726-7265, any other Executive Committee member, or the UEA Office.

(See the additional document of the UEA History)

**UNIVERSITY
 EDUCATION
 ASSOCIATION**

*Serving faculty on the Duluth
 and Crookston campuses of
 the University of Minnesota*

From Your President Elect

Michael Pfau

Tim Pawlenty's "iCollege": Whether You See It as a Fad or the Future, It Is Also a Blueprint to Outsource American Higher Education

Even as higher education and educators' unions are under overt attack by Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker and his plutocratic minions, it is important that we keep our eyes on more subtle – yet equally real – threats to higher education and education unions. On June 10, 2012, Tim Pawlenty, then the Republican governor of Minnesota and a widely expected candidate for the Republican presidential nomination in 2012, made the case for what may turn out to be the single greatest challenge to quality education, our union, our jobs, and our entire sector of the economy. When challenged as to how his state might cut spending and enact "limited government," Pawlenty went straight to an example that ought to get our attention. He called it "iCollege." In a not even thinly-veiled attack on our profession, Pawlenty asked, "Do you really think in 20 years someone is going to put on their backpack, drive half an hour to the University of Minnesota from the suburbs, haul their keister across campus and sit and listen to some boring person drone on about Econ 101 or Spanish 101?" Instead, Pawlenty suggested, "Can't I just pull that down on my iPhone or iPad whenever the heck I feel like it from wherever I feel like? And instead of paying thousands of dollars can I pay \$199 for iCollege instead of 99 cents for iTunes?" The idea remains popular among some Republican legislators eager to find ways to account for Pawlenty's legacy – a \$5 billion "no new taxes" deficit. And it ought to worry us as educators, union members, and Americans.

Now, it is obvious even to a Luddite like me that online education is here to stay in one form or another. But the form it will take, and how it might af-

fect our jobs, is not yet clear. Hybrid courses with some online components as well as classroom meeting time seem less threatening. But an entirely online model like iCollege," while potentially very convenient for students and possibly even efficient, can eventually lead to the demise of our students' education, and our own profession, through the inevitable pressure to outsource higher education.

If online education replaces the personal contact of the face-to-face experience not only will pedagogy suffer but we will find ourselves competing both with national and international superstars, as well as much lower paid (yet likely otherwise entirely qualified) academics and educators throughout the world. Imagine for a moment the "iCollege" vision of a higher education world that is all online and hence "flat" in the globalized sense. Consider, in other words, what would happen if, on one hand, a few hundred, or even a few dozen, academic superstars could replace most of us at UMD. In "iCollege," why would a student want to download the online lecture from even the most brilliantly qualified UMD professor, when instead they can receive the unrefined video wisdom of the most popular thinkers in the world (you know, the ones who have best-selling books, get interviewed for the news and the documentaries, appear on the Daily Show or Colbert Report, etc.).

Imagine further how American higher education could face the fate of much of our manufacturing base and be outsourced to less expensive workers abroad. If the world of higher education becomes truly flat (and it must, if the goal is to keep tuition down to Pawlenty's \$199 figure) why would administrators "waste" taxpayer money paying writing instructors at UMD to grade essays when highly educated and highly motivated – as well as very low paid – graduate students and faculty in India (who, incidentally, probably speak English more correctly than most "native" American English speakers) can perform

the same task for a fraction of the cost? For that matter, in the name of "efficiency," why not replace existing high quality foreign language courses with computer software and instructional DVDs? In an all-online higher education future, where "efficiency" (a value driven presumably by a continued demonization of taxes, especially when imposed on the wealthiest) rather than educational quality was the sole consideration, could not all teaching duties potentially be outsourced online?

In an all on-line model, our university jobs here in Minnesota, or anywhere in the United States for that matter, could be outsourced as permanently as most of our domestic manufacturing base. And the worst of it is, if we are not careful, our generation could find itself helping to create dynamic and vibrant online courses and curricula that the future's unscrupulous administrators, budget slashing legislators (who can afford to send their own children to expensive private colleges), or even private for-profit online universities, can buy, borrow, or steal, then implement on a large scale, at a massive profit, with less expensive outsourced labor. If we are not very careful and very zealous about maintaining our intellectual property rights over any online content we create, we could find ourselves creating the very online educational infrastructure that will make us obsolete in a global marketplace populated by a few superstars and a huge pool of low-wage labor.

But we can anticipate some of these challenges and adapt. For one thing, we can continue to think about what it is we do best, and how best to do it. In particular we need to accept the inevitability of hybrid courses but make sure that the in-class "face" time is truly one of the most memorable parts of the course. We need to give people in the state and the region good reasons to

Union Scholarships Available

The Minnesota AFL-CIO is taking applications for the Martin Duffy Adult Learner Scholarship. The scholarship winners receive \$500 for tuition at any accredited university or college. There are no academic performance standards. Winners are drawn from the applications by members of an AFL-CIO-affiliated local union such as UEA or a member who has been laid off or is retired or disabled. Applications are due by April 30. For more information or to download the application form, go to www.mnaflcio.org/about/2011-scholarships or call the Labor Education Service at the University of Minnesota (612-624-5020). The Minnesota AFL-CIO also has a number of scholarship opportunities for current high school seniors. For more information, including the application forms, see www.mnaflcio.org/about/2011-scholarships.

UEA members are likewise eligible for scholarships through the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). The Robert G. Porter Scholars Program awards four-year \$8,000 postsecondary scholarships to dependents of AFT members, as well as 10 one-time \$1,000 grants to AFT members to assist with their continuing education. To be eligible for the \$1,000 grant, applicants must be an AFT member in good standing for at least one year and pursuing courses in their field of work. Students must be an AFT member's dependent and a graduating high school senior to apply for the \$8,000 scholarship. The applicant's parent or guardian must be an AFT member for at least one year. For more information or application materials, go to www.aft.org/benefits/scholarships/eligibility.cfm.

From the Contract Administrator

Al Roline

As many of you may have noticed, there was sufficient funding for a third round of Special Faculty Development grants in CLA, SCSE and CEHSP. We hope that you were able to put those funds (which, by the way, the UEA negotiated for you in compensation for the temporary reduction in pay) to good use.

Administration is currently discussing possible changes to the academic calendar. While the UEA contract does not set forth any parameters for setting academic calendar dates, if you have questions or concerns about any of the proposed changes (beginning the academic year one week earlier in the fall, spring semester also one week earlier, and

extending the May session to four weeks), you should be sure to raise those with your representatives on the Education Policy Committee and the Executive Committee of the Campus Assembly, both of which will be discussing this issue again after the spring break.

Earlier this month faculty should have received a request to complete their annual REPA (Report of External Professional Activities). It is required that these forms be filed by all faculty and P&As on an annual basis. However, shortly after the initial announcement was sent out, you should also have received a follow-up that there are technical problems with the REPA filing

process and requesting that you do NOT attempt to work on your REPA until the system is up and running again. Stay tuned for additional instructions from administration. (In addition, you should note that REPA filers may now be required to complete conflict of interest training by using a web-based training module found at <http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/trainingservices/COI/COIsm.htm>.)

Finally, I continue to field a number of questions regarding teaching loads, contract limits, and workload protocols. As I have mentioned before, if you have a question or concern regarding those sorts of issues, please do not hesitate to contact me. I will be glad to assist you, our bargaining unit members, in any way that I can.

Faculty Awards

Congratulations to UEA member Jill Doerfler (American Indian Studies) for being selected a Residential Faculty Fellow for 2011-2012 at the University's Institute for Advanced Study.

Members are encouraged to contact Scott Laderman (laderman@d.umn.edu; 726-7207), the UEA Information Officer, with news of member awards and accomplishments.

From the Legislative Liaison

Michael Mullins

John Schwetman and I held a meeting for non-regular faculty on March 8 and, based on the feedback from those who were present, we all seem to be focusing our energies on our workplace while taking note of what's going on around us. This is good given the shifting landscape on which we find ourselves positioned.

I have traveled to the Capitol three times this session and must admit that our work there is difficult. When we visited in January folks were cautiously "moving in." In February, Michael Pfau (Department of Communication), Eric Herrmann (Education Minnesota Field Representative), and I spoke with legislators about the Regent candidates and were told that the Republican majority on the Higher Education Committee would list all of "their" candidates and none of "our" first-tier recommendations. Indeed, that is exactly what happened. Of course, now one of the new Regents, Steve Sviggum, is under investigation for an alleged conflict of interest, according to a March 11 report on Minnesota Public Radio. And so it goes.

On the Thursday before the spring break I experienced some rather unusual

interior decorating in the offices of several of the first-term legislators. I traveled to the Capitol with Wanda Pearcy (Department of Art and Design) and again with Eric Herrmann. We observed several bibles lying in open view on legislators' desks. I have not seen this in 25 years of visiting with legislators both at the state and federal levels. Also, we heard from one House member that it is essential that we continue coming to the Capitol and presenting our case to legislators. Of course, the most important ones to engage are the ones who don't support publicly funded education the way we have historically desired in Minnesota.

I would argue against some opinions I hear at UMD that we should simply forget about the legislature's commitment to the University of Minnesota. While our task is much more challenging than in the past, it is now more than ever essential that our voices be heard. One legislator, a long-serving Republican, said it's a travesty that we don't fund at least 35 percent of the tuition bill. Another said the voice of reason and logic needs to take back the day and that we present the sorts of anecdotes that resonate among elected officials. This is ESPECIALLY so when discussing the stories of students. As such,

should you personally know of students who are currently suffering under the effects of higher tuition, please pass their stories along to me (mmullins@d.umn.edu; 726-6155). Communicating their conundrums is very effective in telling our larger University of Minnesota story.

On a somewhat related note, here is a web link to the Legislative Network of the University of Minnesota: <http://advocacy.umn.edu/>. On this site you can be kept abreast of current developments and receive e-mail alerts on pending legislation, thus allowing you to e-mail your state senator and representative.

Finally, I'm often asked about my political passions, and the "why question" always seems to come up. Why do you do this? My response is simple. What we do as professionals – teaching, research, and community and University service – is endangered if we lack a voice and a public presence around the state. Your advocacy for UEA is possibly the best example of your commitment and service to your students and the citizens of Minnesota.

Use "Access to Savings"

Education Minnesota members, including UEA members, enjoy numerous savings opportunities through the Access to Savings program. These deals include 10 percent off \$50 purchases at 24 Hour Fitness; 50 percent off enrollment at Anytime Fitness; free shipping on orders of \$75 or more from Champs Sports and Eastbay; various coupons from Finish Line, Jenny Craig, and Weight Watchers; \$10 off orders of \$50 or more at FootLocker.com; 10 percent off at Total Gym; up to \$200 and free shipping with

AT&T; \$150 instant savings on new activation and upgrades at Sprint; waived activation fees and a 12 percent monthly discount with T-Mobile; up to \$200 in savings at Verizon; \$20 off at H&R Block; \$25 off at Jackson Hewitt and Liberty Tax Service; and up to 30 percent off movie tickets to AMC Theatres. For more information on these deals, and to view additional savings, go to www.educationminnesota.org/membership/savings.aspx and click on "Access to Savings." UEA members will need to log in to the website to view this page.

From Your President Elect

Michael Pfau

Continued from Page 2

come to UMD – because we are here to engage, inform, and challenge them in an immediate interpersonal setting that can allow pedagogical strategies that are impossible to replicate online. In other words we need to focus our attention on thinking about what it is we can do in the classroom that neither we, nor anyone else, can do completely online. In the end it all comes down to us doing what we are here for and what we do best – educating. In facing the challenges of “iCollege,” we can take steps that simultaneously improve and advance our classroom pedagogy, as well as protect our jobs from outsourcing, by making the classroom experience an even more compelling one that few students – even members of today’s digital generation – are willing to completely eliminate in favor of Tim Pawlenty’s “iCollege.”

For tax-cutting legislators, Board of Regents members, increasingly (often for reasons not of their making) penny-pinching administrators, hard-working students with three jobs, and those online addicts who just can’t even get out of the pajamas for even a few days a week, “iCollege” is a seeming solution to any number of real or imagined problems. It must be remembered, however, that if “iCollege” is taken to its logical globalized conclusion (and there is no reason to believe it would not be, especially if we followed Pawlenty’s vision and aimed to reduce tuition to an absurdly low figure like \$199), it portends a nightmarish educational vision that threatens simultaneously our students’ education *and* our jobs. Whether we are making our case to our Board of Regents, our governor, our state legislators, our students, their parents, or even our family and our friends who are curious about issues of unionization and education, we need to take a page out of

the playbook of the Minnesota nurses union’s efforts in the state last year and make it clear that our union unites and represents us as educators, but that our interests are also united with those of our students. Like the nurses who walked out in an effort to gain concessions that protected both themselves and their patients, we must remember to make the case – the truth – that smaller class sizes that enable *more* interpersonal interaction, more reasonable teaching loads that make it easier to enact more labor-intensive yet more productive pedagogies, as well as appropriate wages, health care, and other remuneration, are all ways of ensuring that our students receive the education they deserve at a public educational institution like UMD. These are also ways to make sure that the educational experience at UMD is one that is too personal and compelling to outsource in an all-online model.

Monthly Drawings for \$2,000 at NEA Member Benefits

Education Minnesota members, including UEA members, can enter into a monthly drawing for a \$2,000 scholarship from the National Education Association’s Member Benefits program and Sallie Mae. Members can register each month from March through August at www.neamb.com or 1-800-637-4636.

We’re on the Web
uea.locals.educationminnesota.org

UEA-D EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: David Schimpf, x7265, *dschimpf*
Vice President: Evan Brier, x7839, *ebrier*
President-Elect: Michael Pfau, x8886, *mpfau*
Past President: John Hamlin, x6387, *jhamlin*
Treasurer: John Hansen, x7566, *jhanzen3*
Member-at-Large: Jannifer David, x8692, *jdavid*
Head Negotiator: currently unfilled
Contract Administrator: Al Roline, x8550, *aroline*

Grievance Officer: Jannifer David, x8692, *jdavid*
BAC Liaison: Jennifer Schultz, x6695, *jschultz*
Legislative Liaison: Michael Mullins, x6155, *mmullins*
Information Officer: Scott Laderman, x7207, *laderman*
Safety Officer: Dan Martin, x6709, *dmartin*
Rep Council Liaison: Eileen Zeitz, x8239, *ezeit*
Rep Council Liaison: Jill Torres, x6758, *jt Torres*