



UNION MATTERS

Vote for Dennis Testa!

Dear Fellow NJEA Member,

During every election cycle, NJEA provides our members with a list of recommended candidates based on each candidate's positions on issues affecting public education, and educators. While the election of pro-education legislators is always important, as an educator and a resident of district 39, this year you have a more vital and personal reason to support our endorsed candidates. That is why This year, your local president and I are asking you to do more than usual for yourself and your profession.

In district 39, NJEA and BCEA have endorsed **Dennis Testa**, past president of both NJEA and BCEA, and his running mate **Josephine Higgins** for the New Jersey General Assembly. Dennis has been a champion of all our causes for over thirty years. He has a special passion for the protection of our state pensions and health benefits. Those benefits are currently under serious attack by the state of New Jersey. The election of Dennis and Josephine is essential to the protection of both our pensions and health benefits.

I, of course, ask you to vote for Dennis and Josephine on November 8th. However, this time just voting for our candidates is not enough. **To ensure victory in this election, I ask each of you to make ten contacts with friends, relatives or neighbors living in the district, requesting that they support our endorsed candidates.** I know that this is a difficult request for some of you but **YOUR BENEFITS ARE AT RISK.**

Sincerely,

Joseph Cappola
President
Bergen County Education Association

Did You Know?

- All dues-paying BCCFA members are automatically Bergen County Education Association, NJEA, and NEA members with all of the benefits these organizations confer.
- There are five bargaining units at BCC: BCCFA, Director's, Professional Staff, Support Staff, and Ciarco Learning Center staff.
- The BCCFA participates in the South Bergen Federal Credit Union (61 Morris Avenue, Garfield, NJ; 973-546-2226). See Peter Helff for an application and details.
- The NJEA 2005 convention is being held in Atlantic City, NJ on November 10 and 11.
- The NEA offers a minimal life insurance policy for all members at no additional cost. It is called Dues-TAB. Members should specify beneficiaries and enroll for this free benefit. Visit www.neamb.com/duetab or see Toby DeMarco for an enrollment form.
- The governing bodies of the BCCFA are the Executive Committee, with five members, and the Representative Assembly (RA), with twenty-four members. Every department at BCC is represented in the RA. A department election determines the representative from each unit.

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Remember that this is your newsletter. If you have any questions that you would like to see discussed, or if there are any issues that you would like to see addressed in future editions, or if you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please contact Toby De Marco (ext. 9282, tdemarco@bergen.edu).

Report from the Middle States Chair

Dear Colleague:

One of the more difficult challenges of creating a self-study document is making sure that it is reflective of the reality on campus. The more feedback the Steering Committee receives, the easier it is to determine whether the document is mirroring various aspects of Bergen life. Many members of our faculty have served on the study groups and the Steering Committee, and some have attended the various open forums that have been scheduled. There was also a very high response rate (over 60%) to the online survey conducted last fall. We are extremely grateful for all of these efforts. Nonetheless, we have not heard from a lot of the faculty since the draft document was made available. The Middle States draft report is available for review in the Library and Academic Vice President's office, and online on the Faculty Home page, and the Steering Committee will be fine-tuning the document through the rest of this semester. I urge you to read it, and discuss it with your friends. Critique it. Write about it. Communicate with the Steering Committee: mssteeringcom@bergen.edu. The more engaged we all are with the process, the more meaningful it becomes.

— Peter Dlugos, Ph.D.
Professor of Philosophy
Chair, Middle States Steering Committee

Teaching Load Reduction for Faculty

Dear Colleagues,

Do you feel overextended teaching five courses per semester? In recent years, our workload at Bergen has increased in both intricacy and volume. More is being asked of us in the classroom due to increased class size, and more is being asked outside of the classroom with respect to administration, assessment, technology, and advisement. The result of this is the creation of unnecessary obstacles to our professional, scholarly, or creative growth as professors as well as a corresponding diminished vitality in teaching. The American Association of University Professors' *Statement on Faculty Workload* argues that community colleges need to achieve workload parity with four-year schools. To this end the BCCFA Contractual Workload Committee has determined that the next contract must not have a teaching load greater than twelve contact hours per semester (generally four courses per semester). If implemented, this proposal would greatly enhance the intellectual and creative lives of faculty at Bergen by allowing us time to participate and keep current in our fields.

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NEW FACULTY PROFILES

Ms. Jennifer Nader

Ms. Nader (no relation to Ralph) is a new faculty member in the English Department. Before being hired this year to a tenure track position, she served as a Lecturer in the English Department for one year. Previously, she taught at Suffolk Community College and SUNY, Stony Brook. She earned her BA degree in Literature from Saint Thomas Aquinas College, and an MA degree in English Literature with a concentration in Medieval Literature from SUNY, Stony Brook. Ms. Nader is a Medievalist with a specialty in translation of Anglo-Saxon and Medieval Welsh. She plans to continue her studies in Irish and Scots, and has a general interest in historical linguistics.

She is a classically trained musician on viola, piano, and cello. SCUBA diving is a passion for her. Besides loving BCC as much as possible, she plans to pursue a Ph.D. degree in Medieval Literature, eventually establish a "Medieval Club" on campus, and develop new curricula for the English Literature courses.

Ms. Stacey K. Balkan

Ms. Balkan is a new tenure track faculty member in the English Department. Ms. Balkan teaches composition, creative writing, drama, women prose writers, American Literature, and surveys of international literature.

Ms. Balkan's specializations are in post-colonial literature of the Indian Diaspora, South Asian and Middle Eastern women's literature, environmental narratives and ethnographies, and Resistance Literatures.

She is currently working on a novel that illustrates the plight of Romanian Jewish immigrants at the turn of the last century.

Outside of the classroom, she directs a local cyclists' organization that works for national and global social justice through the promotion of alternative transportation. She is also a graduate student in the Environmental Studies program at Montclair State University where she is studying Environmental Management and Sustainability.

ENDORSEMENT

At their September 17, 2005 meeting, the Representative Assembly endorsed the following:

Jon Corzine for the Governor of the State of New Jersey;

David Ganz and Bernadette McPherso for Bergen County Freeholders;

Dennis Testa for NJ State Assembly, District 39.

THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Approximately six years ago, I was consulted by President Winn with respect to increasing course section size. It was a special situation because enrollment had unexpectedly soared that semester. I gave my consent as a union official to allow the administration to increase the standard course section size to 42, which is putatively the maximum allowable by the contract. The administration does have the discretionary power to increase class size; however, there has been an abuse of this discretion by the administration. A policy reserved for emergency situations has become standard practice. The 42 number has now become so entrenched in College practice that memories are starting to fade, and we now take for granted the increased class size and all of its deleterious consequences. What are the consequences of such abuse?

Five sections of 42 students each is really six sections of 35 students each. Even if the instructor gets paid for capitation, i.e., the contractually required faculty part-time rate multiplied by 1/35 for each student over 35, the college still makes out. We, however, do extra work and must confront the vagaries of such class sizes—which are myriad—without fair compensation. Seven extra students per section means \$2,388.75 in additional revenue for the College assuming the in-county tuition rate, which means \$11,943.75 per semester for a typical five course load, \$23,887.50 per year. What percentage of your salary is \$23,887.50? Add to this the savings to the college of offering fewer sections, and the need for less classroom space (another problem at BCC). We are doing more work, and the conditions in which we are doing that work are made worse by over-enrolling course sections. There are physical plant issues (crowded rooms, not enough desks, etc.), and educational and pedagogical problems. The administration now likes to throw around the idea that there is no evidence that smaller class sizes benefit students. This is just disingenuous and false. Think about the difference between over-registering a course section and offering a new section at overload rate. The college is making money on this abuse of discretion, and we are suffering, both materially and professionally, for it.

I can assure you that your Faculty Association will be addressing these important issues.

—PETER HELFF
PRESIDENT, BCCFA

Bergen Community College
Faculty Association

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BCCFA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President	Peter Helff
Vice President	Denise Jerman
Secretary	Alan Kaufman
Treasurer	Laurie Hodge
Chair, Rep. Assembly	Richard Comerford

UNION MATTERS

Newsletter Editor	Tobyn De Marco
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Report from the BCCFA Membership Committee

The BCCFA membership committee is now in its second year, the missions of this standing body are to: 1) assist the Executive Committee (EC) in recruiting incoming tenure track faculty to join the association; 2) help mend the relationship between non-BCCFA faculty members and the association, by reaching out to them to find out why they have either quit or declined to join the association, and, when appropriate, voice these concerns to the EC; 3) assist in the colleges new faculty mentoring program by providing social and informational events for first year BCCFA members.

The membership committee is happy to report that in its first two years it has had a 100% success rate in recruiting new faculty members. During this same time period several faculty members, who had left the association have returned (although agency shop probably had something to do with that trend!). Anyway, we think that we are off to a good start and are currently planning our second annual new faculty holiday get-together at my house. New BCCFA members will be getting an e-mail from us with the details. It should be fun!

The membership committee consists of the following: Alan Kaufman, Barbara Alper, Carrie Polnyj, Corinne Kallman, Gene Calderon, Kathy Campbell, Barry Freeman, Laura Ochoa, Peggy O'Neill, PJ Ricatto, Robert Highley, and Tobyn De Marco.

Respectfully submitted,

PJ Ricatto, Ph.D.,
Associate Professor of Chemistry
Chair, BCCFA Membership Committee

Did You Know? *(continued from page 1)*

- There are several committees of the BCCFA: Grievance, Web Site, Membership, Faculty Development, Distance Learning, Contractual Workload. If one is interested in any of these committees, please contact the respective committee chair.
- There are many benefits available to BCCFA members at both the NJEA and NEA websites. Some of these benefits are: discounted group and individual insurance (life, auto, disability, accident, etc.); discounts on financial services, including loans; special member discounts at many retail stores and other services; and tools and tips, including retirement information.
- Members should register at the NEA and NJEA web sites. To do so, have your NJEA PIN number, which is located on your NJEA card, and your social security number ready. Go to the web site and click on register. After you have set up an online account, you will be able to use and view all of the various benefits available to members.
- There is an Association of New Jersey County College Faculty (ANJCCF), which links the faculty unions of the county/community colleges of New Jersey. Their web site is: <http://www.anjccf.org>

Keep in touch with faculty
matters...
[www.bergen.edu/
facultyhome](http://www.bergen.edu/facultyhome)

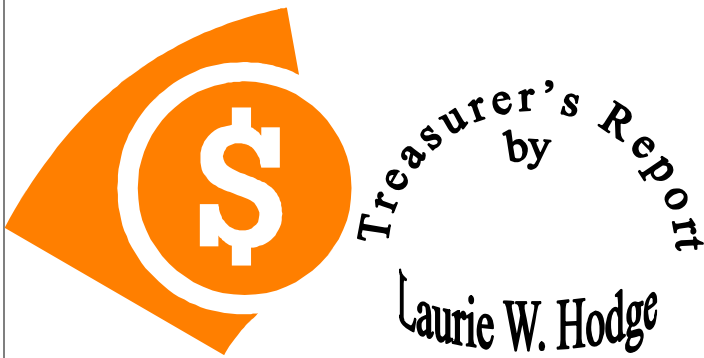
BCCFA WEB PAGE

The BCCFA has a website. It was designed by George Cronk, our former Association Secretary and Website Manager. The Technical Consultants to the site are Anita Verno and Bill Madden. To access the site, simply go to the Faculty Home Page and click on BCC Faculty Association, or log on to www.bergen.edu/bccfa. Check it out, and contact George with any questions and/or suggestions for content.

Special Thanks

The Executive Committee would like to thank George Cronk for his service as Secretary of the BCCFA for the past five years. A job well-done! This is one of the many ways George has contributed to the college over the past 30+ years.

The Executive Committee is happy to report that some progress has been made in the negotiations for the Professional and Support Staff contract. The Committee thanks members of the BCCFA for their solidarity and support!



Treasurer's Report
by
Laurie W. Hodge

It is my pleasure to inform you of the state of our finances as of September 1, 2005. At the beginning of this academic year, we had \$76,123.00 in our treasury. Projected income this year, primarily from dues, will be approximately \$228,000.00. Expenditures – dues, bills, socials, the newsletter, and stipends for the members of the executive committee – will total approximately \$220,000.00.

Teaching Load Reduction

(continued from page 2)

This is the reason we became professors. It would also allow us to be more competitive in attracting the best applicants when searching for new faculty. As a result of this, students at BCC will have access to enhanced educational opportunities. Bergen must do more than say it is a leader in the community college sector—it must *be* a leader. Support quality of teaching above quantity of teaching. Support teaching load reduction!

Best Regards,

Gregg Biermann
Associate Professor of Art
Chair,
BCCFA Ad Hoc Contractual Workload Committee

Editorial Note: As discussed in the September 2005 RA meeting, some people believe a 20% load reduction *seemingly* requires a 20% increase in productivity. First, it is wrongheaded to think of load reduction in this way—we do not get paid for *only* contact hours (there are a plethora of other problems with this view, too). Second, suppose it does mean a 20% increase in productivity. That seems troublesome for us—or so we thought: see the President's Column on page 3.

IN THE NEWS

*Congratulations to Leigh Jonaitis on the birth of her son
Jonah Patrick Campbell!!!*

Member Poll

The BCCFA Executive Committee would like to solicit BCCFA members' views on term limits for department chairpersons. The current contract limits the term of a chairperson to seven years. There seems to be some sentiment that this limit should be extended or eliminated. *What do you think?*

Should department chairperson positions at BCC have a term limit?

Please email your response to:

akaufman@bergen.edu

The NJEA,

BCEA,

A NJCCF, &

BCCFA-RA

have all endorsed

Jon Corzine

for Governor of NJ

Do your part, VOTE!