



The Redwing



Skagit Valley College Federation of Teachers
Local 4985

Mark your calendars

Upcoming SVCFT meetings:

- Exec. Nov. 19, 1:30-3 pm
 - General Nov. 30, 12-1:30 pm
- Outlook invitations with Zoom links were sent to faculty. Please check your inbox.

Contribute!

We encourage contributions to the newsletter. The next deadline for the Winter 2022 issue is Feb. 4. If something is happening in your area that you feel your fellow faculty need to know about, send an article to Editor Elena Bianco at skagitaft@gmail.com. Contributions will be edited for grammar, length and content.

SVCFT Officers:

- Kip Zwolenski, *President*
 Jocie Slepyan, *Vice President for Associate Faculty*
 Brian Manning, *Vice President for Whidbey Island Campus*
 Sunaina Virendra, *Treasurer*
 Diane Johnson & Elena Bianco, *Co-Secretaries*

<http://svcft.wa.aft.org/>

Contact us: svcaft@gmail.com
skagitaft@gmail.com

SVCFT President’s Update

By Kip Zwolenski, *SVCFT President*

President Keegan’s Retirement & Presidential Search Advisory Committee

After 43 years of service in the Washington Community and Technical College system—including 10 years as President, and another two years as a student at Skagit Valley College—Dr. Thomas Keegan is retiring, effective August 31, 2022.

The Board of Trustees is assembling a Presidential Search Advisory Committee, consisting of representatives from a number of constituent groups, both internal and external to the college community. The trustees tasked the union with recommending two faculty representatives to serve on this committee. Last Friday the Skagit Valley College Federation of Teachers’ Executive Council unanimously passed a motion to recommend Claudia Avendano-Ibarra and me, Kip Zwolenski, to serve on the Presidential Search Advisory Committee.

Updates on this process will come from two avenues. The first is the Search Advisory Committee. This committee will share timelines and progress through the SVC website. The committee will also hold campus and community forums, conduct surveys, and plan other activities to collect feedback to inform the drafting of the Presidential Profile (i.e. job description).

The second avenue is the faculty union. We will share updates through our Canvas site and our newsletter—The Redwing. We will also be collecting feedback from faculty at our general membership meetings.

2021-22 Executive Council

We elect our Executive Council annually as a slate as instructed by our constitution. This fall we have operated with an interim council composed of the members from the 2020-21 Executive Council.

I presented the proposed slate for the 2021-22 SVC-FT Executive Council at the October General Membership Meeting on October 26, 2021 and

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President’s Update (cont’d):

can be found below. We are excited to have two new members join the council—David Ridge, a tenure candidate in the Welding Department, and Wanambisi Wesakania, an associate faculty teaching courses in Environmental Conservation, Geography, and Global Issues.

I want to personally thank both our new and continuing leaders. I am truly honored to serve alongside you and continue to learn from our amazing team.

An electronic vote will be held through our Canvas site Monday-Wednesday the week of November 8. This will be an up/down vote on the slate of candidates.

Slate for 2021-22 SVC-FT Executive Council:

- Travis Alexander (Associate Faculty; Environmental Conservation)
- Claudia Avendano-Ibarra (Human Services/Workforce)
- Jennifer Boland (BEA)
- Neta Cahill (Past Negotiator; English for Academic Purposes)
- Sally Dixon (Business Management)
- Beth McGuire (Counseling)
- Stephanie Hunter (Past Officer; English for Academic Purposes)
- Jason Lind (Communication Studies & Journalism)
- Cliff Palmer (Biological Sciences)
- David Ridge (Welding/Workforce)
- Matt Scammell (Lead Negotiator; Economics)
- Wanambisi Wesakania (Associate Faculty; Global Issues)

Your 20-21 SVCFT Executive Council Reps

Travis Alexander, Environmental Conservation	Jason Lind, Communication Studies/ Journalism
Claudia Avendano-Ibarra, Human Services/ Workforce	Matthew Mardesich, Marine Technolgy/ Workforce
Jennifer Boland, BEA/AESL	Beth McGuire, Counseling/Library
Neta Cahill, Past Officer/Negotiator	Cliff Palmer, Natural Sciences
Sally Dixon, Business Management	Matt Scammell, Lead Negotiator
Stephanie Hunter, Past Officer	

For Executive Council contact information, check the SVCFT Canvas Site.



Associate Faculty Update: A Historical Review of Associate Gains Over the Years

by Jocie Slepian Associate Faculty Vice President

The quality of life for associate faculty at Skagit Valley College has changed quite a bit over the years, with improvements coming through the efforts of faculty in negotiations with the administration. These improvements have often been collectively pushed for by associate and tenured faculty, with some key leaders emerging. As we approach contract negotiations again this winter, it helps to look back and see where gains have been, and where we still need to push for more. There are many benefits that I've taken for granted that weren't a reality until the union stepped in.

In 1999, associate faculty at SVC, then called adjuncts, were paid by the hour and there was a flat rate for all adjunct faculty. There was no promotional schedule holding out the prospect of increased pay and no health benefits. Benefits access changed in 2000, when the Washington State Legislature established health care, sick leave, and unemployment insurance for part-time faculty. SVCFT bargained for and gained a change in the calculation of adjunct salaries from hours to instructional units. The change improved SVC adjunct salaries; however, SVC adjunct salaries still ranked 28th out of the 29 Washington community and technical colleges.

2008-13: Former 15 year adjunct/full-time temp (now tenured) faculty Neta Cahill served as the SVC Union president for two terms. She with Sharon Hall and other adjunct faculty pushed for the creation of the "Adjunct Liaison" position, an individual who would represent adjunct faculty and communicate their concerns to admin and the union. A major gain was the codifying of adjunct faculty years of service and in contrast to the "flat rate" for adjunct pay, they pushed for promotion steps to be added, creating a tiered promotion structure of Step 1 and 2 that raised the wages of adjuncts. Adjunct gains included two-year averaging, providing insurance over the summer gap in employment. Through bargaining, led for many years by Greta Kocol, there was improved access to Professional Development funds and Exceptional Faculty Awards. Compensation for meetings improved. Annual assignments, multi-quarter contracts, were offered for adjunct faculty.

2015-2016: Under Celeste Eastwood's leadership as Adjunct Liaison, adjunct faculty gained more support for unemployment claims. Prior to 2015, adjuncts were not encouraged to go on unemployment benefits between quarters or in summer and the college would challenge claims. Celeste went to bat for adjuncts, getting on the phone with Unemployment representatives and judges, as well as meeting with HR to establish a "norm" of not contesting unemployment claims. SVC stopped contesting in 2016, and now when Unemployment contacts HR, staff confirm that there is not reasonable assurance of work for associate faculty between quarters. In the negotiated contract, increased pay through Step A and B raised the wages of adjuncts. With increased promotion steps in 2016, the average associate pay at SVC ranked 13th out of the 29 colleges in the state.

2018: At Bonnie Trent's prompting, President Keegan began meeting with adjunct faculty. From these President's Talks, some changes emerged related to belonging of associates: Associates were given

faculty parking stickers, ensured equal access to workspaces, their titles were changed from adjunct to associate.

Associate Faculty Update (cont'd)

2016-2020: Under Stephanie Hunter's leadership as Associate Liaison, many new gains were seen through the negotiated contract and individually. In the 2019 negotiations, associates gained the option of being department chairs, compensation for meetings and collaborative work, and an additional promotion step (Step C) that ensured wages 75% of tenured base salaries. Today, average associate pay at SVC ranks in the upper 25th percentile of the 29 Washington Community and Technical Colleges.

This list is the micro view of the situation for associates, improvement in quality of life on the ground within a system that is inherently inequitable. Full-time associate faculty do much of the same work as tenured faculty, yet they receive 30-75% of the pay. As we approach contract negotiations this winter, we have micro and macro level aims for associate faculty, with pay equity and job security on the list. Still, in this article, I want to acknowledge the incredible work of many faculty that pushed for improvements for associates over the last few decades. Many of them were associates themselves when they did so. Their involvement mattered, and so does yours.

To get involved with the union, feel free to contact any of your SVCFT officers or Executive Council Representatives.

Contract Corner: How the SVCFT Came to Be

by Neta Cabill, Past President

This is an excerpt from a history compiled for our membership by Trish Barnes, English professor emeritus, and former SVCFT President for many years. A more detailed timeline and description many of our challenges and accomplishments as a union can be found in the SVCFT Canvas site stored in "Files" under "SVCFT Union History."

In Solidarity: A Brief History SVC Faculty Unions 1964-2004

The faculty of Skagit Valley College affiliated with the National Education Association (NEA) and the Washington Education Association (WEA) in 1965 to become Skagit Valley College Education Association (SVCEA.)

In 1994, faculty began investigating the possibility of changing the union's affiliation from NEA/WEA to the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the Washington Federation of Teachers, now the American Federation of Teachers Washington. The American Federation of Teachers is the largest union of higher education employees in the country. The focus of NEA/WEA appeared at this time to be K-12 issues. SVC faculty wondered whether their concerns might be more directly addressed by AFT/WFT. Nancy Kennedy and Wendy Rader Konofalski were invited to meet with SVC faculty to discuss the possible benefits to SVC faculty of affiliation with AFT Washington.

In June of 1996, following the procedure required by the Public Employment Relations Commission, a

vote was held to determine the future of faculty affiliation at SVC. Of the 210 votes cast, 172 were for WFT/AFT; 13 were for WEA/NEA; and 25 were for no representation. On September 13, 1996, the faculty association became Skagit Valley College Federation of Teachers. Nancy Kennedy and Wendy Rader Konofalski were present to join the group for the signing of the charter.

SVCFT Executive Council Fall Quarter Update

by Elena Bianco & Diane Johnson, Co-Secretaries

The union executive council met twice in Fall Quarter, on Sept. 28 and Oct. 19. Here's are highlights of issues that were discussed.

- **Covid Protocols:** Faculty are urged to call Security to assist with enforcement of protocols, such as mask-wearing. Protocols for Winter Quarter are expected to stay the same as for Fall.
- **Vaccine mandate:** There have been 5 exemptions granted to faculty. One faculty was not granted a contract because they were unable to meet the requirements of a clinical facility. Any faculty failing to comply will be granted due process per the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).
- **Presidential search:** The executive council will choose faculty to serve on the search committee. The union will write a letter to the Board of Trustees indicating qualities a President should have. The union will keep faculty informed of any forums or campus visits.
- **2021-22 Executive Council** slate was approved.
- **VP for Associate Faculty:** The council voted to retain Jocie Slepyan in this role. She is working on creating a training for new associate faculty.
- **Negotiations update:** We will enter into a full contract reopened this year. Administration and the union both have an interest in codifying decisions made in the last two years and in creating a strong, coherent contract.
- **Evaluation Forms:** The executive council will be asked to review faculty evaluation forms. Sunaina Virendra, Jennifer Boland and Brian Manning were selected to the subcommittee that will review the forms. They will get input from others as necessary. The board voted to pay faculty who work on the revising the forms at the \$60 per hour rate.
- **CTCLink:** The board received an update on the system. Faculty should look for training soon on how to use the system. The scheduling matrix will be added to ctcLink. We are hoping that it will be flexible enough to allow for changes that were suggested by SVCFT last year.
- **NWLC:** The council considered joining the Northwest Washington Labor Council, an organization of local labor unions. It costs \$75 per year for locals to join. A motion to join was tabled until the budget could be reviewed.

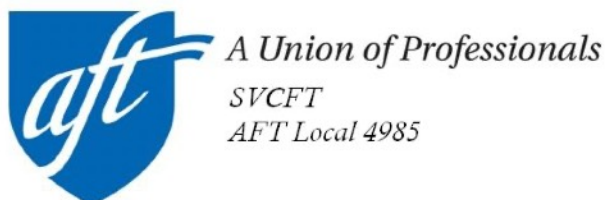
Faculty Evaluation Forms Update

SVCFT Executive Council members and officers Sunaina Virendra, Brian Manning and Jennifer Boland make up a work group who have been tasked with finalizing revisions to the faculty evaluation forms following the 2018-21 Collective Bargaining Agreement's (CBA) revised language related to the faculty evaluation process. Their work builds on the work of an earlier Evaluations Workgroup and the Joint Labor Management Committee (JLMC). The task force drafted the following principles for their revisions, and wanted to share them out with the union membership.

Principles for Fall 2021 Revisions

- Honors agreements reached in the 2018-21 CBA about the process and the type of instruments in the portfolio
- Builds on the foundation established by the initial workgroup and JLMC
- Viewed as iterative and “continual improvement” work that is supported through a systematic way of revisions
- Each cycle will bring new insights and identify areas for improvement
- We need to capture and then act on these discoveries in a systematic way
- Embeds a portfolio approach
- Directly links to the CBA (already done)
- Uses a numbering convention and consistent titles to facilitate accessibility
- Identifies the purpose for each instrument and states connections to other instruments
- Articulates the audience (who uses which instrument)
- States who is responsible for completing the tool
- Specifies the timetable
- Looks and appears consistent (same layout, same type face etc.)
- Is scaffolded (starts with Faculty Competencies)
- Follows a transparent, inclusive and time-bound process that consults key stakeholders

The goal is to get final version of the forms to faculty for review the first week of January. Please forward any questions about the process to Union President Kip Zwolenski.



Our Stories: faculty sharing their stories

“Our Stories” is a new feature of The Redwing, that allows faculty to share stories in print or other media. The format is flexible and can be non-fiction or fiction. They can be union-related or not. The goal for us is to get to know each other and the issues that are important to us. This first installment is from Andrew Vinyard, chemistry faculty, who shared a personal story that was recorded as part of the Menhealing Men’s Story Project in May. Menhealing is a non-profit organization that supports survivors of male sexual abuse. Please be aware that the linked recorded story features portrayal of abuse, which may be triggering for some. Ed.)

by Andrew Vinyard

When I started recovery, I wasn’t looking to launch a movement. I now understand that what happened to me is not unique. I’ve decided to share my experience in an honest and vulnerable way.

I hope my actions will encourage others to reciprocate and risk being vulnerable with someone they trust. I didn’t start by sharing my experience with the public; I started with one person I trusted. Thank you for taking the time to listen to me.

Link to Andrew’s [Men’s Story Project Video](#)



Instructional Tip of the Quarter: Streaming Video Equity

submitted by Elena Bianco, Redwing Editor

What do students do when they need to stream a video for class, but the only place they can get it is a subscription-based streaming service like HBO, Discovery+, or Hulu? In this new era of streaming content, and an explosion of streaming documentaries, many providers that lack a purchase model for educational institutions to screen that content. As a result, librarians around the country are increasingly frustrated by the inability to do what we’ve done for decades - make documentaries and other films available for our students at no cost to them.

These providers argue that their product is low cost - maybe just \$5 per month, and it’s easy enough to sign up for a free trial. But how many of us have fallen into that trap, fully intending to cancel, only to be surprised by a bill the next month? That may not be a big deal for most of us, but for many of our students those little bills add up to a hardship. At the very least it’s inequitable.

And, this doesn’t address the issue of whether this content will be archived and be made accessible after it is no longer popular.

Instructional Tip of the Quarter (cont'd)

So far, no solid solution has presented itself. Netflix has a Youtube channel for documentaries that it will make available to stream to educators, but it's not their entire catalog of documentaries. AFT Washington's Community for Colleges Coalition will have this item on their agenda at their Nov. 10 meeting. I'm presenting there in the hopes that this might start a wider conversation among educators. Maybe we can even start pressuring these companies to come up with a way for schools to show this content with an institutional pricing model (just like in the old days when we paid three times as much for an institutional version of a dvd that an individual could buy on Amazon for \$10).

In the meantime, please consider ways to make watching streaming films for class more equitable. You can do this by:

- Checking services the college library already subscribes or has agreements with, such as Films on Demand, Avon Academic, Kanopy and Swank Digital Campus. Most have equivalent content - it just may not be as trendy as the latest thing on Hulu or HBO.
- If you can't find it there, email elena.bianco@skagit.edu for help finding a distributor and securing a license. Sometimes, though, that just doesn't work - especially if it's proprietary content one of these subscription-based services. In that case, you'll need to weigh the pros and cons of showing the particular film and you may want to consider an alternative.

Finally, a word of caution about "free" streaming services. Many of these harbor malware that can infect your computer. The FTC warned about this not long ago, and it's a good idea never to trust a site that is promising free access to copyrighted material..

Have a teaching tip that your colleagues may find useful? Send it to skagitaft@gmail.com

What's New in the Library: Additional staffing

by Margret Mills, Librarian

The Library is excited to welcome three new members to the team.

- Katie Olafson will be the paraprofessional supervising the Mount Vernon Circulation Desk, Course Reserves and Interlibrary Loan. Her arrival will allow Sharon Cherney to transition to her new role supporting the library's systems, technical services, and media services.
- Shalon Hurlbert is an associate faculty librarian at the Mount Vernon campus. Shalon will be helping with public services, staffing our in-person and chat reference, teaching and managing the ELA and Children's collections.
- Geri Hopkins joins as associate faculty librarian and will help provide services and instruction for e-Learning students, and will be a resource for faculty who are interesting in adopting Open Educational Resources for their courses.

As always, faculty librarians are here to help you or your students with any resources or research needs. Feel free to reach out via: · Email us at mv.library@skagit.edu. · Zoom: Set up an appointment on Zoom (<https://skagit.libwizard.com/f/librarianzoom>). Visit us in the libraries M-W 9 am -4 pm.