

Board of Trustees Meeting, 10/06/2022

Faculty Speakers:

1. Sherry Sippel (Bargaining and budget)
2. Janet Willman (K-12 comparisons)
3. Wendy Pogoda (Unpaid compensation)
4. John Harding (Value of Faculty)
5. Tony Buonaquisti (Retirement)
6. Cheri Borman (Overload)
7. Timothy Griffin (Instructional costs and FRS)
8. April Muchmore-Volken (Written Statements)

Additional Written Statements:

1. Tony Buonaquisti (Physics, DM)
2. David Bueller (Math, DM)
3. Tametryce Collins (Psychology, BR)
4. Suzy Devore (Theater, YB)
5. Walt Ellis (Sociology, DM)
6. Alicia Ellison (Librarian, DM)
7. Peter Germroth (Science, DM)
8. Deb Ghosh (Biological Science, BR)
9. Kristin Heathcock (Librarian, BR)
10. Terese Hesse (Nursing, PC)
11. Todd Joseph (Psychology, DM)
12. Suzanne Lynch (English, DM)
13. Beth McCullough (Chemistry, BR)
14. Judy Nolasco (English, YB)
15. Roxanna Palmer (Librarian, SS)
16. Jeffrey Rubinstein (English, DM)
17. Terry Varvil (Math, YB)
18. Sherry Sippel (Bargaining and budget)
19. Janet Willman (K-12 comparisons)
20. Wendy Pogoda (Unpaid compensation)
21. John Harding (Value of Faculty)
22. Tony Buonaquisti (Retirement)
23. Cheri Borman (Overload)
24. Timothy Griffin (Instructional costs and FRS)



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Hillsborough Community College

To : Hillsborough Community College Board of Trustees
From : Anthony D. Buonaquisti, Ph.D.
Re : Faculty Salary Bargaining 2022-2023
Date : 10/2/2022

Dear Board of Trustees:

I am writing to express my alarm at the HCC Administration's policy of permanently reducing scheduled faculty salaries by one step.

My understanding is that the HCC Administration has linked the loss of the faculty salary step to an unavoidable loss of college revenue that was caused by a falloff in student enrollment during the pandemic.

Last year I was sympathetic, believing that the college had no choice. However, I did think that the situation was incredibly ironic because the college withheld a faculty salary step when I and my faculty colleagues were working incredibly hard to educate students under dire circumstances. We did not simply work from home. We had to develop new ways of teaching. In my teaching career (middle school, high school, university and community college), I have never faced and overcome so many challenges before. I went way above and beyond what the college could claim as its right.

This year, when the HCC Administration moved to make the loss of salary step permanent, I realized that the loss of step was a policy, not an unavoidable consequence. As a result, I began questioning the HCC Administration's justification of the loss of salary step. Here are my questions that I asked:

- 1) Why did the college propose the loss of step in the years that directly preceded the pandemic?
- 2) Why is the college reducing the promised salary of faculty while increasing the salaries of administrators and staff?
- 3) What tangible steps has the college taken to obtain the funding needed to pay the owed faculty step?
- 4) Why didn't the college president reveal the loss of faculty salary step when asked about pandemic related budget cuts in an interview with WUSF's Jack Prator on 7/11/2022?
- 4) In the interview with WUSF's Jack Prator on 7/11/2022 the College President indicated that the fall off in revenue from enrollment was balanced by the increase in state funding. Why did the College President not acknowledge that in his Administrative Update message to faculty on 9/16/2022?

5) The faculty salary step system is a redistribution of pay between faculty rather than an annual added salary burden to the college. Each year higher step retirees are replaced by lower step new hires. In a college that has a uniform faculty profile the step system costs nothing. On any given year the college may gain or lose money due to fluctuations in faculty retirement. How much would the withheld faculty salary step have cost the college in each of the last two years, taking into account retirement?

6) HCC has an annual budget of 136.4 million dollars. If nobody retires the promised faculty salary step costs about 333 thousand dollars. Why would the college alienate one third of its full time employees to save at most 0.25% of its annual budget? (By the way, if one step-30 faculty retires and is replaced by one step-1 new hire the cost falls to about 300 thousand dollars.)

7) In the 2019-2022 FUSA Contract under the Faculty Salary Table point 14.2 F states "Faculty salary increases are contingent upon funding availability." Does this mean funding that is available to the college or funding that the college chooses to make available for faculty salaries?

In teacher training we are taught to keep faith with the 'heart of the class'. The golden rule is that you treat all classes fairly. So, you do not play favorites. You do keep your promises. You do tell everybody the same truth. You can have high standards. You can be tough. But you do not take action that will trigger a sense of injustice in your class. The HCC administration has ignored this rule. The result is that many faculty members feel betrayed. In teacher training they warn that if you lose the trust of the heart of the class, you will stop being an effective teacher and become a beleaguered manager, because that class will not trust you. This is never a good option, for you, your class, or your institution. This is not good for HCC.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "AD Buonaquisti". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "A" and a long, horizontal flourish at the end.

Anthony D. Buonaquisti (Ph.D.)
Associate Prof. of Physics
813 253 7254
abuonaquisti@hccfl.edu

HCC Board of Trustees,

I was hired as a full time, tenure track faculty member in August 2020. At the time I had just about 15 years of experience teaching at the college level. I was placed on step 5 with grade II+ which is 51,172.08. This is my third year at HCC and my pay remains the same. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, I would need 58,309.49 to have the same buying power that I had two years ago.

In terms of housing, using the 1/4 of my take home pay rule, my maximum housing should be around \$800/month. A Zillow search results in zero houses or apartments within 20 miles of the Dale Mabry campus.

Even though I love the work that I do, I find myself looking at job postings outside of academia in my area of expertise, data analysis. Many of those jobs pay double or triple what I am getting paid now. I am going to miss out on over a million dollars over the rest my career.

If my spouse didn't work, I wouldn't be able to afford to teach and live in Tampa.

Morale doesn't pay the bills, and morale is declining.

David Bueller
Mathematics, Dale Mabry Campus

October 4, 2022

To: Board of Directors-Hillsborough Community College

Greetings, my name is TaMetryce Collins, and I have worked at HCC for 24 years. I have had 10 Deans and 5 campus Presidents. Despite the turnover of this institution, I, along with many of my colleagues, have provided and continue to provide outstanding instruction to our students and superior contributions to both the college and to our profession. Why is it that the boots-on-the-ground, the staples of this institution, seem to be valued the least? Year after year we continue to hear how valuable we are.

There is truly a negative correlation between what is being said about the faculty at HCC and what is being done to the faculty at HCC. To be honest, I would rather hear that we are not essential and easily replaceable and that our contributions to this institution are routine.

To quote St. Anthony of Padua and Carl Gustav Jung “Actions speak louder than words’ and “It’s not what you say, but what you do”. We are honoring our commitment; I wish HCC would honor its commitment.

Respectfully,

TaMetryce Collins

Board of Trustees,

Suzu DeVore, Tenured Theatre Professor at the Ybor City Campus

I have been at HCC 13 years. I have grown the Theatre Department to almost double its size from when I started. I currently work 50 hours a week and more during production time. As for “all of our time off”, I am still asked to be in meetings, teaching overload classes, and continuing to work on unfinished projects from the previous semester or work on new projects for the upcoming semester, none of which I am compensated for, all above and beyond my contractual duties. I could say no, and I do say no more and more. Think about what happens when faculty stop working above and beyond their contractual obligations, you will lose HCC presence in the community and student enrollment. I love teaching my students. I am passionate about my profession as a theater educator, and the importance of theater in society. I do NOT love the institution that I work for anymore. This institution has become a tragic example of a dysfunctional and toxic work environment that does not value the very employees who are the backbone of what the institution does, and that is to educate students, and to provide community partnerships. The statistics are evident of the lack of financial compensation to the faculty, which is even more detrimental in an economy with the highest inflation and cost of living rates in years. I am living paycheck to paycheck and teaching overloads every semester and every summer, and we are told not to depend on overload. If I did not teach overload, I would not be able to pay my bills. The faculty are what kept enrollment going during the pandemic and are the ones who continue to and who have always helped it to grow.

Faculty attend and facilitate enrollment and recruitment events without pay and is not contractual. These are just a few examples that I either coordinate and/or attend.

- **Fiesta Day, Ybor City**
- **The College Performing Arts Fair, The Straz Center**
- **Host Arts Immersion Day, event where prospective performing arts students visit the Ybor City Campus**
- **Present to K – 12 Theater teachers at Hillsborough County In Service**
- **Coordinate on campus events with EDC's**

When I share my stories of frustration to colleagues from around the state and the nation, I am often asked why I stay. It is harder and harder to answer that question. Perhaps you see losing tenured faculty as a benefit, as you will save money with lower incoming salaries, but I know that mentality will not benefit the college. I have seen it in departments across the country that thought the same, but instead what they got were more disgruntled employees, lack of consistency for students, a break down in the departments, and therefore a decline in enrollment, not to mention the tarnish on the institutions name. We the faculty urge you to give us back our worth and our value and pay us a living wage.

Suzanne Devore

TO: Board of Trustees,

My name is Walt Ellis. I am Professor of Sociology at Dale Mabry and a Department Chair. This is my 48th year at HCC full-time. I started in the 1975-76 school year. I love it here and view HCC as my family!

I hope my comments will be taken in the spirit that I am giving them. I mean no disrespect to Dr. Atwater, whom I know personally and respect, or to the Board members, whom I also respect (I have met a few of you briefly at various events). However, I think it is important that someone who has been at HCC almost since the birth of the college weigh in on the salary issue of my younger colleagues.

I am not, I repeat not, writing about my personal economic situation. I am at the top of the pay scale and even though the maximum yearly salary has only been raised once (by \$2000) in the last 14 years, and an occasional \$1000-2000 bonus, I can survive all right, especially due to having the time to teach overloads since I do not have children to raise at home or provide for in college, as most of my colleagues do.

I am writing due to my concern about my colleagues who have been here around 1 to 20 years. Their salaries have not kept pace with inflation over the last several years, especially the high rate of inflation this year. Many of these are parents with young children or children in college and these times are very trying for them economically. I was on the faculty selection committee for all sociology, psychology, and anthropology faculty currently serving on the Dale Mabry campus and a couple of faculty serving on other campuses. These are highly qualified, strongly motivated, professionally performing faculty, most of them serving on numerous college committees and/or serving as faculty advisors to student clubs and organizations! Unfortunately, we are not going to be able to retain (or recruit) faculty of this high caliber if salaries are not raised. I am already hearing talk in the hallways about faculty planning to put in applications at other colleges!! Also, we cannot recruit new faculty (or replacement faculty) on these extremely low minimum starting salaries. Our minimum is \$42,500, while Hillsborough County K-12 starting salary is \$47,500. I cannot imagine serving on any new faculty selection committees if \$42,500 is the starting salary. The quality of applicants we would attract would, in my opinion, be dismal. Who would attend grad school, acquire a Masters or higher, accumulate student loans, and then apply to a school with \$42,500 as a starting salary? As a comparison, \$42,500 today would have been \$7725 in 1975, the year I started here. My actual starting salary in 1975 was \$11,000. Today, that would be a starting salary of \$60,500. Now, I did have 2 years of college teaching experience and a Masters plus 30; however, that only gave me a few hundred more than the very bottom. Historically, the U.S. was just coming out of President Nixon's wage and price controls (1971-1973) and an economic recession (1973-75), so it was not a great economic time in America and that was not a great salary. Yet, it is way higher than the buying power of our starting salary today. Hopefully, you get my point that current salaries for our faculty are going to hurt the quality of instruction at HCC, and thus, the quality of our graduates, and ultimately, the reputation and standing of HCC in our community.

Sincerely,

Walt Ellis

Dear Board Members,

Thank you for allowing college faculty the time to speak before you last month, and today.

This statement will be brief.

More and more nearby schools continue to raise their minimum salaries to \$47,500 or higher, while our minimum salary remains at \$42,187.

This, combined with an ongoing inflation rate of over 8 per cent, makes the College's proposal of only an average of 0.9% increase per year over the last two years an unacceptable offer.

In addition, talk is cheap, and it doesn't buy good morale.

We are told by the Administration that our hard work—especially over the last two years—is appreciated. And yet, while other job classes receive salary adjustments—in the case of Administrators, significant increases—we are denied our negotiated step increases.

I do not feel valued. After 21 years here, my morale level is low, and I am far from alone in feeling this way.

And that is a shame.

Sincerely,

Alicia Ellison
Librarian Professor
Dale Mabry Campus

Board Statement by Peter Germroth, PhD
Professor of Biology, HCC

This week I am celebrating my 20-year teaching anniversary at HCC. Never in these 20 years have I felt as disappointed and disrespected as I do this fall. I pioneered online classes years ago, I served on the college- and campus tenure committees for many years and served in many other committees above and beyond what was required. When COVID struck, I, as my colleagues, put in extra effort and many hours to convert all classes to an online format so HCC could stay open. At the same time the administration did not live up to our contract saying there was no money. I entered DROP last year and due to not getting the contractual pay-raise my retirement pay was negatively affected. I took it then as bad luck and bad timing.

Yet now we are post Covid, HCC has good enrollment, and the administration assures the Board that the college's finances are solid. So solid in fact that administrators gave themselves a substantial raise as FUSA has well documented. Yet the very same administration insists that there is no money for faculty while due to inflation I and all my colleagues are losing real income.

I never expected to get wealthy being a faculty member, but I expect to be adequately paid, to make more money over time, not less, and I expect that contractual promises are being kept. Personally, if this situation is not rectified soon, I will and do disengage from any extra effort beyond the letter of my contract. I have never before done that, and always went above and beyond in all my past 20 years at HCC. Not anymore unless words of praise for faculty are followed by action.

Peter Germroth

To: HCC Board of Trustees:

My name is Deb Ghosh, and I am an Associate Professor of Science, teaching at Hillsborough Community College (HCC) for sixteen years. Fourteen years ago, I first came to watch a Board meeting as a new tenure track faculty - Dr. Stevenson, then president of HCC, had advised all new faculty that we must see our HCC Board of Trustees (BOT) in action to see how they steer our organization. After that first attendance, I returned with a sense of pride and euphoria in my workplace, HCC. That was also the first time I saw you, Ms. Watkins, steering the BOT meeting with grace, sophistication, and stewardship, as you are doing today.

Today, fourteen years later, I am, for the first time, writing to the BOT with a sense of grievance, frustration, and unappreciation. Instead of investing in our workforce by raising wages for faculty and building collaboration, the HCC administration is redefining the ecosystem with autocratic ideas that are demoralizing and toxic, to say the least. Everyone is entitled to be treated with dignity. And that's what our labor laws are all about: dignity and fair compensation. We deserve to get our contractually agreed pay and pay raises. It is astounding (not to mention disgraceful) that we are going about this faculty negotiation and impasse in hyperbole – and it's not equitable.

I teach science labs – upper-level science labs. My lab pays me less than my lecture, though the class times are the same for lectures and labs. Let me share simple math – for every lab I teach, I earn six fewer contact hours. So, in a year, I teach nine labs, that's 54 contact hours less, which is \$4050 less in my salary. Hence in the last ten years, that would be around \$40,000.

Board members, you are at the helm of this institute, and I trust that you can steer the administration to make the right decision – for this is your opportunity and obligation to show your leadership in steering HCC administration to treat its faculty with fairness and dignity. HCC administration is at the top of the Greedflation index – HCC administration received a 30% increment (~\$20,000), and faculty compensation was lower than 0% with no contracted step advancement. The need for action is more acute today because of the sharp changes in our economy, and we, the faculty at HCC, have EARNED our fair wage and negotiated contract and must be paid our rightful compensation.

Deb Ghosh

To the Board of Trustees,

I'm Kristin Heathcock, faculty member at the Brandon Campus. As a longtime librarian at HCC, I can proudly say that I have devoted the majority of my career to helping people improve their lives. I have done many things at the college to support student success - I was the initiator for the Wi-Fi hotspot program, co-wrote the grant for the initial round of laptops for student checkout at the library, led the development of the library masterplan, and am co-leader of the Zero Textbook Cost initiative for the college. Everything I do for the college is focused on student success and engagement. I have a bit of a reputation for doing a lot for our students and our college. I'm not alone, the faculty at this college regularly go above and beyond to help our students succeed. Right now, my colleagues and I are frustrated.

Our morale has dropped to the lowest I've experienced during my 16 years at the college.

It's sad that we have to beg for our step increases each year - and even worse knowing that the administration plans to keep this as the status quo. The cost of living has increased dramatically over the past few years. It costs me more to do everything - from getting gas to get to campus five days a week - to buying groceries for myself and my family. Often, we are told by the college to do more with less, but underappreciated employees will not do more, instead they will likely do less.

Kristen Heathcock

To the Board of Trustees for HCC:

I am a full-time nursing faculty that has been with HCC since 2018. I was an adjunct for 2018-19, Temp Full time for 2019-20, and then full-time faculty since fall 2020. One of the requirements of all full-time faculty is that we have our master's degree. This is very costly but well worth it to be able to teach in higher education. When I heard that full-time faculty at HCC make less than a full-time teacher in the school district I was amazed. School teachers are only required to have the bachelor's degree not a master's degree. If Hillsborough County School district can move to increase minimum pay to \$47,500, I am not sure why HCC cannot do the same. The reality is that we should be making more than the school district if we are required to have our master's degree.

The nursing department here at HCC is really struggling to get qualified faculty. The last two years during the hiring process, we had numerous qualified people turn down a job teaching at HCC because they just couldn't work for that little pay. I understand that we can work overload, however, I can only do so many hours each week and be able to keep up with the other requirements of my contract (Office hours, committee work, as well as continuing my own education). To effectively teach the next generation of nurses, we need more qualified faculty to help with the load of classes (both undergraduate and our RN-BSN courses that we are rolling out).

I am also saddened by the lack of consideration for the financial well-being of faculty. I know that for the 2019-20 year the full-time faculty were given their step, although it was given at the very end of the semester. Last school year we didn't receive a step at all, just a one-time stipend. This is causing most faculty members to have financial hardship. I have two children currently in university along with starting my doctorate in nursing practice (DNP) as well. The extra stress and financial strain that this lack of step last year and this year is causing in my household shouldn't be happening.

I hope that the board listens to the concerns that the faculty are bringing forward. We are asking to be given what is due to us according to the contract and to what Governor DeSantis put into place for anyone with a bachelor's degree or higher.

Sincerely
Teresa Hesse

Dear HCC Board of Trustees,

10/5/22

My name is Todd Joseph and I am the Division Chair for Public Safety, Social, & Behavioral Sciences and an associate professor of psychology at HCC. I apologize that I am unable to attend this board meeting in person; I have conflicting responsibilities as a volunteer board member of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) of my community's elementary school.

The purpose of this statement is to help you understand the effect of the administration's failure to adhere to the current contract and to negotiate the new contract in good faith. As a committed member of the HCC community since 2010, I honestly feel that I have been lied to and disrespected. I feel like many of my colleagues do, that our contract is not being honored. We were told that if we did our jobs well and received positive evaluations from our supervisors, we would receive incremental steps designating our seniority and commitment to HCC and we would receive small yearly salary increases, which could help us deal with increases to our cost of living. When the college decided repeatedly to hold those steps & contractually agreed upon salary increases back, I began to wonder whether HCC was an employer I could trust.

I see our contract as analogous to a syllabus. Our contract outlines exactly what faculty can expect from administration and what administration can expect from faculty. A syllabus outlines what students can expect from faculty and what faculty can expect from students. If I tell students in my syllabus that if they perform well on all of the work I assign them that they will get an "A" in the course, it would be fundamentally unfair for me to assign them a "C" when they completed all the assigned work in an exemplary fashion. Similarly, if I come to work and perform exceedingly well (as documented by evaluations by my supervisor), I should be able to expect that, since I had fulfilled my contractual obligations, the college would fulfill its. Imagine how quickly students would revolt if we broke their trust by not adhering to the syllabus; it is hard to expect faculty to feel differently than students would if they were lied to.

In conclusion, I love HCC and my colleagues love HCC, but we can't be expected to be happy about being lied to and disrespected. Many of us have turned down other, more lucrative jobs because we believe in the mission of HCC, we feel like HCC is our family, and we want to make a difference in the lives of our students. All of the research in organizational psychology shows us that when trust breaks down in an organization, so does motivation, performance, and fidelity. It is hard to feel valued and motivated when you don't feel respected. I am sincerely hoping that this ugly episode is simply an aberration, and that just like in any relationship, we are able to work through this difficult time and be stronger as a family. But just like in a family, the one who is untruthful and disloyal needs to admit their wrongdoing and make amends. I hope that the administration can admit their errors and come back to the bargaining table in a fair and truthful way. I know the faculty is happy to do our part. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Todd Allen Joseph

Division Chair – Public, Social, & Behavioral Sciences
Psi Beta National Council President
Co-Chair – APA Committee on Associate & Baccalaureate Education
Treasurer/Secretary – Southeastern Psychological Association
Executive Director – Central Florida Psychology Summit
Hillsborough Community College

Dear BOT,

Every semester the administration opens the year with a statement of how much we are appreciated. Unfortunately, as much as we appreciate the sentiment, these times call for more than words. I am here to tell you that the faculty is hurting and is asking for your sincere consideration in helping to remediate our condition.

We are struggling economically. Many of us are trying desperately to keep our head above water as we try to meet our basic needs of food and shelter. Many of us have taken on extra classes on top of the extra classes we normally teach. We have been driven to take on too many classes, despite the burden it causes us and despite our inability to be the great substantive teachers that we are accustomed to being and that our students need because we are spread so thin. I know this firsthand because this is what I've had to do in order to meet my monthly bills. My house is falling down around me, and I cannot afford to fix anything because I am making less money today than I was making just three years ago. Prices have skyrocketed, and my paycheck has remained the same. My insurance has gone up, my taxes have gone up, my electricity has doubled, but my salary has remained essentially the same.

Many of us give a lot of our time and intellectual talent to HCC and want to feel valued for the great work we do here. I am humbly asking that you think about the morale of the faculty, the talent we bring to HCC and the Tampa Bay community. Our current hardships are real. We are asking that you please consider how to negotiate HCC's resources to show the faculty how truly valued they are at the college.

Thanks for your consideration.

Suzanne Lynch, Ph.D.
Professor of English
Fulbright GPA Project Director 2021-2022
Dale Mabry Campus
(813) 253-7356

To: Hillsborough Community College Board of Trustees
From: Beth McCullough; Full-time Chemistry Faculty, Brandon
Campus HOPE Scholar Mentor
HCC AMSA Pre-Health Chapter Faculty Advisor
HCC Pre-Health Society Director

For the past 30 plus years, teaching and mentoring students has been my passion. I started at HCC in 1996 as the Science Lab Supervisor and adjunct faculty member. I was thrilled when a full-time chemistry position became open, and I was selected for the position in 2001. Through the years, other more lucrative career opportunities have presented themselves, but I always turned them down. I felt valued and respected as a faculty member of HCC and being part of the mission of the college was very rewarding. I was satisfied and comfortable living a moderate lifestyle. Under President Stevenson's leadership, the college brought faculty salaries up to be competitive with the other community colleges in the state so that we could attract top faculty to our college. Faculty saw substantial salary increases but over time there began to be some disparities in salaries where faculty with much less experience were getting paid more than faculty with more years of experience. At this point in time, I was a single mom raising two girls on one salary with no compensation from their father. I was forced to rely on credit cards and cash advances from Amscot to prevent losing my home which was the only security my girls knew.

I was very pleased when the college approved the recommendations of the last faculty salary study because it enabled me, for a short time, to meet all of my expenses and for the first time I thought I might be able to get out of credit card debt. Having the administration put this contract into effect made me feel like a valued member of our college community and that the administration realized the challenges that faculty face in meeting the needs of their families. My enthusiasm was short lived when year after year, the college did not give us our steps on time, or at all, and there was no increase to the base pays which was part of our negotiated contract. In order to make ends meet as prices increased including health insurance, by teaching overload. For many years, I taught 10 classes each major semester and 8 classes during the summer. I had to teach this much to be able to meet basic needs and do repairs to my home. We rarely went on a vacation (only to see family when we could afford it) and we shared one car for many years. Several years ago, the administration limited the number of overload hours we could teach and now I can only teach 8 classes per semester versus 10 so in effect, I am making less money now than I did in previous years.

On top of this being a science faculty also reduces my compensation compared to other faculty. Half of my load every semester are science labs which are paid 6 fewer load points than lecture classes which meet for the same number of contact hours. Lab is actually harder and more time consuming to teach than lecture. I am in charge of the safety of the students and provide individualized attention to

students throughout the lab period to facilitate the development of critical thinking skills. Each week the students turn in written lab report. To properly assess if students are mastering the course learning outcomes, I must carefully review the data for precision, evaluate if calculations are tabulated correctly, analyze the correctness of post-lab questions, and the validity of conclusions. Providing detailed constructive feedback is a lengthy process. Over my 21 years of teaching labs, I

have been paid \$113,000 less than my colleagues who are teaching the same number of points for the same number of contact hours. Looking back, I realize that if I had been paid the same for teaching lab courses that I may not have faced the daily financial stress I've endured during my teaching career. I am once again relying on credit cards to make ends meet. I do not have any easily accessible savings and worry each paycheck how I am going to pay all of my bills.

Students have always been my priority and I have gone above and beyond to help my students develop in and out of the classroom. I have been a HOPE Scholar Mentor for the past four years and the Faculty Advisor for our HCC AMSA Pre-Health club for over 20 years mentoring our HCC students to become our future leaders and health professionals (dentists, doctors, nurses, pharmacists physician assistants, etc). I spend a minimum of 20 volunteer hours each week mentoring and doing activities with these students. One of the initiatives of my club is the HCC Hawk Run which promotes health and wellness within our college and community. We are about to host our 7th annual Hawk Run. We are very proud that our HCC AMSA Pre-Health Chapter has been able to donate \$27,000 to the HCC Foundation for student scholarships from the proceeds of the first six events. Last year, we raised enough proceeds to establish the HCC Hawk Run Endowed Scholarship Fund. This year to reach more pre-health students, I initiated the HCC Pre-Health Society (HPHS) which is an online learning community for pre-health students. Students completing module activities (which provide knowledge of how to develop a competitive student profile for health professional school) earn an embroidered science lab coat in a special "White Coat Ceremony" each semester. In addition to creating a sense of community among the students, the goals of HPHS are to increase student retention in pre-health majors and to ultimately increase underrepresentation in health careers. We currently have over 300 members in the HCC Pre-Health Society and 60 students currently working on earning their white coat. There is nothing more rewarding than seeing students achieve their dreams.

I am four years away from going into the FRS DROP program and I am now faced with a tough decision. Do I continue my volunteer work or use that time to secure a part-time job to contribute to my retirement? My salary has essentially plateaued in the last four years despite doing the maximum overload I am eligible to do teach which is 4 lectures and 4 lab courses. If we do not get any salary increases in the near future, my retirement will be severely impacted. I do not want to give up mentoring our HCC students because it will make me even more disheartened than I am now.

As a member of the HCC Board of Trustees, you have the overall responsibility for the management of our organization. I ask you to assist the administration in finding creative ways to address the salary needs of the faculty so that we can continue to work hard for our students. I have never worked harder as a teacher than I did through COVID, and I am willing to give my all to our college if I feel valued and respected, which I currently do not. As I am getting closer to retirement, I also want the reputation and caliber of HCC to continue long after I retire. For this to occur, it is essential that we can attract the highest quality faculty. Currently attracting talented faculty is difficult when our starting base pay is \$5000 lower than the public-school teachers.

September 24th, 2022

To: HCC Board of Trustees:

My name is Dr. Judith Nolasco. I am a tenured English faculty member at the Ybor Campus. I am also the Division Chair for Communication, Humanities, Art, and Design. After teaching high school for 12 years in Hillsborough County, and after teaching as an adjunct for HCC for six years, I came to HCC in 2000 as an Assistant to the Dean of AS programs. In 2003, I became a full-time tenured faculty member and, after that, I served as the Dean of Academic Affairs for three years at the South Shore Campus and then three more years as the Academic Dean at the Ybor Campus. When I had to make a decision whether to return to my tenured position or to stay on as a dean, I chose to return to the classroom for many reasons.

Because of my tenure as an Academic Dean, I know I may have a different perspective than many of my colleagues, and because of that experience, believe me, I know how difficult it is to create and maintain a budget. But, I also know that there is much discretion about how our student's tuition and our taxpayer dollars are distributed and spent. I have also witnessed how much waste and how many unnecessary positions there are in many areas of the college.

With that said, it is difficult for me and my colleagues to accept that we are not valued by the current administration when we see many new positions being created and funded that aren't critical to student success. **Faculty are critical. Without the faculty, there is no college, no teaching, and no learning.** The college seems to have the financial resources to provide raises, promotions, new titles, and new positions wherever they choose – but not for faculty. If any of you have ever been in a classroom, you know that if you are a good teacher, you are working hard way beyond the time spent in the classroom and beyond a specified amount of days a year, and the majority of the HCC faculty are excellent teachers. I know because I have evaluated and hired many of them at two campuses. Next to being a parent, teaching is one of the hardest and most important jobs there is.

HCC is fortunate to have as many qualified, experienced, and dedicated faculty as we have. When I was a dean, the complaints about the teachers were minimal. Our teachers care about the quality of their teaching, they care about their students, and they care about the college. They are just asking to be cared about in return, fairly paid, and valued by this administration.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely, Judith Nolasco

Dear Trustees,

I regret that I am unable to attend today's meeting due to classroom obligations. My name is Roxanna Palmer. I am a tenured Faculty Librarian who has worked at the HCC SouthShore campus since 2016. In addition to my role as a Librarian, I am Chair of the SouthShore Campus Advisory Council and an Advisor for SouthShore's Phi Theta Kappa chapter, positions I have held since 2017. I have served or am serving as SouthShore's representative on several college committees including the Sustainability Council and the Student Activity Budget Committee. I also represent HCC on state-wide committees including the Textbook Affordability and OER Standing Committee and the Digital Initiatives Standing Committee.

Since I first started working at HCC, the college has found ways to fund new buildings and parking lots, purchase expensive software and hardware for campus and online classrooms, create new administrative and professional staff positions, and increase compensation for those positions to be competitive in today's market. The college has raised fees, added new fees, and received millions of dollars in grants. The college has also delayed or not implemented my step increase, causing my pay to stagnate as the cost of living continues to rise. From my vantage point, I have slowly started to feel like the college can find funding for everything but their faculty.

In the most recent communication from Administration concerning bargaining and impasse, a salary study was suggested to "provide impartial recommendations on adjustments needed to the salary scale." I do not need a study to know that I can no longer afford to live in the community in which I work by relying solely on my current salary as a full-time, tenured Faculty member at HCC. After taxes, insurance, and other expenses are deducted from my paycheck (including a small monthly donation to the HCC Foundation) I have around \$3000 a month to live on. More than half of that amount now goes to rent and basic utilities like power and internet for my one-bedroom apartment. Since 2020, I have not only put my life plans on hold, like buying a house and having children, but I also regressed to the standard of living I experienced while being a student myself, relying on help from family for large expenses to avoid extreme debt. Now I face the reality of needing a second job to make ends meet.

I appeal to the Board of Trustees to urge Administration back to the bargaining table to implement rate increases to the step system, ensure equitable pay for lab hours, and honor the salary steps from the previous contract. I love my job at HCC. I strongly believe in the power of education and, as a former community college student, the unique role community colleges have in providing opportunity and support to students. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for your service as leaders of Hillsborough Community College.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roxanna B. Palmer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Roxanna" being more prominent and the last name "Palmer" following in a similar style.

Roxanna B. Palmer

Board of Trustees,

If it has not already been mentioned, Dr. Atwater and HCC are going to have to consider what happens when faculty get recruited by other schools. There are just as many opportunities as there are institutions that value the experience and credentials we bring to campus.

Now that HCC is getting a reputation for being unsupportive of faculty, it faces a two-fold problem. First, it will lose many experienced and skilled faculty to institutions that provide competitive compensation. Secondly, without competitive pay and instituting agreed upon step raises, attracting skilled, experienced faculty will only get more difficult.

It's true that HCC, as any academic institution, lives and dies by its instruction. Without skilled, loyal, motivated faculty, the quality of service drops, which will be reflected in student outcomes and enrollment.

Dr. Atwater and the Board of Trustees must abandon this shortsighted and impractical approach if they truly value what faculty contribute to HCC.

Professor Jeffrey Rubinstein
English Department
Dale Mabry Campus

Hello members of the board,

My name is Terry Varvil, and I am a mathematics professor at the Ybor City Campus. I have been teaching for 25 years: 10 years in the Hillsborough County Public School System and I am in my 15th year here at HCC. I can't speak for all teachers, but I did not get into teaching for the money. But I did think that I would be paid a fair and living wage.

At negotiations in July, I learned that HCC's starting salary is only \$42,187 and that the base salary has not changed since 2014. The 2016 salary study says that in order for our step system to be maintained, the minimums and maximums needed to be adjusted every 5 years. Nothing has happened in 7 years and in addition, a step was skipped,

Administration stated that our average salary was around \$70,000 with overload, so faculty are fine and there is no issue.

The issue is that overload is a second job. Let that sink in.

Our base salary is so low that we have to take on extra work in order to make a living wage and the administration is fine with that.

According to livingwage.mit.edu, for a family of four (2 parents both working, with 2 kids) in the Tampa area to make a living wage, they would EACH need to bring home \$49,067.20. And in their estimate, student loan debt for a master's (which is required for the position) is not included (average student loan debt for a master's is \$71,000 and is about an extra \$300-\$350 a month). In fact, the only scenario, our base salary is good for is a single person with no children (\$35,713).

And, maybe to outsiders, taking on overload is easy. But for each class of overload, you are taking on 20-30 more students, which means more time creating courses, more emails, more grading, more feedback. It means 60+ hours a week instead of 40+, which means less time playing with my kids, missing mealtimes, etc.

I ask the members of the board to please consider taking the steps necessary to help us to have a competitive, living wage.

Thank you,

Terry Varvil

Madam Chair, and Members of the Board,

My name is Sherry Sippel, and I am the FUSA president. We are here to update you on what has happened with impasse since the last Board meeting.

The Administration did contact FUSA indicating a desire to return to the bargaining table. However, their offer included no changes to their economics proposal from July. The only new item they proposed was to begin yet another salary study to research pay ranges. While we agreed that a salary study may have value, we told the Administration they would still need to offer some much needed increases to the faculty salaries in the interim. You cannot buy groceries with a salary study. They said “No” to any other economic changes.

In addition, we feel it was disingenuous for the Administration to wait until impasse to decide a salary study was needed. They knew last year that faculty pay ranges increases were two years overdue and would be the focus of this contract. If they intended on addressing the pay ranges this year, they should have proposed the salary study be completed last spring so the results were ready when bargaining began.

FUSA came to the table prepared to bargain. We did our research and had counter proposals ready from Day 1. When the Administration said “No” to our economics proposal in July, we offered two counter proposals: 1) To lower the base minimum to \$47,500, and 2) To spread the pay range increases over a 3 year contract instead of all in Year 1. They said “No” to both of those as well. Meanwhile, their one and only offer this entire year is the same one they told this BOT in June, “a one-step increase, subject to negotiations”, and they have yet to propose anything else for economics this year. That is not “good faith bargaining:”

Much has been said about funding availability for salaries. While the Administration continues to bring up the \$17M lost in tuition, they also gained millions in HEERF funds and distance learning fees, and FTE is up over 5% for the fall. We hear in these BOT meetings that the College always has a balanced budget, maintains a healthy fund balance, is debt free, and continues to establish new positions and fund those salaries. Budgets are about priorities. If the Administration is sincere about ending the impasse, they need to make an effort to find funds to do it.

Sherry Sippel, FUSA President

Good afternoon,

G.K. Chesterton, noted English writer and philosopher, reminds us, "There is a lot of difference between listening and hearing." We are asking today that you hear us.

First, Administration asserts that we should not place a value on our masters' degrees when comparing salaries to those who have a bachelor's degree, which is ludicrous. To teach at the college level, we are required to obtain a higher degree than those teaching k-12, which takes more time, more money, and of course, provides us with more expertise in our subject areas. Why are we required to do so if a degree has no value? If a degree has no value, why are we here? I don't mean here today. I mean why do colleges exist? We all know that the degree that instructors earn determines the level at which they can teach and the salary they should expect to earn.

Administration also told us that we should not be concerned with any comparisons to public school teaching salaries because public school teachers work harder than we do and deserve more money. It is insulting to just use the number of classes one teaches as a comparison of salaries. We all know that teaching goes beyond the classroom no matter what level one teaches. I taught many years in public schools, and now I am addressing you as a college professor, so I speak from experience.

No two teachers or professors can be compared in amounts of time spent performing other duties that are required to ensure student success at all levels. Instructors spend time outside the classroom pouring over curriculum materials and making new lesson plans, prepping for new teaching assignments, and learning new technology to enhance the classroom experience.

At HCC, we are required to do more than plan, teach, and grade. Moreover, grading at the higher levels of teaching is *much* more intense because of higher expectations, which translates into more time spent outside of the classroom.

In addition to teaching responsibilities, professors at HCC are required to participate in committees, complete professional development hours, volunteer in community service, and hold office hours. K-12 instructors are not required to attend committee meetings, do not spend countless hours on hiring committees, nor do they create online courses, review or develop textbooks, or volunteer in the community.

Instead of hearing us, administration only listened and merely offered yet another salary study. We see this offer as capricious, not a sincere effort. Administration has already said that even if the salary study shows a needed increase, they will only pay *if* they have the money. Nothing we have heard gives us any confidence that administration will even make an effort to look for the money to pay us, or that they will implement the recommendations of a salary study. After all, the first salary study showed that in order for the step system to be successful, it would need to be raised a minimum of every five years, and that has never happened.

Also, we were told on numerous occasions that HCC had to pay their costs of doing business before even considering faculty salaries. As any beginning business major

knows, payroll is a cost of doing business. In fact, it accounts for the largest portion of the cost of doing business. We were hired so that HCC could do the business of teaching and providing a valuable degree. Without credentialed faculty with master's degrees, HCC cannot legally hold classes and award credits to students. We are a cost of doing business!

Administration argues that they do value the professors and teachers at HCC. Our plea is that the administration demonstrate the value they claim to have for us.

Janet Willman

English, Dale Mabry

Wendy Pogoda's Statement to HCC BOT

10/6/2022

I've been teaching at Hillsborough Community College since 2003, first in economics and then in math. When I was offered a full-time position as a Math Instructor at the SouthShore Campus in 2011, I posted on Facebook that I had found my dream job. Despite my experience having earned graduate degrees in two different fields and working for years as a tutor, teaching assistant, and adjunct at multiple colleges and university, I was offered the bottom of the salary scale and stayed there for almost three years because HC did not yet have a step system. I was making barely over \$40,000 per year, and so to make ends meet, I taught as many overload classes as I could and even got a second job. But, I loved being at HCC and I knew it was worth it.

During these first few years, I spent several hundred hours developing my first online course and then spent several hundred more hours updating it, always improving it to meet national standards, to protect against academic dishonesty, to make the course ADA compliant (for example, by transcribing videos by hand), and to meet Quality Matters standards. Since then, I've created several other online courses. This was my intellectual property, mostly uncompensated by the college, that I spent, without exaggeration, thousands of hours developing.

And then came the day I gave it all away for free. When the pandemic hit in March 2020, I gave away my intellectual property so that instructors who had never taught certain courses online would have material to use. I knew our community was in the middle of a crisis, and I was happy to help make the transition to exclusively online easier for our students and our faculty. Likewise, other instructors gave away their intellectual property to me for courses I had never taught online. Faculty who had never taught online at all had to cram 40+ hours of training into their supposed "spring break" while at the same time converting face-to-face courses to online without even having access to on-campus resources. We all helped each other, realizing we are a team.

That's why it was so demoralizing when, in fall of 2020, we were told that we would not be paid our contractually mandated step that year (which was paid retroactively almost a year late). Then, morale sunk even lower when, next year, we were never paid it at all.

We gave up our intellectual property. We gave up our spring break. We went "above and beyond" the call of duty, and we made HCC succeed despite a global crisis. And now, we feel heartbroken and betrayed. Like most faculty, I view my position here at HCC as my career, being fully aware that there is virtually no opportunity for promotion. This loss of a step will impact my pay for the next 15 years. We ask that you reconsider. Please show your support by paying our promised step and by negotiating the pay scales as promised over six years ago.

We stepped up in support of the HCC community, and now it's time for you to do the same. Thank you for this opportunity to share my story.

Wendy Pogoda
Math, South Shore

Esteemed Members of the Board,

My name is John Hardin and I have been a full-time humanities professor at the HCC Brandon Campus since 2003 and an instructor at HCC since 2000. That is over 20 years of service to the College.

I appreciate this opportunity to speak with you today.

I am not here to discuss budgeted dollars or enrollment statistics.

Instead I would like to draw your attention to what I consider to be the “intangibles” that we, the faculty, contribute to the College -- beyond the classroom.

The First is Community Service: We, the faculty, spend countless hours contributing our efforts and energies to making our communities a better place through volunteerism. After all, the word “Community” is central to the College’s name and mission.

And while it might not be seen as “Community Service”, through our efforts as educators we help to contribute to the financial strength of Tampa Bay and to the livelihoods and well-being of citizens across the region and beyond.

The Second is Committee Work: We, the faculty, serve on a number of Committees at our campuses and across the College. Using myself as an example - but certainly not to pat myself on the back - this year:

I serve as the Co-Chair of the recently-formed Academic Integrity Committee (AIC)

In that capacity, I regularly attend the Faculty Instructional Technology Committee (FITC) and the Online Learning Committee (OLC) meetings

I represent the Humanities Discipline on the College-wide Textbook Taskforce, which is involved in a number of initiatives including the use of Open Educational Resources (OER) and Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) Classes that have already saved students hundreds of thousands of dollars, helping those who might not have otherwise been able to afford a college degree achieve that very important goal

I am the newly-elected Secretary of the Brandon Campus Advisory Committee (or B-CAC) I am a member of the Brandon Campus Safety Committee

As I look around at my colleagues who are in attendance today, I see several who I am privileged to serve with on these Committees.

I have served as a former Council Member of FUSA, which I am here representing today

I am an alternate Senator for the FUSA Chapter of the United Faculty of Florida (UFF) and recently traveled to Orlando to attend their Fall Meetings

I am also an alternate Representative for the FUSA Chapter of the Florida Education Association (FEA) and will be travelling to Orlando next month for their Fall Meetings

Both of these events provide me with the opportunity to meet with faculty members from Colleges and Universities across the State to learn about and discuss important matters that affect us, including recently-passed legislation and contract negotiations, and to be involved in important State-wide initiatives, including Get Out The Vote and the Leadership, Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity (LEID) Committee

I bring this knowledge back and share it with my colleagues so that we are all better informed of matters that affect us as educators.

The Third is Contributions to the Profession: We, the faculty, develop course materials, publish in academic journals, author books, and attend and present at conferences at the State, National, and International levels. All of these help to ensure that Hillsborough Community College continues to be a highly respected academic institution.

We do not do this because we are contractually obligated to do so.

We, the faculty, do this because we are educators, we are professionals, and we proudly serve as stewards of Hillsborough Community College.

I think there is incredible value worth recognizing in that.

Thank you very much for your time and attention this afternoon.

John Hardin, Humanities, Brandon

Dear Board of Trustees:

In teacher training you learn that if you break trust with the 'heart of a class', you will trigger a sustaining outrage that will completely defeat your teaching goals. Well that's what's going on here. We are the heart of the Faculty Class and we are outraged because the college has broken trust with us.

I have taught middle school, High School, University and Community College. I have never worked as hard as I had to during the pandemic. It wasn't about 'working from home'. It was about 'developing completely new ways of teaching' from home. But I willingly found extra time, extra cash, extra space and extra energy to create new materials and courses on the behalf of HCC - because I thought we were all in this together. And the effort continues. Today I provide HCC with 6 preps a semester. The most I even had before HCC was three. Many schoolteachers have 1 prep.

Last year, when HCC withheld my salary step, I thought it extremely ironic but assumed the college was doing the best it could. This year, when HCC moved to make the loss permanent I realized that I'd been naive. I looked and could not find any evidence that the college was seriously trying to find the funds to pay me what I was owed. I actually found an WUSF interview in which the college president clearly explained that during the pandemic, the loss of revenue from enrollment was balanced by increased revenue from the state. No mention of my reduced salary. The loss of step is a policy not a consequence.

For me, this loss of trust with the college is very upsetting. Financially, I'm nearing retirement and my monthly retirement check will be calculated on my earnings in these last few years. To be clear, the college has unfairly reduced my annual salary by a step and will unfairly reduce my annual pension by half a step for the rest of my life. Emotionally? My college has given me a particularly insulting bitter little pill that I'll live with until I die. It's a very sad way to end a career.

Tony Buonaquisti

Greetings,

In addition to the impasse, we are now hearing the Administration's arguments for not increasing the pay ranges are:

1. HCC faculty should have a lower base salary than K-12 public school teachers, and
2. ***Faculty base salaries are not an issue because if we need more money, we can just teach overload.***

I would like to address the latter.

The Administration is implying that teaching overload is no big deal. Below are some comments from my colleague Terri Varvil, Ybor math professor:

"Quote:

*"...Maybe to outsiders, taking on overload is easy. But for each class of overload, we are taking on 20-30 more students, which means more time creating courses, more emails, more grading, more feedback. It means 60+ hours a week instead of 40+, which means less time playing with my kids, missing mealtimes, etc. **The issue is that overload is a second job.** Let that sink in. Our base salary is so low that we have to take on extra work in order to make a living wage and the administration is fine with that."*

"Unquote"

Consider these 3 things:

1. Understand that not all faculty want to teach overload, but are forced to in order to make ends meet.
2. Imagine a Dean trying to hire a new faculty and saying "Your base salary will be only \$43,000, but after a few months you may be able to increase that if you are willing to teach overload". Also, know that overload is not guaranteed, even if a faculty does request it.
3. Teaching excess overload is particularly stressful for newly hired, non-tenured faculty. In addition to prepping for new classes, they already need to devote extra time during their first five years working towards earning tenure. Still, some of them feel they must take on teaching 8 classes instead of 5 to get by.

The point is, telling faculty that if they want to make more money, they should just teach overload, which is NOT guaranteed is not the answer. We are already overworked and underpaid.

Cheri Borman

English, Ybor

ITEM 1

Always lots of chatter about a salary study well, perhaps we could start with the data I located below regarding instructional costs at public 2-year institutions...

NATIONALLY

Instruction, including faculty salaries and benefits, represent the largest single expense category at public 2-year institutions. Based on data from the 50 states and the District of Columbia instructional expenses at public 2-year institutions comprise 39% of total expenses (or \$6 980 per FTE student).

Source: National Center for Education Statistics

LOCALLY (i.e., HCC)

Now look at HCC. Instructional expenses comprise about 30.5% of operating expenses (or \$3 042 per FTE student). See where I'm going with this, right? HCC is around 10% below the national average for instruction expenses and spends less than half the national average per FTE student on instruction!!

Source: Analysis of the Financial Audits of Hillsborough Community College

ITEM 2

What about all the money the State and College has saved and continues to save by requiring faculty to fund nearly half of our retirement (i.e., the FRS)? At last check this is about 3% of our salaries and is ongoing and would easily cover the cost of the annual step with no effect on the College since the College used to fully fund our FRS contributions, right? This is a payroll deduction that may easily continue to slip under the radar (sorta like social security payroll deductions) and after so many years we may now be numb to the pain but that doesn't make these costs, these additional burdens on our faculty any less real—especially in times like these.

Oh yeah, and what benefit do we receive by taking on this additional FRS burden? Oh yeah, now remember we get to enjoy a five-year tenure review process, which only jeopardizes our hard-earned tenure.

Timothy Griffin

Accounting Faculty