

We, the members of the NCSFA-AAUP Exec. Team, on behalf of the full-time faculty we represent and the larger college community of which we are a part, hereby offer the following position statement on the Board's recent decision to take a trip to Boston, as a group, next month.

We offer this statement in the true spirit of collaboration and in the belief that the only way we (as a community) will ever find a way out of the serious financial situation we are in right now is by speaking out, honestly and publicly, when we see decisions being made around us that we do not believe are necessarily in the best interest of the institution.

We understand that the purpose of the planned trip is to participate in a professional development activity, and as a faculty, we absolutely appreciate the importance of professional development.

We also appreciate the fact that the Board has the right to make such a decision to spend the College's money whenever it so chooses.

What we question is the timing of the Board's decision.

Every single day on the job, we hear messages about the financial situation that we are in. How many members of the college community saw their hours and pay cut back in the spring? How many staff members were laid off in the spring? How many staff and faculty positions have not been refilled when those positions have been vacated, as a result of retirement, resignation, or lay off? How many staff and faculty have had their workload increased in silent, invisible ways as a result of our having to do the same amount of work (or more) with fewer workers?

We are aware of faculty who – despite the fact that they are guaranteed professional development money by the CBA – have undertaken professional development activities this past year and NOT submitted requests for reimbursement. We are aware of many 9-month faculty members who – despite the fact that they are guaranteed compensation when they come in to work for the College on their off-quarter – put in tremendous amounts of time this past summer and did NOT submit time sheets to be compensated for their time. We are even aware of faculty members who have purchased supplies for their classes, either because they ran into such a hassle trying to get the money from the administration for such supplies or because they simply thought it was the “right” thing to do in these tight financial times.

And the Board decides that NOW is the right time for the entire group (or as many of them as can attend ... at last count that was seven members of the Board) to fly to Boston?

The fact that the Board made its decision at this time, when so many at the College are sacrificing so much, when even students' lives are being affected by the sacrifices everyone is being asked to make, suggests that the Board is out of touch with what is going on at the College on a day-to-day basis.

September 7th, 2012