

# Union Voice

## Stephen W. Potts, Grievance Chair



Stephen W. Potts received his doctorate in English from the University of California at Berkeley in 1980 and spent the next year in Würzburg, Germany, as a Fulbright Lecturer. He returned to teach at San Diego State University until invited to UCSD by the Department of Literature. Since the mid-1980s he has taught courses on popular culture, genre fiction, film, and creative writing, and on youth culture for both Literature and Communication. As an affiliate of the Human Development Program, he also offers courses in

children's and adolescent literature. Dr. Potts has been in print for 25 years. His publications span literary and cultural critique, political commentary, literary parody, and science fiction. Representative titles include the book *Catch-22: Antiheroic Anti-novel* (G. K. Hall), the article "IBMortality: Putting the Ghost in the Machine" (*Immortal Engines*, U. of Georgia Press), and the story "Mare Somniorum" (*New Dimensions 10*, Harper & Row). His most recent papers have concerned authors Ken Kesey and F. Scott Fitzgerald and their relationship to youth culture. Work in progress includes further fiction and articles. In addition, he is the editor of *Armageddon Buffet*, an online journal of speculative fiction and political commentary ([www.armageddonbuffet.com](http://www.armageddonbuffet.com)). As a specialist in popular culture and social issues, he has appeared often in the media—newspapers, radio, and TV—and as a speaker at public events and conferences. He enjoys hiking, camping, and nature study, and belongs to a number of environmental and progressive-political organizations.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

#### FUNDS

If you haven't yet heard about the professional development monies secured in the current Memorandum of Understanding for Non-senate instruction, unit 18, we would like to highlight some of the recent awardees and the various ways in which the fund is being utilized. Again, we encourage you to apply. The next application deadline is November 1, 2006. The guidelines for applying and the application can be downloaded from our Local's website:

[www.cft.org/councils/uc](http://www.cft.org/councils/uc)

**STEVE CAN BE REACHED AT: (760) - 889 - 5588**

**WE ARE PLANNING A PDF AWARD CELEBRATION - STAY TUNED - ALL ARE WELCOME**

**Preliminary Library Report - July 2006 - Maria daVenza Tillmanns, Ph.D. - Field Representative UCSD**

**I met with a number of Librarians this summer. These are some of the questions I asked:**

- whether their average workload is equivalent or more than 40 hrs a week
- what is their position towards the Union
- why there is so little Union involvement at UCSD particularly
- what is the relationship between the Union and LAUC
- are there any hot button issues at UCSD

Many issues which remain union issues on other UC campuses such as PI status for Librarians, PD-Funds, etc. have been resolved at the UCSD campus thanks to our excellent University Librarian Brian Schottlaender. Hot button issues across the state remain: salary (recruitment and retention) and parking (not to mention the issues for all Unions around pension and health benefits).

**LECTURER SIX YEAR REVIEW**

The most important transition in the professional life of a UC lecturer is that which takes place after six years of employment, when one becomes eligible for a continuing appointment.

The procedures that govern this rite of passage are spelled out in detail in Article 7 of the MOU, and it is the responsibility of both the university and the lecturer to assure that these procedures are followed to the letter. Because lecturers who do not receive continuing appointments after six years must be terminated - or start working in another department - , both parties have a stake in the outcome of the review. Unsuccessful or incorrectly conducted reviews constitute one of the most common reasons for grievances filed by NSF.

For this reason, the union monitors such reviews closely. The local council maintains a list of all lecturers who fall under the MOU, paying particular attention to those who have accumulated more than fifteen quarters of continuous employment. We communicate with both administrative personnel and lecturers to ascertain that reviews have been scheduled as required. Furthermore, the union is here to advise and assist the NSF if a review follows improper procedures or goes badly, to intercede with the administration on the lecturer's behalf if we perceive errors in process, and to file grievances in particularly egregious cases.

For example, this past academic year, the union local intervened in the case of a lecturer who was being threatened with dismissal based on her review. After soliciting and examining a copy of her file, and consulting with state union officers who specialize in personnel matters, the union determined that the negative conclusions in her review had been based on faulty comparisons with other NSF and on unsubstantiated hearsay, back-dated materials, etc. In short, her department had not followed the procedures carefully outlined in the MOU. As a result, we were able to require her department to re-initiate the review process. The lecturer was given a quarter-long extension of employment as a new review is conducted, with the opportunity to place more materials of her own in the file and the chance that this time a fair conclusion will result.

Given the importance of the six-year review, it is crucial for the lecturer herself/ himself to take an active role. You should keep track of the quarters, units, and workload percentages you have taught. As you approach the eighteen-quarter deadline, you should ascertain that a review is in fact scheduled if the department has not so notified you. Keep a record of students, colleagues, and others who can attest to professional and especially teaching ability; solicit letters for placement in the review portfolio. Copies of papers and publications, honors and awards, confirmation of conference attendance, and evidence of community service should be included. Even though non-senate faculty are formally reviewed only for their teaching performance, such materials can demonstrate that you are on the cutting edge of your field and an asset to the university. In addition, the lecturer is entitled to have another NSF as a member of the review committee and is encouraged to recommend names, especially of fellow lecturers who already enjoy continuing status.

In short, the lecturer must be prepared and proactive in the lead-up to the review. And remember--your union representatives remain vigilant in your behalf. Do not hesitate to contact them with your questions and concerns.

