

MSCF Minute



An electronic publication of the Minnesota State College Faculty

Janus Ruling

Special Issue
June 28, 2018

Yesterday the inevitable occurred: The Supreme Court of the United States ruled in favor of Mark Janus in the Janus v AFSCME case. In doing so, they reversed decades of precedent and brought an end to agency (fair share) fees.

This ruling means that from now on, only MSCF members will be contributing to the financial costs associated with bargaining and representing faculty. Non-members, while continuing to receive the full benefits of the contract and representation provided by the union, will no longer pay their fair share for receiving those benefits and representation. Because our dues collection has historically occurred during the school year and is complete for the 2017-18 year, the first impact of the ruling will be felt when dues collection begins again in the fall.

Amidst this contradictory and frustrating ruling is something very positive from the MSCF perspective. Over the course of the past few years, we've had a chance to talk with our members at length about the potential for this ruling and to prepare for it. During our "Yellow Card Campaign," 92% of current MSCF members affirmed that they will remain MSCF members. We again extend thanks to all those who have signed the yellow cards and participated in our membership engagement efforts. In the face of what is going to be an onslaught by special interest groups to get you to drop your membership, your commitment to your union matters now more than ever.

As for the special interests, we know they're out there, and we know they're funded with hundreds of millions of dollars. They'll send you information, they'll call you, and they'll show up at your door. They'll attack all the union stands for, and they'll launch personal attacks on union leaders. They'll try *desperately* to *trick* you into dropping your membership. When they show up, ask yourself (or them) "Why do they care whether I'm in a union or not?"

The only logical answer is that there must be something in it for them, or the big money interests they are working for. And, of course, there are some big things in it for them. Weakening our collective voice means less resistance to a corporatized model of higher education. Weakening our collective voice means depressed salaries and increased costs for health insurance, and that means more money in the pockets of the big-money corporate special interests. The Janus case was a first step. Getting you to drop your membership is the next, and most significant, step to help the big-money, management-oriented, special interests achieve their goals.

If you are contacted by one of these organizations asking you to drop your membership, we ask you to do two things. One, remember that you are a member of MSCF and recall what you and your colleagues, united in MSCF, have achieved for our faculty and our campus. Two, contact the union office: call 651-767-1262, one of the state officers or your local leaders, and let us know.

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The strength of our union derives from the active participation of our members. It has made us effective at the bargaining table, resulting in a contract that is a model for faculty unions across the country. We plan to carry our strength and the history of success to the bargaining table in 2019. The leadership of MSCF will be working with our fellow unions across the state and the country to coordinate our pushback against these attacks. You can help by remaining involved with MSCF or get involved if you haven't been already. Joining a working committee, coming to union meetings, or talking with friends and colleagues about the work your union does are all small but important steps you can take to fight back against those who would make our country and our campus more unequal, more austere, and less sustainable for all of us.

As always, if you have any questions, concerns, or ideas and suggestions for actions we can take to strengthen and grow MSCF, you are always welcome to contact any MSCF officer. Our cell numbers are in the text box.

Thanks again for your commitment – past, present, and future – to MSCF.