

# **COCAL X Conference, Mexico City, 2012**

## *Request for Professional Association and Union Support*

COCAL (Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor) is an international coalition of higher education contingent faculty from Canada, the United States and Mexico who have been coming together in conference since 1996 in order to share information and analysis, promote activism and solidarity, and advocate on behalf of contingent faculty in North America and beyond. In August of 2012 we will be celebrating our tenth convocation, to take place – for the first time – in Mexico. We have appreciated the support of professional associations and unions for all our conferences in Canada and the United States and look forward to continued support for our tenth conference. We are excited to be a part of this noteworthy coming together of contingent academic labor as we invite you to participate and support these efforts.

As you likely know, the working conditions of contingent faculty are generally characterized by lack of job security, economic instability, and inadequate institutional support. However, in most cases contingent faculty members have the professional qualifications, experience and recognition expected to hold full-time, permanent appointments. Their working conditions reflect the impact of global neoliberalism on our societies and economies over the past few decades. Neoliberal policies and practices have pushed public and private institutions of higher learning to a managed/corporate model characterized by a weakened role of faculty in institutional decision-making and have made the struggle for faculty rights by our organized labor unions that much more difficult.

Over time, with each biannual conference, this network of solidarity that is COCAL has grown and strengthened its support for contingent faculty with regard to their working conditions and professional development, asserting that to advocate for this new faculty majority is to advocate for quality higher education in all three countries, which are linked not just by their geographic location but also by a trade agreement that – it is worth pointing out – imposes on Mexico disproportionate inequality.

The COCAL Advisory Committee has, thus, considered and acknowledged the importance of holding COCAL X in Mexico City in 2012. This nation's last several federal governments have exacerbated the problems for academic labor in Mexico's institutions of higher education, thereby depriving young people of an opportunity to be

active in their society. Our solidarity is essential for the welfare of our southern neighbor, as well as for the reinvigoration of our own precarious institutions in the U.S. and Canada. COCAL takes a small step in establishing the ties that will help us create a diverse and meaningful network of activists who support faculty, students, and the labor unions that fight for their interests.

We ask that labor unions and other organizations linked to higher education consider providing support to COCAL X through financial contributions that can help cover conference expenses, including stipends/scholarships for participants' costs such as registration, travel, and lodging. Your support of COCAL will boost its international efforts to improve the collective faculty's working conditions on behalf of quality education for the common good.

For further information, please visit our web page:

<http://cocalinternational.org/index.html>

To join in the discussion, please subscribe to adj-l:

[http://adj-l.org/mailman/listinfo/adj-l\\_adj-l.org](http://adj-l.org/mailman/listinfo/adj-l_adj-l.org)

In Solidarity,

The COCAL International Advisory Committee

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Please contribute by sending your own members/representatives to Mexico City and/or by a direct contribution to help support these efforts:

Checks can be made out to: CPFA (be sure to put COCAL X in the memo line).

And send it to:       COCAL X  
                          P.O. Box 711284  
                          San Diego, CA 92171

Indicate how you would like your contribution to be used:

Scholarship Fund        General Fund        No Preference