

United Faculty of Central Annual Report, 2021-2022

June 15, 2022

One of my duties as President is to submit an annual report of UFC's activities. This report spans July 2021 through May 2022. Please email any questions to ufcentral.president@gmail.com.

Fall 2021 began with pandemic rules still in force. Governor Inslee had required all educational employees to be fully vaccinated (or exempted) by October 18, 2021. UFC signed an MOU with CWU which required that students would also be vaccinated or exempted by that date. Masks remained required, per state mandate. These conditions continued into Winter 2022, as agreed in another MOU. However, in the MOU for Spring it was agreed that masks would become optional after two initial weeks of continued masking.

Looking ahead to Fall 2022, after discussions with UFC the administration has announced that students will continue to be required to provide proof of their vaccination status.

However, next year will be challenging. The pandemic has seriously impacted enrollment. Many NTT faculty have been told that they will not receive contracts for 2022-23.

Officers

The elected officers this year were:

- President: Gary Bartlett (Philosophy & Religious Studies / CAH)
- Vice President: Kara Gabriel (Psychology / COTS)
- Communications Officer: Sarah Feeney (Family & Consumer Sciences / CEPS)
- Financial Officer: Nancy Graber Pigeon (Management / CB)

Pigeon stepped down early in Winter, due to other commitments that left insufficient time for her UFC role. The other three officers decided to finish the year without a Financial Officer; Gabriel was able to take over the necessary duties.

I myself have received a sabbatical for 2022-23. Therefore, I stepped down from the presidency at the end of May. Per the UFC Constitution (Sec. VI.6), Kara Gabriel will now complete the second year of my presidential term.

UFC therefore needed a new Vice President and a new Financial Officer for 2022-23. Two members of the Executive Board stepped up: Clay Arango (Biological Sciences) and Lauren Wittek (Library Services). An election was held in May, coordinated by myself. More than a quarter of the membership voted, and Arango and Wittek (both running unopposed) were duly elected. So UFC now has three female officers for the first time since 2010-11:

- President: Kara Gabriel (Psychology / COTS)
- Vice President: Clay Arango (Biological Sciences / COTS)
- Communications Officer: Sarah Feeney (Family & Consumer Sciences / CEPS)
- Financial Officer: Lauren Wittek (Library Services)

A regular election for all four positions for the 2023-25 term will be held in Spring 2023. All of these four faculty will be eligible to run again, and I sincerely hope they will all do so.

Membership

We started Fall 2021 with 195 members. The pandemic continued to make recruitment difficult in Fall and Winter. Numbers stayed more or less flat: a few members retired, a few joined. By the end of Winter we had 196 members.

In Spring, matters improved. With more faculty back on campus, we were able to send out two recruiters: Ruthi Erdman and Jean Marie Linhart. Both have been extremely effective, recruiting more than a dozen new members. At the time of this report, membership stands at 210. For an analysis of recent membership trends and a recommendation about recruiting strategy, see the Appendix to this report.

UFC events

The only event held this year was a members meeting on May 2. The main purpose of that meeting was to close the nominations for the Vice President and Financial Officer positions, and introduce the two candidates (Arango and Wittek). Bargaining Chair Matthew Altman also gave a brief update on the bargaining of a 3.25% wage increase for state-employed faculty as allocated in the state's supplemental budget.

Bargaining

One member of the bargaining team, Sathy Rajendran, was chosen to become Dean of the College of Education and Professional Studies as of June 2022. UFC aimed to find a replacement member for Rajendran from the same college. Amy Claridge was recruited. So the members of the bargaining team are now:

- Matt Altman (Philosophy & Religious Studies / CAH), bargaining team chair
- Amy Claridge (Family & Consumer Sciences / CEPS)
- Nancy Graber Pigeon (Management / CB)
- Dominic Klyve (Mathematics / COTS)
- Dan Lipori (Music / CAH)
- Gary McNeil (WEA), chief negotiator

As noted above, bargaining of a state-funded salary increase is currently in progress. And next year will be a contract bargaining year, as the current two-year contract expires in August 2023.

Executive Board

UFC Executive Board members serve as points of contact with faculty, and an advisory body for the UFC officers. As well as the four UFC officers, the current Executive Board members are:

- Chong Eun Ahn (History /CAH)
- Clay Arango (Biological Sciences / COTS)
- James Avey (Management / CB)
- Ruthi Erdman (English / CAH; NTT faculty)
- Kevin Feeney (Interdisciplinary Studies / COTS; NTT faculty)
- Liz Fountain (ITAM / CEPS; NTT faculty)

- Dan Lipori (Music / CAH)
- Rodrigo Rentería-Valencia (Anthropology / COTS)
- Karen Roemer (Health Sciences / CEPS)
- Terry Wilson (Management / CB)
- Lauren Wittek (Library Services)

Sathy Rajendran had also been a member, but stepped down in Spring 2022 when he learned of his appointment as CEPS Dean.

Ahn, Arango, Fountain, Rentería-Valencia, and Wittek were all new members for Fall 2021. As noted above, Arango and Wittek will become officers for 2022-23. I recommend that two new members be sought to replace them on the Executive Board. While the UFC Constitution does not specify the size of the Executive Board, I think that a dozen or so members (other than the four officers) is a healthy number.

This year the Executive Board met virtually on October 12, November 19, and February 24. Agendas and minutes are available on the UFC website.

Labor-Management Council

The CBA (Sec. 26.1) requires CWU and UFC to maintain a Labor-Management Council as a forum for constructive labor-management relations and problem-solving. The members of the LMC this year were:

- *UFC representatives:* Gary Bartlett (Pres.), Kara Gabriel (VP), Sarah Feeney (Comms.), [Fall] Nancy Graber Pigeon (Finan.) / [Winter & Spring] Terry Wilson (Exec. Board member)*
* *Wilson replaced Pigeon after the latter stepped down from her officer role*
- *CWU representatives:* Charlene Andrews (Faculty Relations Coordinator), Tim Englund (COTS Dean), Jill Hernandez (CAH Dean), Jeff Stinson (CB Dean)

The LMC met three times this year: on October 18, 2021, February 14, 2022, and April 18, 2022. Agendas are on the UFC website. The following topics, amongst others, were discussed:

- The new process for chair merit (now split from PTR)
- How chair merit eligibility is affected when a chair is replaced by an acting chair
- Chair evaluation practices across the colleges
- Availability to T/TT faculty of their departmental colleagues' review files
- Recording of service workload in Faculty180
- Email communication of university policies
- Calculation of health benefit costs for summer contracts and classes

Grievances and complaints

UFC formally challenges some decisions of CWU administration by filing grievances (alleging CBA violations: Sec. 29.2.1), or complaints (alleging substantive academic misjudgments: Sec. 29.2.2). No complaints were filed this year. The following grievances were filed:

- Grievance 21-03G: Failure to provide reappointment and tenure criteria at hire (Level II, October 2021)
- Grievance 21-04G: Unjust termination (Level I, October 2021; Level II, November 2021)
- Grievance 22-01G: Failure to follow procedure in removal of a chair (Level I, March 2022; Level II, April 2022)
- Grievance 22-02G: Delay in implementation of merit salary increase granted to a Senior Lecturer (Level I, May 2022) *[At time of writing, this grievance is still in progress]*

MOUs signed

Four MOUs were signed this year. Three of these concerned COVID-related health and safety policies for each of the three academic quarters (Fall, Winter, and Spring). The fourth simply extended an MOU that was signed last year making additions to the CBA to comply with new federal regulations concerning Title IX investigations.

UFC Emergency Assistance Fund

No applications for emergency assistance were received this year.

Financial report

A financial report was prepared in Fall 2021 by Financial Officer Pigeon for the period August 1, 2020 to July 31, 2021. The report shows revenues of \$11,439.21 and expenses of \$6,562.91, and thus a net increase in available funds of \$4,876.30.

An interim report for the current financial year up to June 15, prepared by Vice President (and interim Financial Officer) Gabriel, shows revenues of \$9,731.82 and expenses of \$11,045.58. By the end of the financial year (July 31), revenues are expected to exceed expenses, as we will receive approximately \$1,900 more in dues income, with no significant further expenses.

A final financial report for the period August 1, 2021 to July 31, 2022 will be prepared by the new Financial Officer, Lauren Wittek, by Fall 2022.

Closing remarks

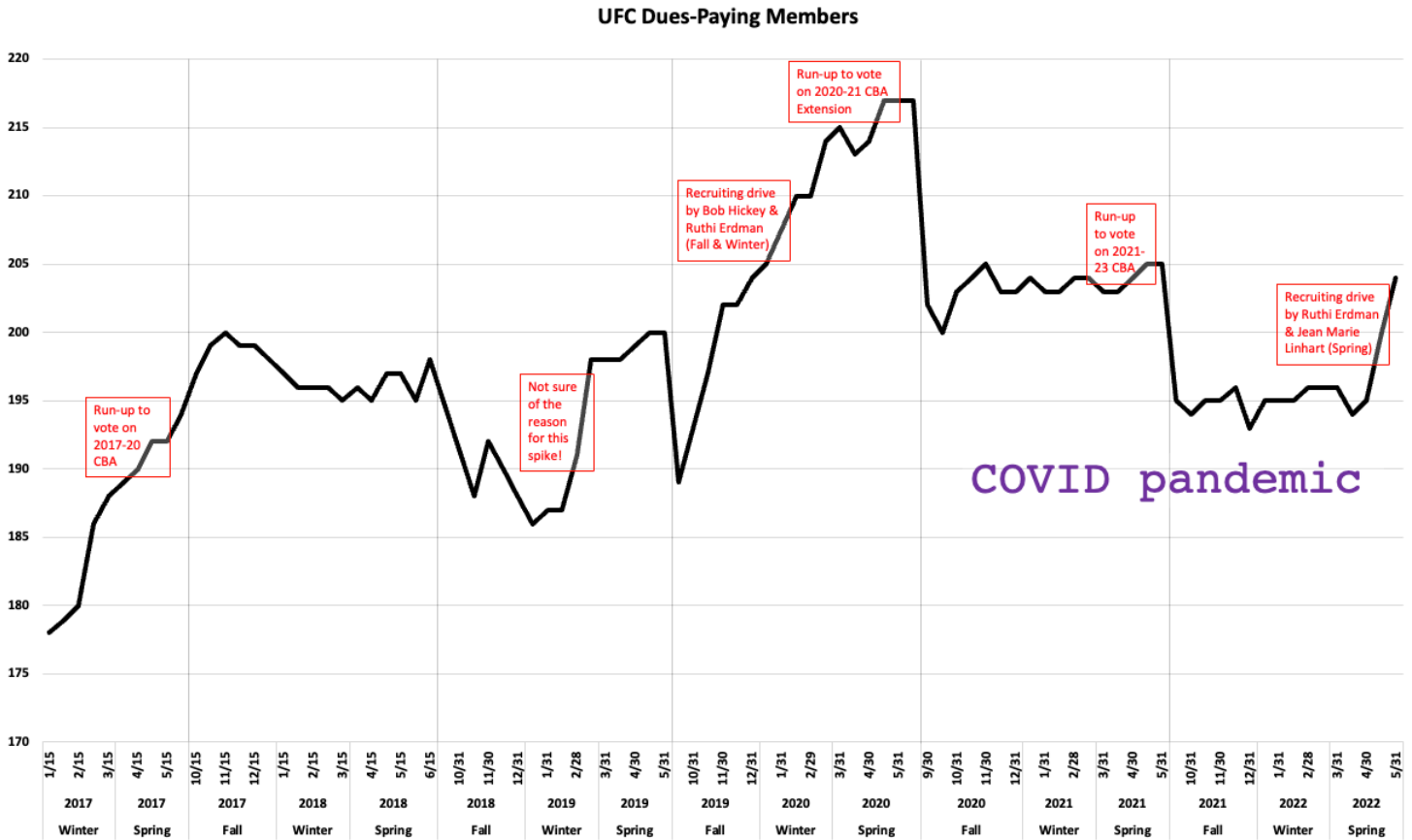
It has been an honor to serve as a UFC officer for the past five years – first as Vice President from 2017-2019, and then as President since June 2019.

I am leaving UFC in very safe hands. Kara Gabriel has been a steady source of support and counsel for me over the past two years, and is more than ready to step into the President role. Sarah Feeney will continue to do excellent work as Communications Officer. Clay Arango and Lauren Wittek will bring their abundant skills and enthusiasm to the team. I have every confidence in their ability to continue UFC's advocacy for Central's faculty employees.

Respectfully submitted,
 Gary Bartlett, UFC President
 June 15, 2022

Appendix: Membership and recruiting

The following chart shows UFC's membership over the past 5-6 years, as recorded in the bimonthly reports that UFC receives from CWU's Payroll office.



Each vertical line marks five members; each horizontal line, a transition between academic years. Membership drops between years due to faculty leaving CWU. We usually start each Fall with about 10 fewer members than in the previous Spring. (In summer 2017, however, the increase in membership in the run-up to a contract vote made up for the usual attrition.)

Until recent years, UFC's recruiting efforts have been rather haphazard. However, in 2019-20 we hit on a very successful strategy. The purpose of this Appendix is to record the effectiveness of this strategy, and to recommend its continuation.

In Spring 2019, past-President Bob Hickey asked whether UFC would like to give him a few wlu's to do recruiting the next year. We agreed, and gave him 2.5 wlu's across Fall and Winter quarters. We also gave Ruthi Erdman 1.5 wlu's in Fall to focus on NTT faculty. Of the total of 4 wlu's given to Hickey and Erdman, 2 were bought out by WEA (as part of the regular 22 wlu's that they pay for) and the other 2 were paid for by UFC itself.

As the chart shows, the strategy was a massive success. Membership had never exceeded 200 from 2017-2019. By Spring 2020 it had climbed to 217. Hickey and Erdman recruited around 25 new members, for a net gain (given 5 or 6 members lost for various reasons) of around 20.

Costs must be kept in mind, especially if UFC is using its own money. The total cost of Hickey's and Erdman's time in 2019-20 was almost \$7,000. UFC's share was almost \$2,500 (mostly Erdman's salary). For that money, we gained some 25 members that we would almost certainly not have gotten otherwise. Each member pays \$60 per year in local dues, but since those new members joined partway through the year, the resulting bump in income for UFC that year was probably under \$1,000. But once someone becomes a member, they tend to stay a member, so the extra income accrues over time. Those 25 new members in 2019-20 meant an extra \$1,500 for UFC in every following year.

However, the main importance of recruiting lies not in increasing our income, but in increasing our strength in numbers. The more members we have, the greater our bargaining power with the university.

We had planned to continue the strategy in 2020-21. While Hickey was no longer available, Erdman was keen to continue. However, COVID intervened, so the strategy was shelved for that year; and most of the next as well. As the chart shows, during those two years membership was stagnant. The only major change in numbers came from the usual summer attrition.

Only in Spring 2022 was the campus sufficiently populated again for it to be worth sending out recruiters. We paid 2 wlu to Erdman and 1 to new volunteer Jean Marie Linhart. The total cost was just over \$3,200, with UFC paying just under \$1,900 and WEA about \$1,350. The strategy was again very effective. The chart shows a membership spike of around 10 faculty. This is actually an underestimate. Two members that Erdman and Linhart recruited in late Winter or early Spring helped to somewhat offset the departure of five existing members in Spring; and three more members have been recruited too recently to appear in the chart.

The consistent success of Hickey, Erdman, and Linhart shows that there are plenty of faculty who are ready to join if they get a push. After 2019-20, I felt that a membership of 250 was eminently achievable within a year or two. Of course, COVID had other ideas. But now that faculty are back on campus, I think that that goal is back on the table. In 2019-20, Hickey and Erdman recruited 25 members in two quarters. This year, Erdman and Linhart recruited 15 in just one quarter. Right now, we have 210 members; by Fall, the usual summer attrition will leave us with around 200. We should easily be able to make a net gain of *at least* 20 members next year. 30 seems well within reach. 40 would be a 'stretch goal'.

Moreover, another benefit of increasing membership should be that recruiting will become easier. The more faculty are members, the more UFC membership will come to be simply the norm, and implicit peer pressure will begin to work in our favor.

At least for the moment, though, recruiting is not easy. One must be persistent and somewhat pushy. But there will always be some members – like Hickey, Erdman, and Linhart – who are willing to spend time on it, and who are good at it.

In my view, therefore, UFC should continue to buy out time for this work. It could be seen as replacing the 'Chief Steward' role, which we had until 2017. The last few years have shown how vastly more effective it is to assign recruiting to just one or two committed members, at the cost of a small salary buyout, rather than to a couple dozen stewards or liaisons.