

United Faculty of Central Executive Board meeting minutes

October 15, 2020, 12pm

Zoom (virtual meeting)

Meeting called to order 12.05pm

- Present: Matthew Altman (Barg. Chair), James Avey, Gary Bartlett (President; taking minutes), Ruthi Erdman, Kara Gabriel (VP), Nancy Graber Pigeon (Barg. team member), Amy Hoover (Comm. Officer), Paul James (Finan. Officer), Martin Kennedy, Gary McNeil (WEA), Sathy Rajendran, Karen Roemer, Terry Wilson.
- Agenda approved.

Bargaining update (Matt Altman / Gary McNeil)

- The Bargaining team remains the same as last year: Matt Altman (chair), Nancy Graber Pigeon, Dan Lipori, Dominic Klyve, Sathy Rajendran, Gary McNeil (chief negotiator).
- Altman and McNeil outlined the team's general priorities, and how these have been affected by Covid-19 and the resulting changed financial situation at the university and state levels. There remains a great deal of uncertainty at this point. *[Further details are excluded here to preserve confidentiality of the bargaining process.]*
- Erdman voiced concerns about the situation of NTTs. Some Senior Lecturers, including herself, have been downgraded to Lecturer status.
 - Bartlett clarified that the university says that this was simply a mistake; and it appears not to have generally affected salaries (except for one case that Bartlett learned of which has now been corrected). There may be other cases that UFC is not aware of, but there is no way for UFC to learn about them unless the faculty themselves notice the situation and bring it to us.
- Altman noted that it has been asked whether a second bargaining survey should be done. The general consensus was that it should not. Our priorities have not changed, and there were concerns about "survey fatigue" (since we also sent out a Covid survey in Spring); and also that responses right now might be overly colored by the present situation.

Financial report

- Bartlett presented the financial report for August 1, 2019 to July 31, 2020. Income was about \$1,000 more than expenses for the period, so UFC is in good shape.

Membership update

- Last year, thanks to recruiting efforts by Ruthi Erdman and Bob Hickey (paid by UFC), we gained a lot of members, getting up to almost 220 by year's end. The usual summer attrition has brought us down to just over 200. We now need to recruit in order to maintain the gains we made last year.

- Recruiting will be difficult for UFC officers, because we can't visit people's offices. We need members to think of faculty they know who aren't members, and talk to them.
- Gabriel has begun emailing non-member faculty, but so far without any luck. She asked if she could cc Executive Board members, at their private email addresses, so that the non-members will see a name that they know.
- Bartlett suggested that liaisons can be cc'ed too. Avey and Wilson said that for anyone in CB, both of them could be cc'ed; perhaps also Graber Pigeon. Wilson suggested utilizing Wendy Cook as a good connection on the west side.

Emergency fund

- Gabriel reported that she and James have been working on this. An account has been set up with US Bank. We now have non-profit status from WA state, but not tax-deductible status from the IRS yet. Once we get the latter, we will be able to set up payroll deductions via the WA State Combined Fund Drive.
- Bylaws for the emergency fund are in preparation, and will soon be presented to the Executive Board for approval, as will the new application guidelines.

Tenure-track review issue

- Bartlett reported that there have been concerns about the availability of material from previous review periods in reviews of TT faculty. Officially, the CBA says that "All reviews shall encompass work performed during the previous review cycle, which is defined as the period between the date the previous file was closed and the date the current file is to be closed." The Provost's office is now interpreting this to mean that previous periods cannot be viewed, which makes TT reviews difficult.
- On the other hand, that rule was put in place to prevent colleges (especially CEPS) from using a faculty member's 1st or 2nd year poor performance (especially in SEOIs) against them in their later reviews, even if they have improved.
- The general consensus was that the trajectory of a candidate's performance matters. Early problems should be discounted if they have been addressed. So earlier materials need to be looked at, to see what the trajectory is. For tenure review especially, reviewers need to look at the candidate's entire probationary period, not just the last two years.

Arranged courses

- Many low-enrolled courses this quarter were being converted to 'arranged' courses, with the instructor being given workload at the Individual Study rate as defined in the CBA.
- The IS rate assumes that grading is the only work involved in teaching a class: so that, say, a class with 6 students is half the work of one with 12. This isn't true, of course, so it results in faculty being assigned too little workload for low-enrolled arranged classes.

- UFC has worked out a 1-year deal with CWU to give faculty a bit more workload for those classes this year. But in the long term, this needs to be addressed in bargaining, since ‘arranged courses’ aren’t even mentioned in the CBA.

Extension of MOUs

- Several MOUs are set to expire on December 31, and may need to be extended:
 - The opportunity to request a one-year extension of one’s review clock. There was a consensus that UFC should push to extend the opportunity, at least if it won’t cost us anything to do so.
 - The opportunity to exclude Spring 2020 SEOIs from one’s review. This should be extended into Winter so that NTT faculty can take it (since their reviews occur in Winter). Ditto for the formative-only use of Summer 2020 and Fall 2020 SEOIs.
 - There is also the question of whether the ‘formative-use-only’ policy for SEOIs should be continued for Winter 2021 and Spring 2021 SEOIs. There was a general consensus that this would be a good idea. Covid doesn’t look likely to go away soon, so most classes will likely remain online, and a lot of students find this very stressful.

Frank Chopp fundraiser

- Frank Chopp is a WA state representative who has done a lot for higher ed over many years. There’s a fundraiser for him next week on Tuesday from 5.30 to 6.30 on Zoom. Bartlett encouraged Executive Board members to attend if they can.

Meeting adjourned 1.29pm