

NEWS

Faculty and Administration teams exchange proposals that are “very far apart”

During a three-hour session on July 3, the Faculty and Administration bargaining teams exchanged their proposals for all articles of the contract, and explained and clarified their proposals.

According to Faculty Chief Negotiator Geoff Woolf, the faculty and administration are very far apart on many issues, including workload, tenure, distance education, and the entire compensation package.

The next bargaining session is scheduled for Wednesday, July 9, at 3:30 p.m.

Geoff said a specific agenda has not been set yet, but he expects the July 9 session to include substantive discussion of some of the articles where

faculty and administration proposals have significant differences.

“Both sides have expressed a strong desire to complete our work at the bargaining table, without any of the time and expense that would be required

if we end up in fact-finding,” Geoff said.

“Now that all the proposals are on the table, we look forward to getting down to work and reaching a settlement both sides can live with,” Geoff said.

What flexibility really means

-- Pam Ecker, AAUP Chapter Past President

On June 12, 2008, faculty and administration bargaining team members exchanged their first proposals written for this year’s contract negotiations.

But one of the administration’s new proposals was three years old.

The administration brought to the table a proposal that, except for a few tweaks, was the same proposal they brought to the table on July 1, 2005.

It’s essentially the same proposal they took to fact-finding in August 2005.

This proposal, if implemented, would change the guaranteed protections of tenure (most importantly, the guarantee of true academic freedom for faculty) into a guarantee that no new tenure-track positions

would be created in the foreseeable future.

The administration’s proposal also would allow current tenure-track faculty to be denied tenure—and then immediately offered continuing work as non-tenure-track employees. It’s a policy vulnerable to abuse.

Why, you may wonder, would the administration want to retain a faculty member who wasn’t good enough for tenure?

The answer might be that some administrators believe that tenure has nothing to do with being good at faculty work.

That’s false, of course... and explaining why is a subject for a future essay. Or a reason to look for the sheaf of letters that

Bargaining updates:

AAUP Office Hotline
513-569-1888

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faculty members sent to this newsletter in 2005.

The administration's "new" non-tenure proposal is essentially the same as the one that was thoroughly rejected by the fact finder in August 2005.

The faculty team members tell me that when the administration presented this recycled proposal, the only reason they gave was a desire for "more flexibility" in filling faculty positions.

Of course I'm not an academic administrator, but it's hard for me to understand why the College administration thinks they need more flexibility when they want to fill faculty jobs.

In any typical term, the full-time faculty--tenured or tenure-track--are a small portion of all faculty at Cincinnati State.

In fact, in most terms, the tenured and tenure-track faculty represent less than 30 percent of the total faculty.

You read that number right. In most terms, according to our Human Resources Office, over 70 percent of all faculty working at our College are adjuncts.

According to National AAUP reports, the typical number for institutions like ours is 56 percent.

Some Cincinnati State adjuncts are working professionals who teach one night a week, in a few terms of the year.

And many adjuncts have been working at Cincinnati State for many years or even many decades, teaching close to a full load--or (in violation of current College policy) more than a full load--term after term. With no benefits, of course, and usually with no office, no phone, and no College-supplied computer.

I've worked with many adjuncts during my two decades at the College. Most take their instructional duties quite seriously, seek as much assistance as they can get, and participate eagerly when my department colleagues and I

have opportunities to talk with them about the goals, standards, and learning experiences we hope to provide for all students.

But in large part, our adjunct colleagues don't have time to be mentored. They're working hard already just to keep up with class planning and grading, not to mention keeping up with the rest of what's going on in their lives.

And in large part--no matter how much we want to do it, and no matter how important we know it is--my colleagues (and others whose departments rely far too much on adjunct staffing) don't have enough time to provide the mentoring and monitoring that's needed.

So when the administration says they need fewer tenured faculty, and more "flexibility," I wonder what it is that they really want.

Save the date!

Cincinnati State AAUP Chapter Meeting

Wednesday, July 23, 2:00 p.m.

Location (on campus) to be announced

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