Bargaining Update: 10-28-2024

This week's two-day negotiation session is our last before the November BOR meeting, which UA management originally proposed to UNAC as a deadline for reaching a new TA'd contract. Unfortunately, we are nowhere close to that point in the process. To date, we have only TA'd the articles that neither side wanted to change (TA'd package). For this week's sessions, management's team asked us two days ago (on the weekend) if we would accommodate a closed-door session with a "subject matter expert." In the interest of moving toward a ratified new CBA before management's proposed deadline, we agreed.

Subject Matter Experts

Today's discussion focused on CBA article 9: Faculty Status. Their expert was UAF's Jennifer Hoppough, Chief of Faculty Affairs and Services, for UAF's office of the Provost. Management's team appeared to agree that prohibiting postdocs from working beyond 3 years, or from getting raises, was not productive. We also discussed our proposal for 2 to 5 year contracts for NTT faculty after 3 years, the clarification of appointment duration, and the removal of the requirement for (not the possibility of having!) external reviews in peer review files. The management team did not agree to these terms, but did ask questions and appeared to listen to our explanations.

We were still deep in discussion at 3:00 p.m., which management had suggested as the end of the meeting. Our team proposed to continue the conversation since we had originally been scheduled to negotiate until 5:00 p.m. Management's team stated the need to go back to caucus to prepare for tomorrow, when they want to bring in a new "subject matter expert" on health insurance. We didn't have time to discuss their idea in article 9 to make post-tenure reviews punitive, for example.

Closed Sessions

So far, this afternoon's closed meeting produced no new proposals from management. We look forward to seeing the fruits of today's discussion in the form of a counter to article 9 that matches what was discussed today.

Tuesday, October 29, 2024

Still, in the continued interest of moving toward a ratified new CBA before November 7 - the Board of Regents' deadline for budget finalization -we agreed to one more hour of closed meeting on healthcare Tuesday morning from 9:00-10:00 a.m. (10/29/2024). Unless tomorrow morning's closed session results in markedly different outcomes from those we've already experienced, we will not agree to any more closed discussions. We are a democratic organization, and process transparency is an essential part of that.

The Real Deadline for a Ratified New CBA

Of course, we have known all along, and so has management, that our real deadline for a ratified CBA is late April 2025. At that time of year, the legislature is still finalizing their new budget and will accept and fund supplemental budget proposals, especially when they involve union negotiated raises for state workers. Raises for non-union workers in a supplemental budget are far less likely to be funded.

Thank you for bearing with us as we temporarily deviate from our 26 year practice of having open bargaining sessions in an effort to move this stalled process along. We have never before had so much difficulty getting management's team to have discussions about the intent behind both teams' proposals. Without that discussion, it is nearly impossible to reach agreement.

Bargaining Unit Members Log On at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday

Please log on at 10:30 a.m. for the remainder of our previously scheduled Tuesday negotiation session. We suspect, based on comments made today, that we will not be negotiating for very long Tuesday after our closed hour, so log on right at 10:30! Watch your inbox for the Zoom link.

Member Actions

It is clear that our members need to get more vocal in supporting our negotiation efforts. That's how unions work–our power is in our solidarity. In addition to attending Zoom negotiations, you have several opportunities to make your voice heard:

- Attend local in-person events
  - UAF BOR Walk-In, 8:00 a.m. November 8. Stay tuned for details.
- Write letters to newspapers
- Fill out our membership testimony form
- Follow us on Facebook and Instagram
  - Share and react to our content
  - Tag us or add your own content to our pages
- Hang an "I support UNAC sign on your door"
- Use our Zoom profile pictures
- Encourage your student newspaper to cover our bargaining
- Wear red clothes on Mondays
- Write an email to our Board of Regents
  - Use the topic options and talking points in the linked pdf to help you write your email. (*regent email addresses in the pdf*)
- Fill out our 'member testimony' form to participate in our social media campaign (examples below)

"I hope to spend the rest of my career at the UAA training bioarchaeologists to work on cultural resource management projects throughout the state. A fair and competitive contract makes that dream possible. We lose too many amazing faculty who don't feel supported by UA."

-Ryan Harrod
UAA Associate Professor of Anthropology & UNAC Org VP

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"Having multi-year contracts would not only tangibly affirm our value to the university but would also relieve the stress of needing to keep an eye on other possible employment opportunities."

-Donna Langley
UAA Mat-Su College Assistant Professor of Quantitative Studies

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SUCCESS!
OUR FIRST IN-PERSON ACTION LAST THURSDAY AT UAA
Informational Picketing Against UA's Zombie Proposals

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United Academics Local #4996 (UNAC) is the bargaining unit that represents all post docs, non-tenure track (term), tenure track, and tenured faculty at the University of Alaska. UNAC is affiliated with the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) as well as the Alaska Public Employee Association (APEA) and Alaska AFL-CIO.

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