



UNAC Connection - November 2025



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UA Community Stands Strong: No Compact Petition a Huge Success

By Mary Wegner, UAS Associate Professor of Education Leadership, Chair of UNAC Legislative Relations Committee



Thank you to everyone who signed the UNAC petition urging the Board of Regents to reject the proposed federal compact for higher education. Alongside our co-sponsors, AGWA/UAW and CAUSE/UAW, we gathered 659 unduplicated signatures, which UNAC President Professor Jill Dumesnil delivered during public testimony to the Board earlier this month.

The proposed compact is contrary to the Alaska Constitution, which grants the Board of Regents, and not the federal government, the authority to govern the University of Alaska. Accepting the compact would require

UA to surrender its autonomy and cede control over critical areas such as hiring, curriculum, research, and student enrollment to federal oversight.

Thank you to everyone who helped send a clear message to the Board of Regents that academic integrity and institutional independence matter!

For more, read this coverage of our multi-union petition from [Alaska Public Media](#)

Protect Your Workload

Times are tough, budgets are crunched, and workloads are getting squeezed. Supervisors take advantage of your dedication to your students, program, and colleagues. They know you don't want to let down your students or put your program in a vulnerable position, so they ask you to work for less or no money, increase your course caps, or convert low enrollment courses to "directed study" with less workload credit.

Our Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) is very clear: 1 credit hour of teaching = at least 1 workload unit. The CBA doesn't have caveats for small class sizes; *if your supervisor asks you to teach a 3-credit class for anything less than 3 workload units, they are violating the CBA*. Contact your Org VP and our UNAC staff at contract@unac4996ak.com. This is a grievable violation of our CBA.

Similarly, if you have a signed workload for this academic year and your supervisor tries to add more to your workload, we recommend that you ask them which items are being taken off your workload in exchange for the new assignment. Workload revisions are common, but the revisions should not continually increase what's expected of you. If this is happening to you, Contact your Org VP and our UNAC staff at contract@unac4996ak.com.

**If you're asked to do additional work during the academic year
and you already have a full workload of 30 workload units,
DON'T just accept more work.**

Choose from the following 3 options:

1.

**Negotiate other elements off
your workload that are either:**

- less important
- less time sensitive
- can be given to someone else needing to adjust their workload

2.

**Ask for overload
compensation**
(CBA article 13.4.3)



3.

Decline the work, citing:

- your full workload
- the importance of work/life balance
- CBA article 13.4.3 states that members *cannot be forced into overload assignments*

Union Representation at a 1-1 Meeting with Your Supervisor

If your supervisor calls you into a one-on-one meeting, request an agenda for the meeting.

If no agenda is provided, we recommend you tell them you will bring a union representative with you to the meeting. Then contact your Org VP and our union staff at contract@unac4996ak.com. If a meeting might result in your discipline, your supervisor is legally required to schedule the meeting at a

time when your union representative is available. This is called your Weingarten Rights. Watch the video below for more details.



Paid Holidays, Hard Closure & Faculty Time Off (FTO)

Paid Holidays

You have several paid holidays coming up in the next few weeks. Paid holidays do not require any timesheet action on your part. If you want to take time off in addition to these paid holidays, you need to claim FTO on the appropriate time sheet, with advanced permission from your supervisor. Following are the dates for this year's paid holidays:

Fall Break: Thursday, November 27 & Friday, November 28, 2025

Winter Holiday: Thursday, December 25 & Friday, December 26, 2025

New Year: Thursday, January 1 & Friday, January 2, 2026

Hard Closure & FTO

This year's hard closure dates are December 29, 30, 31. If you are not required to work on these days, you need to claim FTO on your timesheet for December 29, 30, 31. UA considers the hard closure '**unpaid leave**' if faculty and postdocs do not claim FTO.

If you are required to work on these days, don't take FTO. Work with your supervisor to replace this required leave with a different 3 days of FTO. Our CBA states that the hard closure days must be taken in order to be eligible for FTO cash-in later this spring, so it is essential to work with your supervisor to determine which alternate 3 days you will take for your required FTO days. Keep a copy of your supervisor's email confirming your alternate FTO dates. Contact your Org VP for help with this.

Wellness Rebate

If you checked all the boxes required to receive your \$600 wellness rebate, and your rebate didn't show up in your November 14, 2025, paycheck, send a screenshot of your Personify account showing completion of the required points to UA's benefits team at ua-benefits@alaska.edu to resolve the issue.

All About UNAC -

Radio Interview by Deborah Mole with Kate Quick

UAA librarian Deborah Mole interviewed United Academics' Organizing Manager, Kate Quick, on her weekly radio show *Informania*. The episode is all about UNAC and UA. Deb is a member of UNAC's Representative Assembly. Click the button below to listen.

[Link to Show](#)

Upcoming UNAC Leadership Opportunities

2027-28 Negotiation Team

Team nominations are happening now, ahead of next year's workload due dates. Selected members will start training and strategizing next July and throughout the next academic year. Negotiations will begin mid-2027. Team members will need to take release time of 3 workload units per semester (paid to your university by UNAC to cover replacement costs) for at least 3 semesters.

Nominating yourself for this team is one of the best ways to give back and pay it forward. You're building off what previous faculty-led teams have bargained, with the goal to protect and improve our compensation, job security, and working conditions for future faculty. Nominate yourself before January 15, 2025!

Dues payers in good standing received the nomination form via email on Monday, November 17, 2025.

We'll send reminders before nominations close on January 15, 2026.

Statewide Officer Elections

Nominations will open on December 15, 2025, for the officer positions President, Secretary, and Treasurer. These positions represent all 1,100+ faculty and post doctoral fellows in the UNAC bargaining unit. All dues paying members in good standing are eligible to run for election and vote this spring.

Nominating yourself for one of these positions is another great way to give back and pay it forward. These positions are less public than the negotiation team but are equally or more important. If you care about our profession as higher education faculty and postdocs, and want to see working conditions improve, one of these positions might be right for you.

Dues payers in good standing will receive the nomination form via email on December 15, 2025. *Nominees are required to gather 10+ endorsements by no later than January 12, 2026 (instructions will be included in the announcement).*

Higher Education in the News

- AAUP has won *another court case* in defense of first amendment rights and academic freedom. AAUP v Trump was filed by University of California's unionized employees in response to a federal funding freeze to the UC system of over \$600 million in federal agency funding. ([Read more here](#)).
- Portland State University won an arbitration, resulting in *10 NTT faculty getting their jobs back and being 'made whole' with backpay, etc, due to a CBA violation* by PSU. ([Read more here](#)).

From AAUP's Weekly Newsclips:

- [Professors across the US are protesting Marc Rowan: the billionaire behind Trump's higher ed compact](#) – *Times of India*, 11.10.25
- [Fearing Trump, universities themselves restrict academic freedom](#) – *Los Angeles Times*, 11.14.25 (op ed by Laura Isabel Serna, President of USC AAUP)
- [Cornell University to pay \\$60M in deal with Trump administration to restore federal funding](#) – *Associated Press*, 11.7.25 (Cornell AAUP President David Bateman quoted)
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Strike Solidarity Corner

Unionized workers from varied occupations have been going on strike against their employers. Their occupations vary, but one thing remains the same. They are all demanding respect in the form of higher pay, better benefits, and improved working conditions.

- Starbucks baristas at 95 stores in 65 cities are on strike for a fair contract. While Alaska's Starbucks stores are not unionized, we still consider it crossing the picket line if you go to Starbucks right now. Choose an Alaskan coffee shop instead! ([Read more here](#))
- Resident Advisors (RAs) at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Massachusetts, are on strike after two years of bargaining for their first contract. They are striking to protect and improve their working conditions and job descriptions. ([Read more here](#))
- University of California hospital system's service employees, represented by AFSCME, went on a two-day strike on November 17, 2025, in response to yearslong, stalled negotiations with UCSF Med Center management. Striking workers include custodians, food service workers, patient care assistants, and hospital technicians. ([Read more here](#))

Union Resources

- [AAUP AFT- Higher Ed Benefits Everyone](#)
- [Protecting Your Online Presence in the Current Climate](#)
- [AFT Mental Health Resources](#) and [Trauma Counseling](#)
- [Member Benefits](#) and [Occupational Liability Insurance](#)
- [Faculty First Responders](#)
- [Mobilize AFT](#) and [AFT Votes-Government Shutdown Watch](#)
- [Union Plus Benefits](#)

Meeting Notices

UNAC General Membership Meetings

Regularly scheduled meetings: every second Tuesday of the month from 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Next General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, December 9, 2025, from 5:30-7:00 p.m. AKST

Next UNAC Representative Assembly Meeting*

Saturday, February 21, 2026, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. AKST

UNAC Executive Board Meetings*

First and third Wednesday of each month, 8:30 a.m.-10:00 a.m. AKT

**Dues paying members are welcome to attend the RA and Executive Board meetings. Contact your Org VP and/or office staff for the Zoom link.*

Reminders

UNAC Swag Store

Looking for something new to wear to work? Need a new coffee mug or a new canvas bag? Shop at our [new United Academics store](#) on Bonfire to find the perfect item for you. A small portion of the proceeds goes back to UNAC, and we'll use the proceeds to purchase more free swag for our members. You can select from items with our classic logo or our new, updated logo.



UNAC Website

Please visit our United Academics website: unitedacademicsak.org for helpful resources including:

- Executive Board officer contact info & Representative Assembly roster
- A pdf version of our current CBA
- An archive of our monthly newsletters
- E-Board and RA meeting minutes
- Our union by-laws and constitution
- Union member benefits
- And more

Social Media

- Follow us at our new [BlueSky](#) account
- Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)
- Like and share our posts, and tag us in your own posts

YouTube Channel

Our [YouTube channel](#) (@United Academics_4996_AK) has short member-to-member video messages, videos explaining union rights, training videos for promotion and workloads, and other informational content. Contact us if you have additional training or other video requests.

UNAC Sick Leave Bank

The Sick Leave Bank application can be found under 'forms and guidelines' on this [UA Labor and Employee Relations](#) webpage.

The UNAC sick leave bank was formerly the UAFT sick leave bank; when the two unions merged into UNAC in 2018, the sick leave bank became the UNAC sick leave bank. It was incorporated into our most recent CBA (article 16.8).

Current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)

Our CBA is available on our United Academics website:

<https://unitedacademicsak.org/resources/collective-bargaining-agreement-1>



Executive Board Contacts

President - Jill Dumesnil, PhD

jill.dumesnil@unac4996ak.com

Treasurer - Sharon Chamard, PhD

sharon.chamard@unac4996ak.com

Secretary - Richie Berndt, MSML

richie.berndt@unac4996ak.com

UAA Organizational VP - Ryan Harrod, PhD

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UAS Organizational VP - Andrea Dewees, PhD

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UAF Organizational VP - Ingrid Johnson, PhD

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Extended Sites Organizational VP - Cindy Trussell. PhD

cindy.trussell@unac4996ak.com

Contract Manager - Melanie Arthur, PhD

melanie.arthur@unac4996ak.com

Organizing Manager - Kate Quick, MFA

kate.quick@unac4996ak.com

United Academics Local #4996 (UNAC) is the bargaining unit that represents post doctoral fellows, non-tenure track, tenure track, and tenured faculty at the University of Alaska. UNAC is an affiliate of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and the Alaska Public Employees Association (APEA).

unitedacademicsak.org

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