

LOCAL 1796
At
William Paterson University of New Jersey
General and Executive/Local Council Meeting

Date: September 21, 2004 – Lunch was served

Location: Student Center, Rooms 203-205

Time: 12:30 pm – 1:55 pm

Present: **(Departmental Affiliations Noted for Department Representatives and Substitutes):** Mary P. Baumgartner (Sociology), Steve Betts (Marketing and Management), Robert Bing, Richard Blonna, Dee Catarina (Special Education and Counseling), Rodney Cauthen, Robert Chesney (Biology), S. H. Chung (Chemistry and Physics), J. Craig Davis (Music), Iris Torres DiMaio, Michael Giorgio, Amy Giovanetti (Exercise and Movement Science), Claudia Goldstein (Art), Eleanor Goldstein (Mathematics), Jane Hutchison (Library), Phoebe Jackson (English), Daphne Joslin (Community Health), Richard Kearney, Kem Louie (Nursing), Charles Magistro, Esther Martinez (Languages and Cultures), Judy Matthew (Library), Ed Matthews, Alberto Montare (Psychology), Irwin Nack (History), John Najarian (Computer Science), John Peterman (Philosophy), Janelle Pinkston, Louis Rivela, Martin Rudnick, Vijay Sargis, Arlene Scala (Women's Studies), Alan Schaefer, Shari Selke, Shubhra Sharma (Anthropology), Cindy Simon, Jebaroja Singh, Peter Stein (Sociology), David Stern (Environmental Science & Geography), Sue Tardi, Marion Turkish (Early Childhood & Elementary Education), Miryam Wahrman, James Wilkerson (Accounting & Law), Chriss Williams (Communication), Robert Wolk, Lianzan Xu, Melda Yildiz (Secondary & Middle School Education)

Items distributed to the Council and General Membership:

- 1) Proposed Local Council Meeting Agenda for September 21, 2004 (hard copy – also issued in advance via email)
- 2) Minutes of May 11, 2004 General and Executive/Local Council Meeting
- 3) List of State Council Delegates to the Council of New Jersey State College Locals
- 4) Memorandum of Understanding between AFT Local 1796 and William Paterson University (signed September 18 and 20, 2004) regarding work of professional staff serving on the Banner implementation team
- 5) AFT Local Council Department, Professional Staff, Librarians and Adjuncts Slate for 2004-2005 (list)
- 6) AFT Local 2373 (Rowan University) *F.O.R.C.E. Notice AFTalk Supplement*, September 2004
- 7) Draft Adjunct Faculty Compensation schedule for The College of New Jersey, Fall 2004 (dated September 7, 2004)
- 8) Council of New Jersey State College Locals flyer on John Kerry

Note: All motions were approved unanimously unless stated otherwise.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Sue Tardi at approximately 12:45 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve agenda called by Tardi. Moved by Montare, seconded by Turkish. The motion passed.

3. Approval of May 11, 2004 Minutes

Montare moved to approve the minutes, Giovanetti seconded. Approved.

4. Action Items:

Tardi noted the reorganization of the agenda to prioritize action items over officers' reports.

- a. **CNJSCL Council Delegates and Alternates** – Tardi referred to the handout distributed listing State Council delegates. Tardi called for a motion to approve the list. Moved by Scala; seconded by Catarina. Approved

- b. **Range Adjustment Policy** – Tardi noted that at the May 11 Local Council meeting the membership agreed on a counter-proposal to be given to the administration that included the following terms:

- that eligible candidates must have tenure
- that those approved for promotion must wait four years before seeking a range adjustment

Tardi noted that despite the equity problem evident in the current policy, the administration refuses to address it.

Discussion: A member asked whether anyone who was not tenured had been given a range adjustment. Tardi replied that she did not think that this had occurred, but that it was feasible according to policy.

Another member asked whether the administration's problem is with the four-year wait (as compared with, for example, a three-year waiting period). Tardi replied that this did not appear to be the administration's position. The member pointed out that the current policy is inequitable, noting his previous experience on promotion committees. Tardi reiterated the terms of the current policy regarding promotions and range adjustments. At the present time a faculty member cannot use the same credentials used for promotion in seeking a subsequent range adjustment and must wait a minimum of four years to seek a range adjustment following a promotion; yet faculty can use the credentials submitted for a range adjustment for a subsequent promotion (in successive years).

Another member inquired about the terms of range adjustments. Tardi confirmed that range adjustments represent a permanent and significant change to one's salary.

Another member commented that he had been informed in the Music Department that

seeking a range adjustment would experience difficulties in seeking a subsequent rank adjustment (i.e., promotion). Tardi replied there is no evidence for this, and the information is incorrect.

Another member asked about information she had received that the administration intends to (at least temporarily) suspend range adjustments. Tardi replied that this is not likely.

Stein moved that the local re-affirm its previous position on the range adjustment policy because it does not address the equity issues of concern to the Union.

Nack moved a point of information: before a vote is taken there should be a clear statement of the motion on the floor. Stein moved that the local affirm its position that the current range adjustment policy remain in effect so long as the university does not address the equity issues of concern to the Union in the current promotions policy.

Tardi called for a vote on Stein's motion. Approved.

- c. **October 19, 2004 Local Council Meeting: "Health and Pension Benefits"** – Tardi asked whether the next Local Council Meeting should be focused on a particular topic (in this case health/pension benefits), entailing our bringing in experts on benefits issues. She asked whether any other topics should be considered for future focused meetings. A member asked about the duration of benefits.

Wilkerson moved that questions in advance of the meeting should be submitted to the Executive Board and placed on the agenda for the next meeting. Approved.

A member asked whether individual faculty members will be typing their questions into a web form. Tardi suggested this was possible, although the specific technical details would have to be worked out in consultation with webmaster Llarull.

5. **President's Report**

- a. **Local Council Meeting Locations** – Tardi indicated she has attempted to make the meetings more equitable in terms of location. This year she discovered that Valley Road rooms large enough to host meetings of the Local are thoroughly booked for the year; as a result, all meetings this year will need to take place on the main campus.
- b. **Local Council Meeting Minutes Distribution Process** – Tardi announced that hard copies of the minutes will no longer be distributed in paper format through campus mail (although they will be available at subsequent meetings). Instead, the minutes will be scanned into PDF format and made available through a secure login on the Local's web site.

- c. **Master Contract Distribution Process** – Copies of the Master contract will be sent to departmental reps (starting tomorrow) for distribution to all department members. For professional staff, the contracts will be distributed at an upcoming meeting.

A member asked whether the contracts will include individually addressed labels. Tardi replied that they would not because of resource issues. Doing this would entail additional unwanted delays. Another member asked whether contracts would be distributed to both agency fee and full members; Tardi replied this would be the case and requested that the member review the definition of these categories for the membership, which the member did.

- d. **Communication Directory Distribution Process** – Tardi commented that the time and resources devoted to producing a communication directory that is generally obsolete by the time it reaches members is not desirable. As an alternative, Tardi indicated the new directory would be produced electronically and made available through secure login on the Local's web site.
6. **Professional Staff Officer's Report** – Matthews reported on the "Memorandum of Understanding" negotiated with the administration, a copy of which was distributed to the membership. The memorandum provides for compensation in the case of "unusual" or "extraordinary" additional work time performance related to Banner implementation. The immediate spur to this negotiation was the experience of two professional staff members who logged many additional hours during the Banner implementation during the summer.

Tardi noted that in her dealings with Human Resources on this issue Employee Relations Director Boucher communicated to her that the administration did not want supervisors to take advantage of professional staff with this agreement in place, nor did Boucher want to see other abuses that might result from the adoption of this agreement. Tardi strongly recommended that in all cases where professional staff are being asked to do substantial work beyond their usual responsibilities they should negotiate compensation with supervisors up front (regarding payment or compensatory time) and communicate with the Union about the matter so the representatives are aware of the issue.

President Emeritus Bing commended Tardi's leadership on this issue along with the Professional Staff Officers, DiMaio, Matthews and Selke. He further emphasized that the achievement of this agreement is extraordinary given the administration's historical reluctance to enter into something of its nature.

Tardi mentioned that President Speert was granted a raise as of July 1, 2005 at the last Board of Trustees meeting and will be earning \$234,000. Wahrman announced that the Faculty Senate will be discussing its published evaluations of the University's Senior Administration at its next meeting on September 28 in Science Hall 200A.

7. COPE Officer's Report

Tardi noted that members had expressed concern over past leadership's process for providing our Local's political endorsements. To provide Union representatives with the opportunity to poll their respective departments, whenever possible, recommendations for political endorsements would be presented at one General and Local Meeting and voted upon in the pre-scheduled subsequent meeting. A representative may vote his/her conscience but is accountable to those s/he represents.

- a. **Political Action (Presidential Election)** – Simon noted the national AFT's endorsement of Kerry and referred to its flyer (distributed to the membership) detailing Kerry's positions on various issues of concern to the membership. Simon indicated a vote would be taken on endorsement at the next State Council meeting in October.
- b. **Local Political Endorsements** - Simon reviewed other current election campaigns:
 - 8th Congressional District – Pascrell has been endorsed by the national AFT and recommended to be endorsed by the State Council
 - 9th CD – Rothman – has been endorsed by the national AFT and recommended to be endorsed by the State Council
 - 5th CD – no endorsement has been made

Simon indicated she was making no endorsement for local races; no one has sought the Local's support. Simon requested that Department Representatives go back to their departments, request an endorsement decision, and report back to the Union at the next meeting.

- c. **Fund Raising** – Simon mentioned the Local's legislative breakfast events held in the past as productive for the Union in drawing local level representatives (State Assembly and Senate) to make them aware of the Union's concerns, and AFT Labor Walks (taking place in Passaic County October 2), involving volunteers going door-to-door to Union members to encourage them to vote. COPE funds are used for local political races rather than state/national campaigns.

A member commented that WPUNJ's own contribution to the state COPE funds are among the lowest in the state, urged the members to make contributions to COPE, and requested that COPE contribution cards be distributed to the membership.

A department representative sought clarification about the departmental endorsement process. Tardi replied that only a simple majority is necessary for the representatives' purpose, since the end-result will be a single "vote" from each representative on this issue of endorsing Kerry (perhaps accompanied by an election flyer). Another department representative wanted to know if additional information about the political campaigns is available to provide to department members. Tardi suggested department representatives use the Kerry flyer and indicated the availability of other flyers. Department representatives requesting additional information should contact Simon.

Tardi called the **Order of the Day** at 1:40 pm and requested an extension. Moved by Hutchinson, seconded by Scala. Approved.

8. Old Business

Alternate Assignment: Tardi noted other recently adopted alternate assignment agreements in NJ, taking special note of the Rowan agreement detailed in its publication *F.O.R.C.E. NOTICE, AFTalk Supplement*, AFT Local 2373, Rowan University, September 2004).

9. New Business

- a. Overbooking of Classes** – A member reported briefly on information that last semester he heard of class overbookings taking place at the last minute, resulting in classes of 45-50 students in many cases, and called for the Local to undertake an investigation of this problem.

- b. Faculty-Authored Textbooks** – The same member also reported his understanding that the administration is calling for faculty not to use their own textbooks in classes, and that they forego the royalties on their books. Another member sought to clarify this issue by explaining her experience on her Department's textbook selection committee, in which one of her own books was recommended for use in appropriate courses. The Administration sought to remove the apparent conflict of interest stemming from such situations by requesting that faculty authors forego royalties on books sold for use in WPUNJ courses.

Tardi stated that there were misconceptions regarding both the overbooking of classes and faculty authored textbook "rules." These needed to be clarified at a subsequent meeting.

Tardi called the **Order of the Day** at 1:48 pm and called for a motion to adjourn. Moved by Montare, seconded by Chesney. Approved.

Respectfully submitted

Richard Kearney
Recording Secretary, AFT Local 1796
[Final Edit: 10/5/04]