

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

Date: November 18, 2008

Location: UC 171, A/B

Time: 12:30 pm – 1:45 pm

Present: S. Tardi, C. Williams, G. Guerrieri, S. Selke, F. Pavese, R. Wolk, L. Mbogoni, G. Pope, M. Williams, K. Martin, K. Martus, K. Asada, J. Carter, S. Wollock, S. Alon, R. Soto, J. Cho, E. Martinez, S. Betts, D. Fengya, T. Newman, K. Louie, A. Montare, K. McNeal, G. Furst, D. Caterina, A. Holpp Scala, J. Matthew, I. DiMaio, C. Simon, E. Goldstein, A. Cheo, M. Rosar, J. Heavey, S. Rienstra, M. Giorgio, D. Van Boerum

Items distributed to the Council and General Membership:

- 1) October 21, 2008 General and Executive/Local Council Meeting
- 2) Membership letters and cards

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:41 pm by Chriss Williams. He explained that Tardi had been delayed by traffic.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was modified to put the Grievance Officer's Report at #4, the Negotiation Officer's Report at #5 and the NL Study discussion at #6 if necessary, pending Tardi's arrival. **A motion to approve the modified agenda was made by K. Martus, and seconded by A. Cheo. The motion was approved unanimously.**

3. Approval of the Minutes of the October 21, 2008 General Membership and Executive/Local Council Meeting. A motion to accept the minutes was made by K. Martus and seconded by J. Matthew. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Grievance Officer's Report

Williams stated that several individuals who have received non-reappointment letters have contacted him. He encouraged department representatives to advise their colleagues to contact the Union Leadership if they are not being retained. A member stated that individuals who are not being retained may not come forward due to embarrassment so the department representative might not be aware of the situation. Williams stated that the matter can be pointed out in a general way if the Union is on the agenda at departmental meetings, and noted that is one reason why it is important to make sure the Union is on the agenda. A member asked if the practice of not reappointing individuals signifies a climate change at the University. Williams stated no, that the University will always have students and the administration has the responsibility to provide qualified faculty

members who are moving forward with the tenure process. Williams stated that mentorship in departments ensures that new faculty members are given the correct information about the tenure process. A member stated that President Speert is on record as saying there are no plans to reduce faculty or to implement furloughs. Another member stated that although he said that, there is a clause in the contract that employment is subject to budgetary considerations. Williams stated that the most recent round of non-reappointments is not something new; the University has a history of laying people off during a financial crisis.

Tardi arrived at 12:52 and began presiding over the meeting.

Williams announced that the Sabbatical Committee grievance has been settled. He explained that faculty members who applied for a one year sabbatical but were awarded only a ½ year sabbatical will be eligible to apply for the one available ½ year sabbatical. Tardi stated that the caveat is that the person who is awarded the additional ½ year will get ½ pay. A member asked if that is a ½ year for the semester or year. Tardi stated that the amount balances out to be ¾ pay for a year. A member stated that if someone applied for a one year, she assumed that the one year would be available. Tardi stated that the Union assumed the same thing, and will clarify this for future committees. Tardi noted that if a person applies for a full year, there should be a certain percentage of one year proposals that are awarded by the committee. She said there was too much flexibility in the hands of the committee. Tardi noted that the important factors the committee should consider are insufficient policy specification and the merit of the research to the candidate's field. She stated that a one year project should be feasible within one year, not able to be completed in ½ year, and we're still negotiating this. A member asked what happens if a person gets zero. Tardi responded that a person who is not awarded is eligible to get a full year in the following year. A member asked if projects can be revised to fit in a shorter timeframe so that a candidate who applies for one year might be awarded one semester. Tardi stated that in the original proposal, a person must specify if the project will require one year or a ½ year, and she doesn't understand how that can be revised. She stated that models and theories are wonderful, but they must be implemented in an equitable manner because revising takes time and requires that another committee meeting take place; that becomes very difficult when there is a calendar to follow. A member stated that 1/7th of the faculty should be able to take a sabbatical every seven years. Tardi stated that the number of sabbaticals is determined by the State, and that only 26 half year sabbaticals will be awarded this year. A member stated that since there are two pools, there should be two committees. Tardi stated that the administration will not agree to two separate committees. Williams stated that two committees are not necessary as long as there are two separate pools. He noted that it is not fair to compare the one year proposals to ½ year proposals by deciding which is more meritorious. Guerrieri noted that one of the sticking points in the negotiations is that the administration wants to lump everyone into one pool. She stated that doing all or nothing is a problem and compromises the idea of having two separate pools. A member stated that he hopes to go on sabbatical next year and is in the process of lining up someone to pick up his quarter of the salary because that is how sabbaticals operate in the college of Science and Health. Tardi said that is another issue that has not been clarified. She stated that a member who

was getting external money applied and received the sabbatical but a person who applied for the one year did not get it. Tardi said there are ways of getting your needs met outside of the sabbatical leave. A member commented that the funds are only a supplement. Tardi asked what is the secret. She stated that if a faculty member can't apply under this program then what are the options? Williams clarified that there is a finite number of sabbaticals in our contract unlike promotions, where the Union leadership presents how many we think should be offered and then the number is negotiated locally with the administration. Tardi noted that the flexibility comes into play because it's up to the committee to decide who gets the ½ year and who gets the full year. A member suggested that the sabbatical process could operate similarly to the promotions and range adjustments process. If you apply for a promotion and receive it, then you do not pursue the range adjustment. A member suggested completing part of the project in a semester and calling it "phase 1." Tardi stated that members don't understand how the committee generally operates because it is a complicated process. They typically want to meet as few times as possible and make a decision. She further stated that if we impose a policy that involves those kinds of layers it will not work. Tardi stated that the individuals applying for ½ year sabbaticals, put together proposals that were extensive and could not have been completed in a ½ year, but the committee didn't even look at that. Tardi stated that the committee needs guidelines, and that the suggestions made here have been great, but the administration will not accept them. A member stated that he would like to see a decision on the one year proposals first. Tardi responded that the committee does not want to make the decision on the one-year proposals first because they want to compare the quality of the projects, rather than comparing the ½ year proposals to the full year proposals. Tardi stated that the committee wants to ensure that the proposals fit the guidelines of the policy, contribute to the respective fields, and are feasible within the timeframe. A member asked for clarification about the new applications for people in the one year pool. Tardi stated that the individuals who applied for a one-year sabbatical but received only a ½ year, will be sent a notification that they can apply in a separate pool, and only one full year will be awarded. They can submit their original proposal; no new information will be required.

Williams distributed cards containing Weingarten Rights information. The cards have information about the three things members should do if they are summoned to attend a meeting with a College/University representative: 1) Ask for an agenda prior to the meeting; 2) Request that a Union representative accompany you to any interview that has the potential to result in disciplinary action; and 3) Always immediately stop and request Union representation if in the process of a meeting, you believe disciplinary action may result. Williams encouraged the department representatives to take a packet of cards back to their department for all members. He reiterated that this is another reason that it is important to have the Union on the agenda at departmental meetings. Tardi noted that it never hurts to contact the Union and that members should know they can always talk to members of the Executive Board "off the record." A member described an incident where he was interviewed by a University official and had no idea that the purpose for the interview was to get evidence that could be used against him. Tardi stated that the Union was naïve a few ago when we assumed that if people are innocent and they answered questions it was no big deal, but since then we have found out that is not the case. She

stated that she is not encouraging members to hide anything, but just reminding people that when in doubt, seek guidance from the Union leadership.

5. **Negotiations Officer's Report**

Guerrieri noted that workshops on tenure and retention and professional staff performance based promotions were recently held. She noted that the sabbatical workshop has been cancelled since negotiations are currently underway and no concrete information is available. Guerrieri stated that the assessment compensation issue is currently stalled because the administration failed to produce the information regarding compensation as promised. She stated the Union leadership will keep moving forward with this issue and will strive for equity across departments. Tardi added that after one and a half years of negotiating this issue, the Provost now claims it is not negotiable. Tardi gave an update on the issue involving the faculty member who was alleged to have two fulltime jobs. She stated that matter has been resolved and the individual was fined \$10,000 and suspended for 1 ½ months without pay. Tardi noted that this took substantial negotiation on the part of Union, and the member was satisfied with the outcome.

Tardi asked the Membership to make note of the email message she sent advising individuals not to participate in advisement. She stated that faculty advisors are being asked to participate in an event called "Show Me Your Schedule" on 12/9, in which students will be certified for graduation. Tardi stated that while she recognizes that the professional staff members in the Registrar's Office are very overworked, this responsibility should not be placed on faculty members. Tardi noted that the administration is claiming that this is a duty and responsibility of the faculty, but it is not; it involves a condition of employment and should have been discussed if not, negotiated with the Union. Tardi said she is currently working with the administration on this matter, and she asked the Membership not to agree to participate until there is further clarification.

6. **Action items**

Tardi stated that in the spring semester, Pavese was elected to serve as the Adjunct Faculty Representative, but he was not officially appointed as the COPE Officer.

A. Montare made a motion to appoint Pavese as the COPE Officer for one year, seconded by K. Martus. The motion was approved unanimously.

Tardi stated that Vince Vicari was approved as Communications Officer, but the amount of compensation was not agreed upon. Tardi explained that Vicari is currently creating a new, interactive website with Wolk's assistance, and since this is a new position it is not clear how many hours the job will entail. She suggested that the Membership approve the amount that was originally budgeted for the position, and then Vicari can write a report on the amount of work and the number of hours required. **A motion to approve Vicari up to 4 credits was made by A. Montare and seconded by Martus. The motion was approved unanimously.**

7. President's Report

Tardi stated that she asked President Speert about the safety task force that was to be formed more than one year ago. Speert said the Chief of Police has been on leave and that the task force will be implemented as soon as he returns. She also spoke to Speert about the dedication of the new faculty lounge to faculty members who are deceased, but dedicated their lives to teaching at our University. She suggested that a committee be formed and criteria established so that the lounge can be dedicated fairly, rather than having rooms and/or buildings around campus that are named after deceased faculty members.

8. NL Study

Selke reported that she had a recent meeting with John Polding, Lou Szucs, Tardi, and representatives from the Council regarding the implementation of the Professional Staff NL Study. The projected date for implementation is January 17, 2009. Selke explained that according to our current contract, any campus without a local NL agreement must participate in a year-long study to determine how many hours Professional Staff members work per week. Selke stated that since President Speert refused to negotiate a local agreement, the study must now be implemented. Selke explained that Professional Staff are very dedicated and project oriented so they don't necessarily have an end to their work week and are often expected to complete projects at no additional salary. She said some supervisors are very agreeable and allow professional staff to take unofficial comp time, but others do not, and this leads to inequity across campus. Selke stated that while the study is voluntary, it is very important that all professional staff members participate. Tardi added that this study can only be implemented one time, and it is extremely important that all professional staff members participate. She said if no one participates, it will become a "dead" issue and can never be brought up at negotiations again. Tardi stated professional staff members will be required to spend 5 -10 minutes at the end of each day (on University time), recording the extra hours they worked. A member asked if the supervisors are aware that the study will take place. Tardi said that once the details are finalized, Human Resources will notify professional staff and will host a workshop for supervisors.

9. Membership report

Tardi asked the department representatives to distribute the letters and membership cards to all members of their department. She noted that they should especially focus on adjunct faculty members because 50% full membership is required or the State can remove adjunct faculty members from the bargaining unit.

10. Treasurer's Report

Tardi, speaking on behalf of Matthews, stated that we will have a small increase in dues beginning in January. She stated that Adjunct Faculty members will now pay dues on a percentage basis, as is the common practice of the other locals in our Council. A detailed letter explaining the increase will be sent out to the entire Membership soon.

11. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by K. Martus and seconded by A. Montare. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Pinkston,
Recording Secretary