



UNION WIRE

NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY

2020

University Releases Updated Classification System

As you are aware, Human Resources released the updated classification system late last month and it appears that the University has missed an incredible opportunity to demonstrate its respect and value for our professional staff.

Many of you have shared the impact of your mapping into the new system, and we want you to know that we hear you. We also want you to know that there are numerous people outside our bargaining unit that are dissatisfied with the outcome of the system as well. While we are grateful for the recognition of our efforts and the confidence expressed by many of you despite the widespread discontent with the status of the system, we acknowledge that our current contract language has limited our ability to participate in a meaningful way to the outcome of this process. Despite these limitations we will continue to fight for a fair and equitable system while eagerly anticipating and preparing for the opportunities contract negotiations will bring us later this year.

During our membership meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 5 more than 330 members participated either in person or online. Additionally, since being posted, the meeting recording has received more than 340 views. During the meeting, we heard both individual and departmental concerns. The complete mapping was provided to the UCPEA less than two hours prior to members being

notified of their individual mapping. The information we've received from members so far has been helpful as we sort through 1,993 UCPEA positions. Some of the consistent feedback we've heard includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- General cynicism and distrust that HR has worked in the best interest of the membership;
- A significant number of people feel that:
 - the content of the Job Inventory Worksheets (JIWs) was not considered at all in the mapping and/or the job template they have been put into;
 - SMEs weren't utilized adequately or at all, nor was the input provided considered or included in decisions made about mapping; and
 - they have been essentially demoted.
- Many equity issues in this new system have been identified;
- People who supervise other UCPEA members have not been categorized as managers;
- Questions regarding reclassification and reconsideration;
- Concern about options for growth and advancement being more limited.

Please be assured that our loyalty is to you, our membership, and that we are all in this together.

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Reminder: File Reports for Injuries Sustained at Work

If you are injured -- or think you may have gotten hurt -- while performing a function related to your job, always report the incident to your supervisor in writing.

While this is true year-round, snow and ice during cold weather months can make navigating around the University's campuses a hazardous situation. Please report any slips, falls or other injuries to your supervisor.

All state employees are eligible for benefits provided under the State's worker's compensation insurance. This

includes faculty, staff, student labor, work study, special payroll and graduate assistants. In all cases, supervisors must complete and submit the WC207 First Report of Injury form to Human Resources.

Depending on the incident, there are different types of claims and detailed. Information can be found at: hr.uconn.edu/workers-comp/#. Specific questions about reporting an incident or injury can be directed to Tiffanie Roback at Human Resources: (860) 486-2598.

Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield to Administer Employee Health Plan

The State of Connecticut has selected Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield (Anthem) to administer the state health plan, which the Comptroller's Office says will vastly improve the way state health care is administered in order to ensure high-quality patient care.

Effective July 1, all health benefits for active state employees and their dependents on the health plan will be administered by Anthem. UnitedHealthcare will continue to provide coverage for retirees and their Medicare-eligible dependents under the state's Medicare Advantage program.

The Office of the State Comptroller will be providing updates

to all state employees about new expanded health benefits and features now under development that it says will be designed to make it easier for employees to utilize their health benefits more effectively and to more easily access the highest-quality health care providers.

Human Resources will provide more information as the May open enrollment period approaches.

Until then, frequently asked questions and other details about this update are available here: Frequently Asked Questions, www.anthem.com/docs/SOCT_FAQ_MED.pdf.

Rainbow Center Offers Guide to Use of Gender Pronouns

Increasingly, email signatures at UConn now include gender pronoun such as he, him, his; she, her, hers; they, them, theirs; or ze, hirs/zirs, himself/ zirself.

At a Union Reps/Stewards meeting last fall, Julia Anderson of the Rainbow Center discussed the proper use of Gendered, Gender Neutral or Gender-Inclusive pronouns within the University community. Educating our leadership, staff, stewards and members about gender diversity is necessary to make sure the UCPEA as an organization is making inclusion a priority in all of our work.

The Rainbow Center, one of five cultural centers on campus, was established in 1998 with a mission of advocating for, and increasing education, access, retention, identity development, and community-building for queer- and trans-spectrum communities. The Center serves as a resource for a range of information to assist the LGBTQIA (lesbian, gay bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual) communities.

Anderson says individuals may choose any method that makes them feel comfortable when disclosing their pronouns to their coworkers, supervisors, and those they supervise.

"Some key considerations are the way to disclose. Is that an all staff meeting thing or one on one? It's whatever you decide to do. There is no wrong way to do that," she says.

Respecting a person's gender pronoun is also important, Anderson says, and this should be acknowledged going forward when working or communicating together, including taking responsibility to correct an incorrect use of pronouns.

"Respecting a person's gender identity is a protection in the



state of Connecticut, but that's not why it should be done," she says. "As long you know what a person had said about their pronouns, you would have a responsibility to correct someone and share why it was important to address that person's identity with care."

The Rainbow Center has a three-part gender and pronoun poster series available online.

Call for Amendments: Constitution and Bylaws

The deadline for proposing amendments to the UCPEA Constitution is April 1, 2020 under criteria outlined in Article XII of the Constitution, which can be viewed here: www.ucpea.org.

Proposed amendments can be submitted two ways: through the Constitution and Bylaws Committee or by an individual member in good standing with signatures of support from at

least 3% (currently 59 members) of the membership in good standing.

All proposed amendments or ideas for the committee to consider should be sent to Sheila Kucko, committee chair, at Sheila.Kucko@uconn.edu. Please contact the UCPEA Office with any questions: ucpeaoffice@ucpea.org or 860-487-0850.

Executive Board Begins Strategic Planning

The Executive Board has started to meet in strategic planning sessions under a new amendment to the Constitution approved last year by UCPEA members, which requires three planning meetings annually.

During its initial meeting on Dec.19, the Executive Board discussed the following subjects:

- Fiduciary responsibilities of the board
- Improving confidentiality measures to enhance protection of member information
- Setting formal Strategic Goals for how to better serve members

- Establishing formal statements for Mission, Vision and Values of the UCPEA
- Establishing social justice as a guiding value in all of the UCPEA's work

A Mission Statement was discussed and a draft written for presentation to Union Representatives/Stewards for their feedback and input.

The next planning session is tentatively scheduled for March 13, with a third session to be determined for the summer.

March 27 Deadline for Member Dependents Scholarships

UCPEA offers two \$1,000 scholarships to children who are dependents of UCPEA members.

The UCPEA/Sandy Schulte scholarship is awarded to a high school senior who will be a full-time matriculating college student in 2020-2021 and is a dependant of an UCPEA member.

The Austin Leadership Scholarship is awarded to a UConn

student who has displayed leadership at the University of Connecticut or in the community and who is the dependent of an UCPEA member.

Applications and information on these and other scholarships are available on the UCPEA webpage under the "Resources."

The deadline to apply for the scholarships is Friday, March 27, 2020.



HOLIDAY LUNCH FASHION AT ROME BALLROOM: Left: Nadine Boudissa decked out in Red, White and Green. Right: Reindeer headwear (L-R) from Nicole Starkey, Andrea Tetrault, Nancy Labonne, Jeanette Morales, Kelly Cunningham and Linda Juber.

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Classification System cont.

In addition to Human Resources, the UCPEA leadership has shared our initial reaction to the system with the President and Executive Vice President for Administration and Chief Financial Officer. To view that communication, please visit: <http://www.ucpea.org>.

Right now, our first goal is to collect and categorize feedback from members; Union Reps/Stewards met Monday, Feb. 10 and have been asked to directly participate in this effort. If you have not already done so, please share any information/concerns/issues you think would be helpful for the UCPEA to know as we continue to advocate on your behalf. Please send this to ucpeaoffice@ucpea.org.

BJ's Membership Discount Ending

It has just come to our attention that BJ' Wholesale Club will be discontinuing their corporate discounts effective next week. This will be that last corporate discount BJ's will allow us to send to our members.

If you have a BJ's membership, you can renew at any time, you don't need to wait for expiration to renew (the extra months will be added to your membership).

Please email ucpeaoffice@ucpea.org for the necessary paperwork. This offer is for UCPEA members only and expires on Monday, February 24, 2020.

Dates, Deadlines, and Things To Do

Feb. 17, Mon., UCPEA Office Closed – Washington's Birthday
Feb. 19, Wed., Social Justice Committee meeting, Wilbur Cross 26
Feb. 20, Thurs., New Member Luncheon, SU304B
Feb. 25, Tues., Executive Board Meeting, SU316
Feb. 26, Wed., Union Steward Training, SU310
Mar. 5, Thurs., Union Steward Meeting, SU304B
Mar. 10, Tues., UCPEA Membership Meeting, SU Theatre
Mar. 11, Wed., Social Justice Committee meeting, Wilbur Cross 26
Mar. 13, Fri., Executive Board Workshop and Meeting, SU310
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Mar. 16, Mon., Union Steward Training, SU310
Mar. 24, Tues., Executive Board Meeting, SU316
Mar. 25, Wed., Professional Issues Event - Evaluations, SU304
Mar. 26, Thurs., Executive Board Meeting, SU410
Mar. 27, Fri., Deadline for UCPEA Scholarship Applications
Mar. 30, Mon., Regional Campus Meeting @Waterbury Campus

All events and meetings are at noon, unless otherwise noted

- **Membership Discounts**
- **Professional Development applications are reviewed at the beginning of each month**
- **Childcare Deadlines Jan. – April (Due May 15); May – Aug. (Due Sept. 15); Sept. – Dec. (Due Jan. 15)**

Dependent Tuition Waivers

The benefit applies to Fall & Spring semesters only
Deadlines: Fall Semester – June 1; Spring Semester – Nov. 15

Employee Tuition Waivers

The waiver applies to the Fall and Spring semesters only.
Deadlines: Fall Semester – Oct. 15; Spring Semester – Feb. 28

Tuition Reimbursement

Reimbursements apply to summer, fall and spring course work
Summer: Sept. 15; Fall Semester: Jan. 15; Spring Semester: June 1