

UCPEA Stewards Meeting

MAY 5, 2021 WEDNESDAY | 12:00PM-1:00PM |

ZOOM MEETING – invitation has login information, registration required



MINUTES

- I. Call to Order 12:04 p.m.
- II. Additions to the Agenda:
Request for volunteers for HR
Rally covered in Hartford Courant
- III. Approved Minutes from April 2021
- IV. *Standard Reporting*
 - a. *SEBAC Update (M. White) – No updates*
 - a. *Classification – Reconsideration & Career Progression (K. Fisher, E. Sullivan) – update*

The University has been provided with the names of members who are part of the Demotion Grievance. Written and oral testimony preparation will be offered to those involved. There are currently more than 100 members participating in the grievance. Salary bands are secondary to the primary grievance issue of title changes. A team led by R. Boggis and M. Fournier will determine decisions on the reconsideration process. A question was asked about the right to request notes and the factors leading up to the decision to approve or deny reconsideration. Members can request this information. There was also a question about a member participating in the grievance who will be on vacation during the hearing. Members can participate in the grievance without being present at the hearing and there will be opportunities to observe in the future. HR will no longer meet with UCPEA regarding demotion now that there is an active grievance.
 - b. *Negotiations – (F. DeMerell, K. Fischer) – update*

The University has cancelled the last two Monday sessions. There have been no new proposals in the past 2-3 weeks. The negotiations have been described as contentious and there have been challenges with submitted proposals from UCPEA being returned without the inclusion of the additional language. Observers are still needed and an email will be sent to the membership Thursday with reminders. The date for discussion of Article 5, regarding non-discrimination, will be determined and additional observers requested.
 - c. *Budget Review (quarterly M. Decozio-Wiley) – tabled*

The budget will be presented to the membership in the coming weeks.
 - d. *Committee Activity (R. Marcellino) – Members needed to serve on committees*

New stewards will take position on June 1st and are encouraged to join committees. Some positions will be a greater time commitment than others. Interested stewards can view available committees on the UCPEA website.
 - e. *Eboard Updates (R. Marcellino) – CT AFT Convention (P. Morenus) – May 1, 2021*

The AFT Convention featured a speech from Randy Weingarten. As a whole, the event was useful but presented as a seminar with little interaction between members that left some feeling a lack of purpose.

This is a noted change from previous conventions. One highlight was a scholarship named after a former president.

f. Area Issues (open forum)

Equity is a concern for continuing to allow remote work, an example being the Law School, who has been told that all positions are required to work in-person, 5 days a week. The rationale is that if some employees need to work in-person, all employees should work in-person. Some members are concerned about resuming work in small offices and are expected to continue remote meetings despite being back on campus. Some members have noted that they are concerned about commuting to the office if meetings will still be held remotely. Members are encouraged to continue reaching out to UCPEA with all concerns related to resuming work on campus.

A rally for state union employees was held in March with an action beginning at Capital Community College, marching to the State Capital. The event was framed as economics for higher education but for UCPEA, we are not seeking financial support beyond salary increases. UConn is doing better financially with the block grant and un-funded legacy costs. SVFT, the union for technical school teachers, is in a dire situation with their contract going to arbitration. Others notice when UCPEA participates in rallies, and more engagement from the membership will be important at future events. It is noted that the graduate student union was present and gave remarks.

g. Arbitration Report (UCPEA staff) – L. Jenkelunas

There will be a hearing Thursday regarding a member's unsatisfactory evaluation from last year. Moving through the 3 steps of the grievance process took almost a full year. There will be one month allowed to write briefs and the arbitrator will issue their decision. Unsatisfactory evaluations should always be reported to the UCPEA office. A full list from the University is not provided to UCPEA until the grievance period is over.

h. Labor History (R. Marcellino) – Now highlighted on the UCPEA Facebook Site

V. New Business

a. Election Results (J. Escalara, R. Marcellino)

On May 20th, Kathie Fisher will take office as President, Fiona DeMerell as First VP, Dave Paquette as Treasurer, Jennifer Morenus as VP of Professional Issues, Justin Kyle Tanner as VP of Communication, Peter Morenus as VP of Political Action, Donald Babcock as Secretary, Nisha Hardnett as VP of Membership Services, and Nishelli Ahmed as VP of Social Justice.

b. Constitution & Bylaws Committee (*L. Boritz, D. Babcock*)

Twelve proposed changes have been moved to the ballot for voting in early June. A presentation will be given about the proposals at the annual membership meeting. The ballot will be open for voting for 10 days.

a. Unionist of the year award presented at May 20th Annual Meeting

Special considerations are still welcomed for the award, which will be announced at the annual meeting.

b. Annual Meeting (Virtual) – May 20, 2021 at noon (R. Marcellino) pre-registration is required

c. Field Rep Position – Status (E. Sullivan)

Seven applicants will be interviewed with a plan to have the position filled by the end of the summer.

- d. June 2nd Steward Meeting – Election of Chief Union Steward
New stewards will take office on this date and participate in the election of the Chief Union Steward.
- e. New Stewards – mini training in June to review the basics of being a steward
- f. Fall Training for all Stewards – date to be determined - 3-hour training
- g. HR Request (L. Jenkelunas)
HR has changed their job audit process to an online format and seeks 5-7 members to pilot the system prior to finalizing implementation. The more voices we have regarding the process, the better positioned it will be for the future. A demonstration video will be provided at the end of May or early June. The time commitment for the pilot will be 5-10 hours to walk through the steps. This will not be an actual reclassification process. It may be beneficial for someone who has previously gone through the job audit process to participate. There was a question about whether feedback will be considered in making changes to the process.
- h. UCPEA office phone will now be answered live.

VI. *Good & Welfare – (R Marcellino)*

There is a new PLUS insurance plan that will be offered during the insurance open enrollment period between May 3 and 28, 2021. It should be noted that the newly offered plan doesn't work with Hartford Hospital or its doctors. Members should refer to the brochure to review fees for each of the plans.

The number of negotiation observers has gone down in recent sessions and one reason for the change is cancellations by the University.

NPR says the state is anticipating a surplus, which is consistent with the finances presented by the University.

VII. Old Business

- a. COVID-19 – Update and Question & Answer Session-no updates

Meetings (please check UCPEA website for updates on the calendar)

Reminders

- Professional Development applications are reviewed at the beginning of each month -\$2,000 awards – applications are due 7 days prior to event and must be submitted for reimbursement 60 days after the event

Childcare Deadlines

- Jan-April (Due May 15th)

Meeting adjourned 12:54 p.m.