

# UCPEA Stewards Meeting

September 1, 2021, WEDNESDAY | 12:00PM-1:00PM |



## Minutes

- I. Call to Order 12:01 p.m.
- II. No additions to the Agenda
- III. Approval of Minutes from August 2021 – tabled
- IV. New Business
  - a. Introduction of new UCPEA Field Rep: Jordan McMillan (jmcmillan@ucpea.org)  
Jordan has started her position as a UCPEA Field Rep, coming to UCPEA from the graduate school union at UConn, where she was President. She recently completed a PhD in Sociology.
  - b. Union Steward Appointments (R. Marcellino)  
There are 5 new stewards: Area 33: Karen Lohr & Sydney Wein, Area 41: Dan Stolzenberg, Area 20: Justin Rogowski Area 26: Joleen Monahan-Wilding.
  - c. Retirement Projections June 2022 (R. Marcellino & D. Paquette)  
We have approx. 370 members eligible to retire, of which, 170 in a younger age range. This would impact the budget by a \$270K decrease in revenue if all 370 retired. Expenses would drop in half due to the funds that go to AFT CT. If you look at the salaries over the last few months, the average salary is quite a bit lower. Expenses would remain the same despite a different number of members. If UCPEA/UConn positions aren't replaced, that would impact the next year's budget. The Finance Committee is looking at scenarios to plan accordingly. There are one and potentially two vacancies in the finance committee. The position is open to anyone interested in the finances as there are some members who already have the finance background.
  - d. Vaccine Mandate (K. Fisher)  
The majority of UCPEA members are vaccinated. Today is the final day to put in a request for exemption and stewards are asked to remind their members. A steward asked why UCPEA allowed the University to mandate this. UCPEA did not "allow" this; the University has the right to set policies and must negotiate the impact with unions. Members need to upload proof of the vaccination in the HR portal by Sept. 10. There was a question regarding the exemption forms and the level of detail requested for medical and religious topics, as well as appeal and confidentiality. HIPPA does not apply to this; these are the same forms used for any other request for exemption and are in line with EEOC guidance. The more information that members can provide within the form, the better a decision can be made. An appeal would be on the basis of an EEOC violation.  
UCPEA is here to support members with the process, so they should reach out to the office with any questions or concerns and will be represented should this go through grievance process. This mandate applies to all new hires, however unions do not negotiate conditions of hire, as these are not yet our members. UCPEA worked in collaboration with the other UConn unions and all are working to provide accurate science based information to members and supporting members in response to the University's policy. The University has a responsibility to avoid preventable harm. UCPEA's does not to have any member lose their job. Anyone who puts in an exemption or deferral should copy UCPEA so they can be supported.

- e. **AFT Sticker Campaign – Higher Ed Action (Logan Place & Matt O’Connor, staff for CT AFT)**  
This is part of a larger movement, not just with AFT, but all of higher ed and SEBAC, of 40k employees at all branches of government in the state. It is part of an escalation campaign to get the governor to move. UCPEA is not alone with the difficult negotiations, part of this comes from higher level administration as no one at the state agency is being offered raises. AAUP has already started distributing stickers. The first step is distributing the stickers, then taking a picture to post on social media with #FundOurFutureCT. Reps are asked to get pictures of groups of members, especially those without social media. AFT recommends we have these ready at the UCPEA office for reps to pick up. Sign out all stickers to keep track of numbers. This is a good way to educate members about what is going on at the table and tie into the larger fight for fair taxation systems, funding education, etc. This is a structure test, to see how much solidarity there is within the union. Asking someone to attend a rally is more difficult than asking to wear a sticker. This is a starting point of engagement for the membership. We don’t currently have the office staffed so we are working on developing a plan for distribution, such as a booth at the student union.
  
- f. **Future of Work Report (K. Schneider)**  
The group met both as a large group and then in sub groups to create the report. It is very detailed and the idea was for the sub groups to meet on various topics, to determine strategy and planning for change, so we can respond about how work will change in the future. For all of the committees work and research, including internal and external benchmarking research, the future is going to change for public health, retirements, and tech advancements. One takeaway is that it will not look the same as it did 20 years ago and won’t have a one-size fits all for employees. Positions are different, the future is different. This is worth the long read. The committee will meet again in the fall and it is not just related to the pandemic, but also what has changed since the experience of the fall semester.  
A steward asked a question about members who have been assigned to work in-person and are not comfortable with this for various reasons. There is language in the current contract to request telecommuting for those who were assigned to work in-person and have concerns with this circumstance. In the future, the telecommuting arrangement for the upcoming contract is being negotiated. Members have the right at this time to ask for telecommuting arrangements. There was a question from a steward about the frequency of supervisor’s completing a telecommuting request. There are challenges when a supervisor is not in agreement with the telecommuting arrangement for an employee.
  
- g. **Area Meetings (Jordan McMillan)**  
This would be a good time to host area meetings to update members, organize the membership and to build solidarity as we return to work. Field reps will be reaching out to schedule, but stewards can get in touch with Lindsay and/or Jordan as well.
  
- h. **Responding to Current Events/Crisis with Statement (Nishelli Ahmed)-tabled**
  
- i. **Pausing - Steward Training October 20<sup>th</sup> from 12 to 3 p.m. – (R. Marcellino)** We will hold off on training due to the negotiations as well as the pandemic. We are looking at holding the training in the spring and will need to get approval from the board per the constitution.
  
- j. **Demotion Grievance – Update – (L. Jenkelunas) Tabled due to time.**

V. *Reporting-Tabled due to time*

- a. *SEBAC Update (K. Fischer) – update*
- b. *Classification – Reconsideration & Career Progression (K. Fisher) – update*

- c. *Negotiations – (K. Fischer/F. de Merell) –update*
- d. *Budget Review (quarterly D. Paquette) – tabled*
- e. *Eboard Updates – Code of Conduct*
- f. *Area Issues (open forum) – Transitioning Back to Campus for some members*
- g. *Arbitration Report (UCPEA staff) – L. Jenkelunas*

VI. *Good & Welfare – (R Marcellino)-Tabled due to time*

VII. Old Business

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

**Reminders**

- Professional Development applications are reviewed at the beginning of each month – A new award amount of \$500 has been established – applications are due 15 days prior to event and must be submitted for reimbursement 60 days after the event

**Childcare Deadlines**

- May-August (Due Sept 15th)

Meeting adjourned 1:01 p.m.