

To: UML-MSP (UML-MSP@LISTSERV.UML.EDU) <UML-MSP@LISTSERV.UML.EDU>

Subject: Bargaining summary for bargaining meeting on 6-16-2021

Bargaining Summary 6/16/21

First, the MSP wishes to remind members that bargaining is an iterative process. The proposals that were made during this bargaining session are just that, proposals. In some cases, as you will see from the summary, the team did not make a specific proposal but rather raised an issue for discussion or requested that the other side respond to an earlier proposal. For better or worse, a proposal will not necessarily be accepted in its full form. Any proposal would need to be agreed upon by both management and the union before acceptance, which likely would not occur without compromise and revision. Moreover, all proposals must be ratified by a vote of the union membership before they are integrated into the contract. This is to say, that proposals made at these sessions reflect priorities and “wish list” items for the various parties, but they will not necessarily become part of the contract.

Second, the member responsible for writing these bargaining summaries (Katie Shrieves, Clinical and Teaching Faculty At-Large Representative) wishes to apologize for the delay in getting this out to the membership. For what it’s worth, the bargaining team has been taking a summer hiatus, and there have been no negotiation sessions between 6/16 and 8/4.

At the June 16th session, both MSP and management made proposals. MSP presented first and made the following statements and proposals:

1. MTA representative Miles Stern rejected the administration’s termination proposal. The union argued that it’s not in the best interest of MSP members to diminish rights for bargaining unit members.
2. Katie Shrieves (Teaching and Clinical Faculty Representative) presented a policy proposal related to GPS. The proposal was based on feedback from MSP members, and sought to codify that GPS courses ought to adhere to similar policies as in-person courses, for example, on matters such as course determinations, academic freedom, and surveillance of courses. MSP also sought to codify a right for appropriate evaluation of online courses (as part of the contractually-mandated course observation), and we sought to increase the number of GPS courses that unit members are eligible to teach as an overload.
3. Mary Elizabeth Hooker (Health Sciences Representative) requested a response from the management team to the MSP’s Nursing chain-of-command proposal.
4. Carol Barry (MSP-Lowell Secretary) made a proposal related to research faculty. The proposal revises the appendix about research professors for clarity, by stating for example that research professors:
 - a. Have PI status
 - b. Are supported by grant and contract funding
 - c. Are employed on a 12-month basis
 - d. Have full benefits if their funding has been maintained up to 50% effort
 - e. Are members of an academic department and are answerable to Center Directors

After a brief caucus, management then made a number of proposals:

1. Vice Provost Julie Nash presented an amendment to the contract section about promotion from Associate to Full Teaching or Clinical Professor. The administration's proposal included new language about the criteria for Full Professor status, clarifying that the promotion would require "significant accomplishments beyond the expectations for promotion to Associate," such as leadership roles.
2. Dean Shortie McKinney presented a revision to personnel form 16-A, with the stated goal of giving faculty the "best opportunity to share their activities and accomplishments." The revision also included putting the form online.
3. Provost Hartman proposed changes to the contract section about department chairs, specifying that some people ought to have the title "School Director" with equivalent responsibilities to department chairs, which Provost Hartman framed as a change in title rather than substance. The proposal also changed the formula for chair compensation, specifically by adding "performance of the chair" as reviewed by the Dean and DPC as a factor that either negatively or positively influences chair stipends. The proposal also changes the timeline for evaluation of chairs.
4. Vice Chancellor Lauren Turner raised a topic regarding affirmative action and nondiscrimination, bringing up the issue in the spirit of beginning a dialogue. The administration's stated goal was to create consistency among different university Collective Bargaining Agreements in the treatment of these important issues. The administration's proposal, shared after the session, expands the rights of HR and EOO with regard to discipline and termination of employees accused of discrimination. MSP fully supports the concepts of affirmative action and nondiscrimination, and we believe that each person (whether student, faculty, or staff) is entitled to a safe environment here at the university, however we would want to review and discuss any proposals to make sure that member rights are not being curtailed.
5. Michael Rutherford (Executive Director, Labor Relations) brought up one final issue about "360 degree evaluations." The administration did not make a concrete proposal, but rather stated the belief that faculty members should be evaluated not only by their superiors (e.g. department chair) but also by some of their underlings (e.g. a PI's employees evaluating the PI). The MSP generally supports the idea of evaluating all levels of the university (including the administration) but is concerned about the possibility of greater evaluation of unit members and wishes to discuss the implications further. Furthermore, the MSP argues that "360 degree evaluation" should include evaluation of administrators by faculty and librarians, rather than simply top down scrutiny of faculty and librarians.

The next bargaining session is scheduled for Wednesday, August 4th, 3:00 p.m. If you are interested in participating as a Silent Bargaining Member (in other words, observing the negotiations and participating during MSP caucuses), please contact administrative assistant Karen Fitzgerald: Karen.Fitzgerald@uml.edu.