



# Faculty Association Negotiations Update #17

## ***STRONGER TOGETHER!***

To: All Faculty

From: Sandra Esslinger, Lead Negotiator

Date: 08/20/2024

We met with the District team for the **21st Time** for 2 hours on Tuesday, August 20, 2024.

Team members in attendance:

District: Sokha Song, Alexis Carter, Kelly, Lance Heard, Delana Miller, Francisco, and Morris Rodrigue.

FANT: Sandra Esslinger, Emily Woolery, Joshua Christ, Herschel Greenberg, and David Mrofka.

**Overview:** Welcome back to Fall 2024! We are still in the throes of negotiations! We appreciate all you have done to support union negotiations.

The FA and the District exchanged 4 proposals. We have agreed to a TA on Article 10.B.5—Adjunct Office Hours. However, we are struggling with the District to spend relatively small amounts of money to offer improvements to adjunct compensation. The district is risk-averse and does not want to spend money on faculty unless guaranteed to recover costs, regardless of its ability to afford it. The college's healthy finances profit from contingent faculty as they employ them on an as-needed basis for substantially lower pay and reduced benefits. The financial risk is then shifted to the faculty's personal finances, with far more significant human impact than forgoing a few district luxuries such as catered meals or retreats. The FA's proposals for a 15-year adjunct longevity step, added professional development hours so adjuncts can attend both flex days, and office hour compensation at the non-instructional rate are small steps. The District, with its growing reserves, cannot see how important these relatively inexpensive improvements would be to the majority of our union. We are still working toward the district participating in the CCCCCO funding of adjunct health insurance. The contradiction of the institutional commitment to social justice and equity as part of the campus mission is in high relief in this negotiation cycle.

### **FA Response:**

Appendix C—Adjunct Longevity: The FA is committed to the equitable treatment of all faculty. The FA offered to share the cost of the 15-year longevity by purchasing it from COLA. The District verbally refused to contribute to anything, ultimately refusing the approximately 0.17% we offered to pay from our COLA as insufficient. The FA will continue to explore solutions that will close the equity gaps so important to the college and encourage the district to be true to its stated goal of equity.

Article 20–Grievances: The FA responded with language to clarify the process, timelines, and include mediation to settle higher level grievances.

**District Response:**

Appendix A.4.—Initial Salary Placement: This proposal was to make transparent the initial placement on the salary schedule either for academic or vocational tracks. There have been issues, including several grievances, regarding whether a faculty member should be placed on a vocational or academic track for salaries. The Faculty is working on a fair process that determines the track before the position is offered. The District has not agreed to allow the FA to be part of the process of determining placement, nor do they agree that placement can be challenged once it is determined. The FA will counter.

**Tentative Agreements:**

Article 10.B.5–Adjunct Office Hours: The District responded that they will increase the office hour rate based on a contingency for Chancellor’s Office Funding. The FA asked for clarification for the contingency agreement and requested that if funding drops below the 70% threshold and above the 65% threshold, the FA and District will discuss the possibilities for increasing the office hour rate. If over 70% the increase will be automatic for \$5 for the 2025-26 academic year. The FA will closely monitor the impact of this change in the 2024-25 academic year.

**Concluding Remarks:** This was my last session this year as lead negotiator. Although I had hoped we would have concluded negotiations, before Dave Mrofka’s and my sabbaticals began, that did not happen. It has been my honor to serve you as lead negotiator for the past three years. In those three years the FA Negotiation Team and I fought hard for the gains we negotiated such as the reduced workload pre-retirement program, the new 15 and 20 year service increments, academic freedom, dramatically improved adjunct office hour rates, stronger rehire rights, the emeritus program, the 2% for SPOT certification, improvements to double ticket courses, improvements to remote working conditions, protected distance learning from double ticket designation, finalized merged course shells, improvements to initial placement on the salary scale, improvements to banked leave, voting rights for adjunct, sabbatical improvements, increases to health benefits, and all these are in addition to historic high COLA. We all fought together for these gains and it is the union as a whole that made this all possible. I am honored to have served this faculty and the Faculty Association. I will continue to serve on the Executive Board of the FA during my sabbatical. I have complete confidence that this team will be able to continue the fight for equitable contract rights.

Emily Woolery, FA President, will be updating you separately regarding the new team composition.