

MSP Executive Board and Reps Meeting - October 27, 2021

Board: Eve Weinbaum , Marc Liberatore , Asha Nadkarni, Caleb Rounds, Christine Turner, Jacquie Kurland, Jeanne Brunner, John Staudenmayer, Michale Asha, Paulina Borrego, Priyanka Srivastava, Sigrid Schmalzer, Tristram Seidler

Reps: Colleen Kuusinen , Ela Gezen, Lisa Modenos, Christine Hatch, Ezra Markowitz, Jen Sandler, Jennie Donohue, Karen Kurczynski , Laura Attanasio , Luke Bouvier, Neal Katz, Shelly Peyton, Steve Eyles, Tom Roeper

Staff: Lori Reardon , Emily Steelhammer

Guest: Steve Brewer

Approval of minutes from 9/15/21, 9/29/21, 10/13/21: Motion made by Maciej, seconded by Jacquie. Unanimously approved.

Meeting called to order at 8:46

Update on MA House ARPA allocation

- MA got more than \$5.5 billion in ARPA funds; MA is rolling in cash because of the stimulus and tax revenue.
- The legislature is currently in the process of allocating the funds and MTA has been engaged in a lot of advocacy.
- In the house version of the spending bill there is \$115 million for public higher ed. \$75 million of that is for infrastructure (deferred maintenance, HVAC systems, etc.). This isn't enough but it is still a big deal.
- There is also \$25 million in matching funds.
- \$500 million has been allocated as hazard pay for frontline workers. We don't know how that will be decided.
- There is also money allocated for relieving student debt.
- While this is good, it is not anywhere near what we asked for. There's still an austerity mindset at work.
- The House is accepting amendments and then it will go to the Senate side where we have good people like Jo Comerford.
- From there it goes to a conference committee where they'll have to consider all of the amendments.
- We need to keep pushing during this window of time.

"Healthy buildings" multi-union and MTA campaign

- MTA is asking people to take pictures of sick buildings for the ["Healthy Buildings" campaign](#).

- We want to get the word out about this campaign. Graduate students, undergrads, anyone can take and send pictures.

Internal Organizing of Non-Members

- It's important that an overwhelming majority of faculty and librarians in the unit are members. Currently our number of members has dipped below 90%.
- This is a problem because of Janus – now that there is no agency fee fewer folks are signing up.
- Plus, the logistics of NEOs are trickier these days (either they are on zoom and folks drop off before we can orient them, or people are not showing up at all). Once we miss the opportunity to sign them up it can be difficult to get them to join.
- There are about 1700 folks in the unit; of these about 200 are non-members. 170 of these are convincible, while about 30 are hardcore anti-union. 3-4 dozen of this 170 are high priority.
- We are asking Officers, Board Members, and Reps to do some in-person organizing. People can work on pairs, or singly. It only needs to be an hour or two.
- People who expressed interest are:
 - Tristram, John S., Jacquie, Christine T, Sigrid, Paulina, Jen and Asha

Questions

- Bargaining:
 - All proposals on the table. The Bargaining Team is currently negotiating around the Teaching Tenure Track and other NTT proposals.
 - We've also put forward a salary proposal
 - The administration has put forward (among other things) a proposal about moving the period of responsibility to August 25th.
- Staffing:
 - Provost says that staff has been replaced, but in LLC this is not the case
 - The MSP has full staffing (of full-time tenure system faculty and staff) on the top of the bargaining list.
 - The campus restored funding to all of the colleges (except for the money they reserve for strategic planning). HFA has made decisions about which positions have been restored. There is a grievance re: the WGSS staff position that was not replaced. Faculty are doing the work, thus for us it's a workload issue and for the staff unions it's about unit erosion.
 - Management is saying it's their right to decide about staff positions.
 - If LLC wants to work with us we can see if it makes sense to file grievances.
 - Is there any way to fast-track hiring once lines have been approved?
 - We also need to address the fact that pay levels for staff are inadequate. parameters are so low and for staff unions that had furloughs it's not enough to make up for it.

- o One way to approach this problem is to ask for higher floors – that we can do outside of governor’s parameters
- o However, allowing remote work options could also serve as a hiring incentive
- o There is a meeting on Monday with folks from each union to think about multi-union actions.
- Hybrid teaching:
 - o Some faculty are already getting requests to do hybrid courses. While we understand that this is not required, the social pressure can be very strong, especially for pre-tenure and NTT folks.
 - o MSP leadership asked about the technology piece in our last meeting with the Chancellor – he agreed that we’d have to rebuild buildings in order to have proper hybrid meetings (and thus the same principle applies to classes).
 - o MSP tells people that they don’t have to create hybrid or multi-modal courses, and that’s what the Provost’s Office is saying as well. We do have to accommodate students – but this means the same thing as it did before COVID.
 - o The MSP leadership would love to hear what people think about this: is this the right position?
 - o UWW is constantly being told that multi-modal and flexible learning are where education is heading.
 - o There are things that can be done if we want to have hybrid courses (use of OWLS, etc), but the university needs to provide the technology. We also have to think about this in terms of inclusivity and accessibility. For some zoom is great, and having a remote option may increase accessibility.
 - o We shouldn’t simply make these accommodations without bargaining for them, but we should also have the conversation about why we might want to have these options.
- Academic Calendar Change (starting the period of responsibility on 8/25 and starting classes the week before Labor Day):
 - o At the Academic Priorities Council last week the calendar change issue came up and some faculty were pushing for the benefits to students of the intersession.
 - o No concerns about the ramifications for the faculty were expressed in this meeting.
 - o MSP has heard mixed things. We’ve heard concerns from faculty with small kids, and we’ve also heard concerns about student internships and those on grant funding for the summer. But then we’ve also heard that people like intersession teaching.
 - o Preview week – this is already an issue with UWW because they need to have their courses up a week early in any case. This is going to push things an additional week earlier.
 - o Also, adult student distance learners may have childcare issues as well.

- o How will this work for grant-funded faculty?
 - Currently grant funded faculty need to have 2 weeks of vacation in the summer. Mike Malone says this can be one week.
 - UMass said that folks can only pay themselves from grants for 2.5 months – previously it was 3 months. But you can pay yourself from other funds during that two-week gap. This is a rule that the administration made up. The Problem is that you can only do non-grant work during those two weeks. So they call it's vacation but it's really time to prep for classes, apply for other grants etc.
- Work during the period of non-responsibility and workload creep:
 - o It's true that there is often student work during the summer (for instance, if you are Undergraduate Program Director and need to advise transfer students). But you have to be compensated for your time during the period of non-responsibility. Additional compensation is available for that.
 - o If work during the period of non-responsibility falls under your normal job responsibilities you should be getting paid – come and talk to us and we can help you.
 - o If this work is ALWAYS part of your normal job then it should be a stipend onto your base salary. We know that there is work that needs to happen but there is also money for compensation.
 - o What are the guidelines for getting reimbursed? Extra work should be at your usual hourly rate.
 - o MSP understands that we all want to be good colleagues and pitch in, but we should fight back against workload creep or there will never be any pressure to get to full staffing. We need to make the costs visible!
 - o We shouldn't let little things go because that makes it impossible to deal with the big things. We compromise all the time, but what we should not do is allow violations of the contract, especially if they are precedent setting. We also need to be attentive to this because if we let them violate the contract and it goes on for more than 60 days then we can't do anything because the window to file a grievance will have closed. Don't let them violate the contract in exchange for something else you might want. If this is happening to you, come to the MSP and we can represent you!

Save the date

- MSP General Assembly Membership Meeting: Wednesday, 10/27/21, 12:00pm
- MSP General Assembly Membership Meeting: Monday, 12/13/21, 12:00pm
- Next Joint Executive Board Rep Meeting: Wednesday, 12/1/21, 8:45am

Meeting adjourned at 9:58