



UNITED FACULTY OF EVERGREEN COMMUNIQUE

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Coordinating Committee:

Chair: Laurie Meeker
Vice-Chair: Jose Gomez
Treasurer: Rebecca Sunderman,
Communications: Ruth Hayes
Steward Coordinator: Sarah Ryan
At-Large Representatives:
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Tony Zaragoza

Stewards:

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Stephen Beck
Peter Bohmer
Kathleen Eamon
Anne Fischel
Vauhn Foster-Grahler
Judith Gabriele
Gery Gerst
José Gomez
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Nancy Koppelman
Stephanie Kozick
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Rebecca Sunderman
Joe Tougas
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Elizabeth Williamson
Bob Woods
EJ Zita

Bargaining Team:

Chair: Chuck Pailthorp
Gery Gerst
Jose Gomez
Jeanne Hahn
Allen Standing Bear Jenkins
Laurie Meeker
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Rebecca Sunderman
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Gary McNeil*
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A Message from the UFE Chair

Bargaining our first contract has been our first priority as a union this year. As your Bargaining Team moves deeper into negotiations with the Evergreen administration, I want to underscore how important it is for the membership to come together at our spring meeting to help support the collective bargaining process. Bargaining Team Chair Chuck Pailthorp has been doing a fantastic job leading the team as the prime spokesperson during negotiations, and he will give a report on the process and progress we are making at the table. The Bargaining Team and Coordinating Committee are committed to involving our membership in the process, and look forward to working with you at the membership meeting to develop strategies for addressing particular issues, if or when they come up, and mobilizing the membership if necessary. We want the membership to be informed about the process and do some

outreach to non-members to keep the faculty as a whole informed as well. As a member of the Bargaining Team, I have been impressed with how hard team members have worked to develop the contract proposal and to represent faculty interests during the negotiation process. As legal equals, we have entered new territory in having lengthy, substantive, and respectful discussions that both parties are committed to. Please attend the meeting to help support collective bargaining.

Another priority this year was electing new officers during the winter. Thanks again to our Nominations and Elections Committee - Krishna Chowdary, Dan Leahy, and Liza Rognas - for organizing and conducting the elections in such a thoughtful, effective way.

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Interim Report on Bargaining

The UFE Bargaining Team and the Administration's team sat down for our fifth bargaining session last Monday, May 5th. We have arrived at a smooth process for working together. In these past weeks, we have presented our proposed contract in some detail, and the Administration has offered a number of initial responses. Up to this point, there has been a limited exchange of counter-proposals, and the Administration team has offered one new proposal (on Management Rights). Both sides have agreed that, most often, chalk-boarding issues should precede exchanging paper. We are still in the process of discovery: asking questions, caucusing, offering clarifications, raising further questions.

Three principal objectives remain clearly in

view: to preserve and enhance Evergreen's traditions and ideals; to ensure that the faculty are compensated at the level of their true worth; to achieve parity and eliminate a faculty caste system. These are the objectives that emerged from the election process, from our surveys and forums, from faculty DTF work and in conversations with you, our colleagues.

Wages: Faculty compensation stands as the most obvious issue to be negotiated. The Administration has long voiced a concern that Evergreen faculty are not paid as well as they should be. We read in the President's Supplemental Budget Request for 2008-2009, "Evergreen's long-term goal is to achieve compensation levels equal to
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Spring General Membership Meeting

The Spring General Membership Meeting will be on Friday, May 30th from 5-7 pm in Seminar 2 A1107. Childcare will be provided, as well as a teleconferencing link between the

Olympia and Tacoma campuses. Look on page 2 for the agenda.

We hope to see all members there!

**Join the UFE! Contact Sarah Ryan: s.f.ryan@comcast.net
or go to <http://www.ufws.org/evergreen/index.html> for more information**



Coupon Savings!

Join UFE now, pay later!

**Spring Special!
No money down!**

Membership dues will be deferred
until September

Such a deal!

About United Faculty of Evergreen

The purpose of the United Faculty of Evergreen is to represent all eligible faculty members in bargaining, grievances, and in all matters relating to terms and conditions of employment with The Evergreen State College, to protect and enhance Evergreen's unique traditions that have earned it prominence among the nation's public colleges and liberal arts colleges, to encourage mutual understanding and cooperation among union members, to engage in legislative, political, civic, welfare and other actions which further the interests of the membership, public education and the labor movement; and to bring about a world where justice and equality are a reality, not just empty words.

The UFE is affiliated with:

United Faculty of Washington State

The Washington Education Association

The National Education Association

AFT Washington

The American Federation of Teachers

The American Federation of Labor/Congress of Industrial Organizations and

The Washington State Labor Council.

<http://www.ufws.org/evergreen/index.html>

Chair's Message (cont'd)

I am honored to serve as the Chair of the UFE and can assure you that you've elected a great leadership team! Each member of the new Coordinating Committee brings unique talents and a strong sense of commitment to developing our faculty union. The committee met for the first time April 30th, and began discussing union priorities: supporting collective bargaining, engaging and communicating effectively with Stewards and the general membership, and planning

effective membership meetings. Other important issues we are working on for the spring membership meeting include continuing to strengthen our Stewards' Council and developing a thoughtful, democratic decision-making process with the membership. We are also hoping to recruit new members. See the coupon in this newsletter and start talking to non-members about joining us. Looking forward to seeing you all and working with you at the Spring Membership Meeting!

- Laurie Meeker, UFE Chair

Spring Membership Meeting Agenda

We are planning three main agenda points for the upcoming membership meeting:

1) we will hear about the progress our bargaining team has made and discuss what we can do, as members, to help them negotiate the best contract.

2) we'll have a small group session so members can work on current issues that interest them. Ideas floated for small group work include:

a) supporting the negotiations: we'll take a closer look at specific contract issues and discuss strategies for supporting the negotiation process;

b) democratic decision making processes & social justice issues: what practices do we, as members, want to put in place so our decisions on Evergreen-based and larger political issues are done in an informed, thoughtful, and timely

way? How does the membership choose, prioritize and support social justice issues?

c) What can we do to support safe learning and working conditions?

3) Stewards Election: we'll elect stewards for the coming year. We'd like your ideas about supporting faculty in underrepresented areas, like Environmental Studies and Scientific Inquiry. And please consider nominating yourself or another interested member to be a steward.

Childcare will be available, and pizza and beverages served.

Your support and ideas are needed.

Bring new or prospective members with you. Members who sign up in the Spring will not have their dues deducted until the Fall.

On Union Stewardship

What does a union steward do? How can s/he help me?

The role of a union steward differs from union to union, but in every case, they are the people who keep a union connected to its members and their everyday life on the job. Shop stewards' movements began in England as a radical and democratic reform of existing unions. Not all unions have a steward system, but those that do are the most effective and democratic. Without stewards, a union only has officers and staff acting on behalf of members. Stewards are union members who work alongside their peers, experience the same life on the job as their peers do, and bring the members' concerns to the whole organization.

United Faculty, the new Washington state union in the public higher education institutions, has relied on a strong stewards' networks on every campus. Stewards communicate to and from the members of the union. They also go one step beyond that -- as individuals, they take responsibility to see that the union is representative and effective in pursuing faculty problems and issues.

Stewards help resolve members' problems and get their ideas and

suggestions heard, either by bringing them to negotiations, or to union staff or office holders, or by intervening to resolve conflict. When there's a contract, or collective agreement, stewards will make sure that faculty rights are preserved. Even now, we're helping to represent members and resolve conflict. Stewards don't have to be like lawyers, and they don't need special experience; they just have to communicate with, and from, the members.

At Evergreen, we have a goal of having 35 stewards. That's quite a lot, by most standards. But having many stewards lightens the load of each individual and makes sure that the union is everywhere and hears about all workplace issues.

If you can help with this role, or if you know someone you would like to nominate as a steward, please get in touch with me. The only qualifications you need are, first, to be a union member with a willingness to take a small share of responsibility and, second, the ability to listen to colleagues. The more stewards we have, the lighter and more pleasant the work will be. We'll teach each other what we need to know to work effectively for our colleagues.

- Sarah Ryan, Steward Coordinator



Bargaining Team Report (cont'd)

the 75th percentile of the national market place.” The UFE team agrees that achieving this goal would bring us closer to our true worth, and we are arguing that this goal already has been too long-term. We are determined that faculty should be paid their worth soon. The Administration team expresses concern about what is feasible in light of competing needs and demands, as we expected they would. As in most such negotiations, the levels of proposed compensation are likely to be settled near the end of the process.

Workload: So far, three issues are on the table regarding workload. Is it feasible to reduce faculty workload, overall, and at what cost? Can faculty be given greater flexibility in distributing their workload over the year? Can the workload be distributed more fairly over various segments of the faculty? Of course all this raises complex questions about how to measure and compare one kind of teaching responsibility to another.

Faculty Categories: We have proposed simplifying the existing structure of faculty categories, and the Administration team seems to share this goal. Sorting faculty into many categories interferes with our highly valued flexibility in what we do and how we do it. Everyone at the table agrees that faculty creativity has long been a distinguishing and desirable quality of Evergreen faculty, and that autonomy plays a critical role in retaining and encouraging creativity. In addition, there are basic questions about parity in the way faculty are compensated, provided benefits, and offered job security in relation to the faculty category designated in their contract. The UFE Bargaining Team advocates greater parity as a fundamental value in our union and the College overall. We have been seeking this in our negotiations, and we will continue to do so. Obviously there are costs associated with these questions as well. We will continue to develop and negotiate the ramifications of how we define and organize faculty categories.

Staffing the curriculum: Anyone aware of College-wide conversations about the curriculum won't be surprised to hear that the Administration team has raised concerns about how to balance faculty autonomy against the need to teach a curriculum that matches the student population showing up for classes. At this point, we're discussing what are the specific problems that arise (most obvious is meeting an emergent need for many more first-year seats than our two-year planning cycle has provided), what is the source of these problems, and whether or not they should be addressed by the faculty and the College as a whole rather than in the contract. In addition to these issues, and closely related to faculty categories, are implications in our proposed contract regarding the balance between temporary hires and those who hold regular faculty lines.

Shared Governance: We are engaged in an important conversation about how the presence of the UFE, as a legal equal in negotiating “wages, hours, and working conditions,” affects the structure of governance at Evergreen. From the outset, the UFE has sought to strengthen and protect the faculty role in College governance. This includes curriculum, academic structures and standards and all such professional matters. Two related questions stand before us: “What should be addressed only in the Faculty Handbook?” and, “What should be contractually grievable if a member of the faculty objects to how a problem has been addressed?” Our overall goal, we want to assure the faculty, is not to arrogate professional issues to the union but to reinforce the principles of shared governance that have defined us as a faculty throughout our history. So far, the Administration team appears to share this goal, but the details of

our agreement will be important.

Academic Freedom: All at the table agree that principles of academic freedom are central to our profession. At stake is how far these principles go, particularly as they have evolved at Evergreen. We are advocating a position that ensures maintenance of our long-standing principles and traditions.

Long-term Faculty: Our proposed contract embodies the principles and policies that the LTVAFAP DTF presented to the faculty in February and that the Faculty Meeting endorsed, with a single dissenting vote. The Administration team has raised important questions, without yet taking a position, about what we and the faculty have proposed. The UFE Bargaining Team is defending the principle that long-term employment should guarantee a measure of job security, and the details of this are being worked out.

Sick Leave and Family Health and Medical Leave: We have begun to address both the extensions we have proposed and what bearing changes in Washington State law may have on these benefits.

Non-Discrimination Policies: The Administration team has raised the question of whether or not these policies should be specific to the union contract or alternatively put in place for the College as a whole and subscribed to by the union and faculty.

Grievance Procedure: The UFE team has proposed a grievance procedure that includes third party arbitration.

Tentative Agreements: We have reached tentative agreements on a Conflict of Interest policy and on the UFE-Management Committee that will be in place once the initial contract has been agreed to. Relatively simple matters, but reaching these has encouraged everyone that we can move ahead.

Matters that lie ahead: A number of additional issues in our proposed contract are scheduled for future discussion and bargaining: Faculty Development and Travel, Professional Leave and Leave Without Pay, Faculty Working Conditions and Safety, Discipline and Discharge (Just Cause Guidelines), UFE Rights, Retirement and Insurance Benefits, Reappointment and Conversion, Reduction in Force, and others. Some of these may be contentious and some may not. More discovery on these matters will occupy us in our future sessions.

Our next bargaining session is scheduled for May 21st, and after that we will meet weekly until the end of spring quarter. We have not yet determined our summer schedule. Everyone is aware that we are some distance from a tentative overall agreement and that we need to reach that goal as soon as possible. Our working relationship with the Administration team has developed well, and their team appears to agree that the sooner we can complete our work, the better. We are hard at our negotiations, well underway, and we expect bargaining to continue for some time. We would be pleased to present a tentative agreement for ratification to UFE membership and the Board of Trustees early in the fall. That strikes us as a challenging and reasonable goal.

Chuck Pailthorp, for UFE Bargaining Team

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