

1/13/2022

Dear FSU Members,

As we reported earlier, the FSU's Core Bargaining Team reached a tentative agreement on the 2020-2023 contract on December 22nd. We are currently translating everything into contract language and a presentable form.

The FSU Core Bargaining Team recommends that faculty and librarians ratify this agreement. The purpose of this email, however, is to provide a straightforward account of the agreement to help members decide how to vote. In addition to this email, we will also be holding a forum (on 1/26 from 3-4pm) to discuss the agreement, circulate the agreement itself (and/or a detailed Memorandum Of Understanding of the agreement). We will then hold a vote to ratify (or not) the agreement soon after the 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Across the Board (ATB) Raises:** 2.5% in year one of the contract (effective July 2020); 2% in year two (July 2021), and 2% in year three (July 2022), plus a 1.5% bonus in year one to recognize the special efforts faculty put into converting courses to remote modality due to the pandemic (see end of email for info on when the ATB raises might be implemented). We realize this is not sufficient given the level of inflation, but this was the rate for colleges and universities across the state. The Administration proposed reducing the across-the-board raises to 1% per year to carve merit pay out of these paltry raises, but we argued that everyone should get at least 2% raises, and that Admin should add merit on top of these across-the-board raises. They declined to provide money for merit pay.

**Promotional Raises and Increases to Salary Floors:** Promotional bumps and salary floors will be increased at all levels. See [here](#). They are not as large as we would like, but they do bring us closer in line with our colleagues at Amherst. In the absence of bigger across-the-board raises, increasing promotional bumps and salary floors are a way to increase faculty salaries.

**Travel Money:** Travel money will be expanded to more members and individual awards will be increased. Librarians and Clinical Nursing faculty will be eligible for the travel fund. The individual award amount will be increased from \$1000 to \$1150; the total pool will be increased from \$275,000 to \$325,000 by shifting \$50,000 from the RES Fund -- \$50k that is never used up from the RES fund.

**Associate Lecturers** – The new contract will increase the per course rate from \$5,000 to \$5,350. We believe this per-course rate remains too low, especially as Associate Lecturers become the largest category of faculty on campus. We won fewer gains for Associate Lecturers than we would have liked – this will be a major struggle in the future. More and more of our faculty are being hired as Associate Lecturers, with low pay and no security. We need to make sure that those who are hired as Associate Lecturers are paid better and have a shorter path towards Lecturer status with a continuing appointment. For now, this modest increase in pay is as far as the administration was willing to go.

**Senior Lecturer II** – Teaching load goes from a 4-4 to a 4-3. The default teaching load for SLIIs will now be 4-3, with the expectation of “increased service” during the semester when they are teaching 3 courses. In many cases, this will simply be recognizing the service that NTT faculty already do. Faculty may opt out of the 4-3 and remain at 4-4. We are working on implementation details and will provide them when we have more information.

**Senior Lecturer III** – This new rank will be created, with a teaching load of 3-3 and a salary raise of \$6500. Details of the implementation of this new rank are still being worked out with the Administration. We'll follow up when we have more information.

**Librarians** – We agreed on new salary floors and promotional raises and effectively fought off an Administration proposal to remove language setting a maximum number of hours from the Librarian work week. We were not able to shorten the time to promotional eligibility.

**Scholarship of Practice Nursing Faculty (SOP)** – We agreed that SOP will be eligible for Travel Funds and for salary anomaly pool. We were not able to agree to changes to workload this time around but will be working with SOP on how to engage on this issue shortly.

**Anti-Racism Initiatives** – The FSU negotiated a \$25,000 fund (within RES) for the next two years of the contract for anti-racism initiatives. The fund (\$50k in total) will be allocated to and distributed by the Provost's Office in consultation with the FSU to support anti-racism activities by faculty and librarians.

### **"Package Proposal"**

**2-2 Teaching Load** – A 2-2 teaching load will now be written into the contract and apply to all tenure-track faculty at the university. We felt it was important to get all tenure-track faculty in all colleges and departments to a 2-2 teaching load – to make real our claims of being a research university. It is also important to enshrine the 2-2 in the contract to protect faculty from the whims of state politics.

**Research Intensive Semester** – We won a Research-Intensive Semester for all junior TT faculty –giving them a semester off from teaching before tenure to focus on research.

Unfortunately, the Administration was unwilling to grant faculty these two benefits (2-2 & RIS) without extracting something. Admin wanted (a) an evaluation mechanism for determining whether faculty are "research active" (and hence remain on a 2-2) and (b) more flexibility over course capacities. Fortunately, in both cases, we were able to limit the scope of the demand – even though we are not thrilled with either.

**Evaluation Mechanism for "Research Active":** Tenured faculty will be evaluated by each Department/unit Personnel Committee (DPC), department chair, and dean on an annual basis as part of the regular Annual Faculty Report process, to determine if they have met the criteria for research-active status in the year being evaluated (what constitutes "research active" is determined by the Department and approved by Admin). We expect almost all faculty will be routinely designated "research active" by their departments. However, any tenured faculty member who receives an AFR designation of "Does Not Meet Expectations" for three years in a row will convert to a 3-3 teaching load as of the spring semester immediately following the third AFR review. A faculty member who has reverted to a 3-3 teaching load shall stay at that load unless or until the DPC, ratified by the department chair and dean, finds them again to "Meet Expectations" as part of the regular Annual Faculty Report process for research-active status. A tenured faculty member who moves from a designation of "Does Not Meet Expectations" to "Meets Expectations" will revert to a 2-2 teaching load as of the spring semester immediately following the AFR review. The FSU core bargaining team opposed the evaluation mechanism (and successfully limited it in a number of ways), in large part because we believe that a 2-2 should be the default load at a research university, that we spend way too much time evaluating each

other, and that these types of evaluations are always more complicated in reality than on paper. But the Admin was not willing to concede the 2-2 and the RIS without this concession.

**Flexibility on Course Capacities** – As you may know, although the Administration (with departments) controls course sizes before the courses are entered into Wisier, once they are put into Wisier and registration begins the number of students in a course can only be increased with instructor permission. This basic provision of the contract still holds and protects faculty. We did make one concession in order to get the 2-2 load and RIS. In courses with more than 5 sections, the chair/dean may now increase the course capacity of the course by no more than 5% of the original cap, rounded upward to the largest whole number, with a minimum of one, in order to accommodate unexpectedly high student demand for the relevant semester. Such increases can only be made from the week before classes start until the add/drop period ends. Any such increase will apply only to the relevant semester.

### **Two Memoranda Of Understanding (MOUs)**

**Committee to Look At Compensating Faculty for MA, Phd Advising and Independent Studies** -- The FSU and Administration agreed that the Provost will convene a committee for the purpose of researching how UMass Boston departments and colleges compensate faculty who teach independent studies and advise students pursuing master's theses and doctoral dissertations. By December 1, 2022 the committee will propose the establishment of a baseline standard of compensation to apply across colleges and departments for the provost's consideration. The proposal will be submitted to the Provost, the Faculty Council, Deans, and the Faculty Staff Union. The Provost will respond in writing by January 31, 2023.

**Committee to Look At NTT Department Participation** –The FSU and Administration agreed that the Provost will convene a committee for the purpose of researching how UMass Boston departments can better integrate non-tenure track faculty into department life. The committee will focus on ways in which Lecturers on continuing appointment (all ranks) can best participate in departmental governance. For instance, key questions may include under what circumstances, to what extent, and on what types of issues should lecturers on continuing appointment have voting rights within their respective departments. We see this as an important step towards more fully incorporating NTT faculty into workplace governance.

### **Other items**

**Compensation for Union Work** – The FSU and Administration agreed to increase the stipend option for union officers to \$4,000 (from \$3,000).

**Gender Neutral Language** – we agreed to incorporate gender neutral language throughout the contract

**Grievance Procedure** – We agreed to slight changes in the timeline for holding hearings on filed grievances.

### **What Next?**

We expect the state legislature to pass a supplemental budget in February that will fund this contract. Soon after our raises will kick in, with a lump sum retroactive pay for salary increases from June 2020 plus the 1.5% bonus. For this to happen, however, we need to ratify the contract.

There will be a Forum on January 26th to explain and answer questions about the tentative contract. Prior to that, we will share a more detailed MOU about the contract and hopefully the entire contract itself (assuming all the language is in place by then – it is a tedious process). The vote to ratify the agreement will then take place from January 27<sup>th</sup> until February 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Thanks to everyone for supporting the bargaining process. Your support was key. We did not achieve everything we wanted, but this agreement contains important gains that will benefit members and lay the groundwork for future advances in subsequent rounds of bargaining.

Please join us on the 26<sup>th</sup> (3-4pm) to discuss the agreement further.

Sincerely,  
Core Bargaining Team

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science, FSU Vice President  
Katie D’Urso, MTA Field Representative  
Jessica Holden, Librarian III, Healey Library  
Maria Mellone, Non-Reappointed (i.e., laid off) Associate Lecturer, Math  
Alex Mueller, Associate Professor, English  
Lorenzo Nencioli, FSU Senior Staff Member  
Jason Rodriguez, Associate Professor, Sociology  
Heike Schotten, Professor, Political Science  
Steve Striffler, Director of the Labor Resource Center and Professor, Anthropology, FSU President  
Tony Vandermeer, Senior Lecturer II, Africana Studies

*For information on the FSU, links to our contract and bargaining updates, and a calendar of events, see the [FSU webpage](#)*

12/23/2021

Dear FSU Members,

The FSU’s Core Bargaining Team reached a general agreement on the 2020-2023 contract last night sometime after 11pm. There is still a lot of work to be done to translate everything into contract language and a presentable form – but we have an agreement.

We will provide a more extensive update in the New Year – as well as member forums to discuss the agreement, circulation of the agreement, ratification, etc.

Although the FSU did not achieve everything we proposed in bargaining (that’s the nature of bargaining!), there were some important gains. A few highlights:

**Raises:** 2.5%-2%-2% (plus a 1.5% bonus). We realize this is not sufficient given the level of inflation, but this was the rate for colleges and universities across the state.

**Promotional Raises and Salary Floors:** -- All the promotional bumps and salary floors were increased.

**Associate Lecturers** – Increased the per course rate from \$5,000 to \$5,350.

**Senior Lecturer II** – Teaching load goes from a 4-4 to a 4-3.

**Senior Lecturer III** – New rank will be created, with a teaching load of 3-3 and a salary raise of \$6500.

**2-2 Teaching Load for all Tenure-Track Faculty** – The 2-2 load will be in the contract and apply to all tenure-track faculty at the university.

**Research Intensive Semester for Junior Faculty**

**Travel Money:** Librarians and Clinical Nursing faculty will be eligible for the travel fund; the individual award amount will be increased from \$1000 to \$1150; the total pool will be increased to \$325,000.

**RES Money** – The Administration agreed to an additional \$25,000 for the next two years of the contract for anti-racism initiatives.

We know you will have lots of questions – which we will answer in the new year through a more extensive update, circulating the tentative agreement itself, and holding forums.

Finally, we want to acknowledge all the incredible hard work that this team as well as all the members of our expanded bargaining team (that is, all of you!) have done over the last year and a half to reach this agreement. None of this could have happened without our collective effort!

Sincerely,  
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12/6/2021

**Bargaining Update** (just the lowlights!):

1) Admin accepted much of our proposal to modestly increase promotional raises and salary floors for faculty. This was welcomed. Two important caveats, however.

- First, Admin is tying the very modest increases in promotional bumps and salary floors for librarians to a proposal to remove (from the contract) the 37.5-hour cap on their workweek. This is outrageous given how poorly our librarians are paid, how hard they work, and how understaffed the library is. Admin's argument seems to be that removing the cap on their hours would more closely reflect the current reality -- that UMB librarians regularly work more than 37.5 hours per week. The FSU is all for a contract that reflects the reality of our working conditions, but this would remove the one workload protection librarians have and effectively cement the existing status quo of excessive work within an understaffed library. It is bad for the librarians (and the library), and is unacceptable.
- Second, the Administration responded to our proposal that per course rates in the summer/winter session be set at \$6000 with a counter of \$5100. \$5100 would also be the new per course rate during the regular academic year as well, in effect raising the salary of a full-time Associate Lecturer from \$40,000 to \$40,800. This is also unacceptable. \$5100 per course is not sufficient – it does not result in a livable wage.

2) Admin continues to insist on carving merit out of already ridiculously low raises. As a reminder, the state is proposing raises of 2%-2%-2% (with a one-time 1.5% bonus the first year). This is below the increasing cost of living. Originally, Admin wanted to take 1% of those raises and put it towards merit. We rejected that, reasoning that everyone deserves a 2% raise, and countered by saying that if the Administration wanted to give merit it should do so above the state's 2% raise. Instead, Admin countered with .75% in merit (instead of 1%).

3) Admin rejected our proposal to modestly compensate faculty for independent studies and for the advising of Ph.D students. Despite the fact that many departments already compensate faculty for this work, Admin did not want to create a basic floor of compensation to guarantee a degree of equity and insure that all faculty receive some compensation (in the form of CLRs accrued over time). Admin did not see this as a problem.

4) Admin rejected our proposal to allow students of terminated employees an extra semester at the discounted rate of tuition – to allow them to continue their education without having the rug pulled out from under them.

11/23/2021

Dear FSU Members,

We are fed up. The FSU (along with the other campus unions, by the way, who are experiencing the same thing), are sick and tired of how bargaining, and labor relations more generally, are being treated by the current University Administration. And we need your help; **keep reading for ways you can support your union.**

Bargaining has gone on far too long. Our last contract expired in June 2020; this is now the end of the third semester we have been bargaining the new one. Bargaining is taking so long because it is virtually

impossible to schedule meetings: administration has continually dragged its feet, demonstrated poor to non-existent follow-through in responding to requests, emails, proposals, etc. They have come to meetings unprepared (either because they have not read our proposals or not brought proposals of their own) and have comported themselves via a general inaction that, regardless of intent, has had the result of being obstructionist.

In the meantime, the FSU's Core Bargaining Team (CBT) has put countless hours into developing thoughtful, complex bargaining proposals, only to have them either swiftly and categorically rejected or else returned with requests for additional, unreasonable concessions.

After a year and a half of bargaining, the Administration has yet to make a single proposal that we feel benefits faculty or the university as a whole. To the extent that Administration makes proposals at all, they consist mainly of policies that would increase their control over our working conditions or enshrine new and more innovative ways to discipline faculty and librarians into the contract.

The CBT has experienced bargaining overall as an expression of Administration's consistent lack of respect for us (although perhaps it is just incompetence) and believe it reflects a broader lack of commitment on the part of the Administration to bargain or manage labor relations in a reasonable, productive, manner.

We write to ask for your active support in two actions.

**Thursday, December 2, from 12:30-1:30:** Please join all the campus unions on zoom to learn more and participate in an email action. <https://umassboston.zoom.us/j/97912783256>

**Thursday, December 9, from 12:30-1:30:** Please join all the campus unions on the first floor of Quinn for a rally; we will deliver a letter to the Administration demanding fair, serious, bargaining.

**We could also use your support during the next two bargaining sessions:**

November 29<sup>th</sup>, 4-5pm. [Register here.](#)  
December, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 3:30-6:30. [Register here.](#)

The FSU has made many proposals and is eager to be finished with this work. But even our modest proposals are likely to be rejected and bargaining will drag on if we do not put pressure on the Administration. Please join us and the other campus unions.

For those of you interested in the details, below is recent update on bargaining. We think you will want to read it...we just don't advise doing so right before bed, because it will give you nightmares.

Sincerely,

Core Bargaining Team [\[SEE BELOW FOR IMPORTANT BARGAINING UPDATE\]](#)

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science, FSU Vice President  
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## **BARGAINING UPDATE & SUMMARY**

### **RAISES**

The state-funded raises of 2.5%-2%-2% for each of the 3 years of the contract (with a 1.5% one-time bonus) are of course disgraceful and do not even keep pace with cost of living. While our Administration does not control this, they do have the freedom to make salary proposals of their own – or seriously engage with our salary proposals – that address the declining financial situation of our faculty and librarians. The Administration has yet to respond to most of our salary proposals, but early indications are not promising – see the next item on Librarian salary and raises.

### **LIBRARIAN PROMOTIONAL RAISES AND SALARY FLOORS**

The FSU proposed that librarian promotional raises be increased by \$1000 and that librarian salary floors be modestly increased so that, for example, new librarians' starting salary would be \$54,000 (the same as at UMass Amherst, where the cost of living is much lower). This proposal is the only one of the few CBT proposals the Administration has engaged with that involves any sort of financial commitment, but we suspect this is because it would affect only 14 people. And yet, Administration wants to link these still-insufficient increases to a condition removing contract language limiting the number of hours librarians can work per week. In other words, they will only accept poverty-rate raises for Librarians in exchange for removing the one workload protection guaranteed them in the contract; namely, that they cannot be required to work more than 37.5 hours/week.

We would have thought Ebenezer Scrooge thought up this counter proposal if it hadn't actually been stated aloud by our own administrators at the bargaining table. Our library is woefully understaffed. Our librarians routinely work more than their allotted 37.5 hours anyway, because there is too much work and not enough people to do it. But our Administration wants to tie a meager increase in pay to the removal of the one workload protection the contract actually provides our librarians. Seriously?

### **FACULTY PROMOTIONAL RAISES**

We have proposed the following:

- that the per-course pay for summer/winter classes be raised to \$6000.
- that the Salary Floor for Associate Lecturers be increased from \$40,000 to \$46,200. This would raise the minimum amount paid for a single course from \$5000 to \$5775.
- that promotional bumps for all faculty ranks be increased by \$1000 (so, for example, the bump for promotion to Senior Lecturer would go from \$5500 to \$6500...and so on).
- that NTT faculty who have been here for 20 years receive a longevity raise of \$6500.

What do these FSU proposals have in common?

- They are obscenely modest, given inflation and the Boston area's high cost of living.
- We have yet to hear from the Administration.

### TRAVEL FUNDS

As you know, FSU members subsidize their jobs by paying costs that the university should. One way we proposed to address this is to increase travel and research funds so that our members do not have to pay for their own conference travel, research expenses, or teaching-related costs.

Months ago, we proposed that the FSU Travel Fund be expanded to include librarians, clinical faculty, and senior lecturers. This was rejected.

We then proposed that the Travel Fund be expanded to include just librarians and clinical faculty (a total of 20 additional people) and increase the annual amount from \$1000 to \$1250 (since it is nearly impossible to go to a conference on \$1000). This was also rejected – with no explanation.

### RES FUNDS AND ANTI-RACISM TRAINING [you will not believe this one]

RES stands for "Research and Educational Support." This is the pittance amount faculty get each year from the Provost's office to cover non-travel-related professional expenses. The total RES Fund pool is \$200,000 annually. However, each year, something like \$70,000 of this pool goes unspent, largely because they are doled out to FSU members in small amounts and are difficult for faculty to access. Historically, the FSU and the Administration have agreed that this "leftover" money goes to the library or for computers.

Last Spring, however, the FSU proposed taking \$50,000 of the RES pool out front and using it for anti-racism initiatives. The crux of the agreement stated that the funds would

be allocated to and distributed by the Provost's Office in consultation with the Restorative Justice Commission and the FSU to support anti-racism activities for faculty and librarians. At the conclusion of the fiscal year (6/30/2021) the Administration will provide the Union a summary of expenditures made pursuant to this paragraph.

Administration agreed to this proposal and we co-signed it on **March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021**.

But get this: When the FSU requested this summary of expenditures in the Summer/Fall of 2021, we assumed that none of the money could have been spent, since the FSU was never consulted in any way. Much to our surprise, not only *had the money indeed been spent*, but it had somehow been spent on anti-racism initiatives *that took place before our agreement was in place* and that *the Administration had said they were paying for out of the Provost's budget* as part of the Administration's "commitment" to anti-racism. Yes, you read that correctly: the Administration took this bargaining agreement as permission to raid faculty RES Funds, spend them in violation of that very agreement, on events that were promoted as sponsored by the Administration and as evidence of its commitment to anti-racism, with no mention of the FSU or the faculty whose money it took to fund the programming.

If the Administration's inability to respond to email, show up prepared for bargaining sessions, or even schedule meetings in a timely manner feels disrespectful, and if their across-the-board non-response to

any financial increases for faculty and librarians feels Scrooge-like, this deceitful appropriation of faculty funds to disingenuously and opportunistically present the administration as anti-racist takes these ugly behaviors to entirely new lows we had not even imagined possible. We have asked Administration for an accounting of what money it has spent on anti-racism initiatives outside of the ones we unwittingly ended up funding for them with our RES money – but here, too, we have received no response.

## TEACHING LOAD

- **We have proposed enshrining a 2-2 teaching load for all TT faculty in the contract** along with a research-intensive semester for junior faculty. We believe this is fundamental to the university's expressed commitment to being a research university. In typical fashion, the Administration is watering down this aspect of the proposal while proposing a series of unrelated concessions that would increase administrative control over course capacities, establish an additional mechanism for evaluating faculty research productivity, and require summer work. Again, commonsense improvements in the contract that are aligned with the university's ostensible mission continue to be thwarted by administrative interest in extracting an extra pound of flesh from faculty in return.
- **We have proposed enshrining a 3-3 teaching load for all NTT faculty** in the contract. This was rejected. We countered with a proposal for a 3-4 teaching load for all Senior Lecturers and above. We are awaiting administration's response.

Please join us and the other unions on December 2<sup>nd</sup> and December 9<sup>th</sup> (details above!) to demand the administration treat us and your union with the respect we deserve and to move these important proposals forward.

11/1/2021

Dear FSU Members,

Here is a quick update from our two (!! ) bargaining sessions last week.

## SALARY

As you know, the parameters for raises are set by the governor. This year, those parameters are across-the-board raises of 2.5%-2%-2% over the three-year contract, plus a one-time 1.5% bonus (i.e. money that does not go on salary) in the first year.

Administration, however, proposed carving merit out of these already spare across-the-board raises, offering us across-the-board raises of even less—1.5%-1%-1%—with the rest coming in the form of merit raises of up to 1%-1%-1%. They also propose leaving Associate Lecturers hired after January 2018 out of this raise structure altogether (that would amount to approximately 115 of our current members).

We are countering by insisting that all of the money be given as across-the-board raises (2.5%-2%-2%). As it is, these raises do not even keep up with the cost of living. They are simply too small to carve merit out of – both in the sense that everyone deserves at least a 2% raise and in the sense that squeezing merit out of 2% not only leaves some faculty with less but does not provide others with nearly enough to be worth the effort. We have urged Administration to return with a proposal that includes

merit paid for by them, **on top of** the across-the-board raises provided by the state, as well as an additional \$500 bonus for all members (on top of the 1.5% bonus the state is providing).

Beyond this, the FSU is proposing that:

- Promotional raises be increased in order to address our low salaries while keeping up with inflation and our colleagues at Amherst (for example, from Assistant to Associate Professor, or Lecturer to Senior Lecturer I);
- NTT faculty get a longevity raise of \$6500 at 20 years of service;
- Salary floors be increased (again, reflecting both inflation and salaries at Amherst);
- To address more salary anomalies, increase the pool from \$60,000 to \$100,000 and include Scholarship of Practice Clinical Nursing professors of all ranks;
- The Summer/Winter per course rate be increased to \$6000 (yes, this would actually be an increase from what the university currently pays).

As you can see from the [attached](#), these proposed increases are quite modest.

### **ARTICLE 15: Faculty Workload**

The other major proposal we are currently bargaining is located largely within Article 15 of our contract.

With regard to Article 15, Administration is pushing for:

- greater control over increasing course caps;
- a formal path for evaluating whether faculty are or are not “research active” (and hence remain at 2-2 or be bumped to a 3-3 teaching load);
- a requirement that faculty respond to all work-related email communications in the summer.

By way of counter, we are proposing that:

- pre-tenure faculty be given a real Research-Intensive Semester prior to going up for tenure;
- a 2-2 teaching load be written into the contract for all tenure-line faculty;
- control over course cancellations for “low enrollments” should rest firmly with academic departments;
- NTT faculty should have basic rights in departments, including the right to attend department meetings and vote (with details to be determined by departments).

Thus far, we have been very surprised by the Administration’s resistance to including NTT faculty in department governance, the very places where some of the most important decisions impacting NTT faculty’s working conditions are made. This move towards a more democratic workplace would cost the university nothing, but make great strides toward ensuring equity and autonomy for our more vulnerable members.

Sincerely,

Core Bargaining Team

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science, FSU Vice President  
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10/21/2021

Dear FSU Members,

The question around expanded bargaining should be resolved in time for the next bargaining sessions on October 27<sup>th</sup> and October 29<sup>th</sup>; the system of expanded bargaining that allows 30 FSU members to attend bargaining will continue. So please consider participating as we bargain around teaching load, a research-intensive semester for junior faculty, promotional raises, online classes, and other important topics. Come support the process! Bargaining will intensify this semester, in part because we expect a formal salary proposal soon and face deadlines around the state's budget.

Register in advance (even if you can't attend the whole time; contact [FSU](#) or [Steve Striffler](#) for registration information).

October 27 (4-7pm)

Oct 29 (3:30-6:30pm)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Sincerely,

Core Bargaining Team

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10/9/2021

Dear FSU Members,

Please join us on Tuesday at 3:00 pm to support the union's demand for open and transparent bargaining: (contact [FSU](#) or [Steve Striffler](#) for Zoom information).

The Administration is refusing to continue with expanded bargaining. The expanded bargaining MOU signed in 2020 allows 30 of our members to join the core bargaining team in bargaining sessions (as audience members). This system has functioned smoothly for the past year.

The Administration does not want bargaining to be open or transparent – for members to witness what the Administration is proposing or how they treat faculty/librarians and the bargaining process itself.

The FSU determines who is on our bargaining team – not the Administration. Please join us on Tuesday to make this demand clear.

10/5/21

Dear FSU members,

If you make it to the end of this overly long email you will have a guaranteed place in union heaven! There is something for everyone!

**Bargaining** -- The FSU has engaged in bargaining with the Administration for over a year. We had hoped to re-start bargaining at the start of the semester but were unable to get the Administration back to the table prior to October 12<sup>th</sup>. Admin is also indicating a reluctance to continue with "[expanded bargaining](#)" which we negotiated in 2020 to allow thirty FSU members to attend bargaining sessions – to insure that bargaining is transparent and open. Now that university operations have returned to campus, and the MOU that allowed for expanded bargaining no longer applies, the Administration is looking to roll back expanded bargaining – because, we assume, they don't want faculty/librarians to see their proposals firsthand (or hear their rejection of our proposals). We hope to have this resolved prior to the first bargaining session on October 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Raises and Merit:** Our raises are largely determined at the state level. The Governor sets the parameters, which are then haggled over with state-wide unions (including the MTA), eventually "agreed" upon, and then filtered down to the university level (where negotiation is limited). The FSU has not yet received a salary proposal from the Administration (except for the initial one of 0%-0%-0% that we got in 2020). However, unions at other state colleges and universities have been getting proposals of

2%-2%-2% (raises over the three-year contract), with a one-time 1.5% bonus the first year. Given that these disappointingly low numbers do not keep up with the rising cost of living, it seems very unlikely that there will be merit raises. We have heard that Deans have been telling Department Chairs that there will likely be merit. Please know that merit must be bargained with the union, and we have not begun the discussion. Also know that other universities are not electing to squeeze merit out of 2% raises for a simple reason – to do so would inevitably require some faculty/librarians getting no raise at all. The Administration could always opt to fund merit raises out of the university's general operating budget, in effect topping off the state-funded 2% raises with additional merit raises. This is, after all, where bonuses for Administrators come from.

Sincerely,

Steve Striffler	Caroline Coscia
FSU President	FSU Vice President
Director, Labor Resource Center	Senior Lecturer II
Professor, Anthropology	Political Science

*For information on the FSU, links to our contract and bargaining updates, and a calendar of events, see the [FSU webpage](#)*

9/20/2021

Dear FSU Members,

Are you interested in becoming more involved in the FSU and bargaining? Yes....you say?

The FSU is looking for 3-5 people to be part of the **Contract Action Team**, or CAT! If you are interested, please let the FSU know ([fsu@umb.edu](mailto:fsu@umb.edu)) and join us on September 29th at 3pm: <https://umassboston.zoom.us/j/97771206497> Chris Fung, a faculty member in anthropology and FSU organizer, will chair this important team. The CAT supports bargaining. It does not involve a ton of work, but it is important – and our first bargaining session of the Fall is October 12<sup>th</sup>. The CAT:

- Makes sure we have 30 members at each expanded bargaining session.
- Makes sure that we don't have the same 30 members at every bargaining session. We want as many members as possible, from all colleges and ranks, to experience the joys of bargaining! This just requires some nudging and a bit of organization.
- Finds ways to support FSU bargaining proposals outside of bargaining sessions by mobilizing members (and sometimes media) to pressure the Administration to do right by faculty, students, and staff.

Sincerely,

Steve Striffler	Chris Fung
FSU President	FSU Organizer

For information on the FSU, links to our contract and bargaining updates, and a calendar of events, see the [FSU webpage](#)

5/21/2021

Dear FSU Members,

We thought the end of the semester would be a good time to provide an outline of where things stand in the bargaining process. For previous bargaining updates see [here](#), but for a broad re-cap continue reading!

*Raises:* Now that the state has released their economic parameters (see [here](#)), we are expecting to see another proposal from Admin with a revised raise that will be better than their first offer of 0%-0%-0%. The FSU, in coalition with other UMass unions, presented the following proposal: 4.5% raise for each year of contract; one-time \$1000 increase to base pay for increased cost of benefits and working conditions.

*Non-Tenure Track Faculty:* The FSU made a number of proposals designed to address NTT issues. These include: mandating that NTT be allowed to attend department meetings; clarifying the additional work clause of Article 21 to make it clearer how such work will be assigned; ensuring that continuing appointment percentages of time are reflective of actual work history; enhancing the status of Associate Lecturers by reducing the number of semesters needed to convert to Lecturer along with other significant changes; ensuring access to office space; extending Travel Funds eligibility to NTT; and, perhaps most significantly, proposing that full-time NTT should be on a standard 3-3 workload with 25% time allotted to service and/or research. Admin has said no to virtually all of these proposals (they accepted a version of the NTT office space proposal). We are preparing a subsequent counter proposal.

*Tenure Track Faculty Workload:* The FSU made a comprehensive counter proposal to Admin on Article 15 which included the following tenure-track (TT) specific items: enshrining a 2/2 TT course load in the contract and a Research-Intensive Semester for junior faculty. Admin has shown some openness to the 2/2 and RIS, but with a series of problematic strings attached. We are preparing a subsequent counter proposal.

*Librarians:* We proposed some administrative, 'clean up' language for Article 20, that Librarians must be allowed to do service and scholarship during their assigned work hours, that salary floors and promotional raises match those of our UMA Librarian colleagues', and that Librarians be eligible for Travel Funds. Admin has not yet responded to salary/financial aspects of the proposal but has countered with some acceptance of our other proposals. We submitted a counter proposal.

*Scholarship of Practice Nursing Faculty (SOP):* We have proposed that SOP be eligible for Travel Funds and are working on a more comprehensive proposal to address workload concerns.

*Course Caps and Cancellations:* Admin has tried throughout bargaining to increase administrative control over course caps – to allow them to increase caps without instructor permission. The FSU has resisted this while proposing that courses cannot be cancelled due to low enrollments.

*Travel and RES Funds:* The Administration has resisted expanding the Travel Fund either in the sense of allowing more faculty/librarians access to it, or in allowing expanded uses of the Fund itself (when travel

was restricted). We intend to make another comprehensive proposal that will include: increase in the overall amount in the pool, expansion of eligibility for Travel funds to NTT, Librarians, and SOP, and the allocation of leftover funds to racial justice initiatives as well as the library (for info on our separate agreement on RES Funds for 20-21 see [here](#)). We will also push to make access to RES Funds easier.

Sincerely,

Core Bargaining Team

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science, FSU Vice President  
Katie D'Urso, MTA Field Representative  
Jessica Holden, Librarian III, Healey Library  
Maria Mellone, Non-Reappointed (i.e., laid off) Associate Lecturer, Math  
Alex Mueller, Associate Professor, English  
Lorenzo Nencioli, FSU Membership Coordinator  
Jason Rodriguez, Associate Professor, Sociology  
Heike Schotten, Associate Professor, Political Science  
Steve Striffler, Director of the Labor Resource Center and Professor, Anthropology, FSU President  
Tony Vandermeer, Senior Lecturer II, Africana Studies

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4/30/2021

Dear FSU Members,

We invite you – as members of the FSU bargaining team – to our next bargaining session on **Wednesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, 1-3pm**. (contact [FSU](#) or [Steve Striffler](#) for registration information).

We are permitted to have 30 FSU members join the core bargaining team during contract negotiations. We are hoping to fill the zoom room on May 12<sup>th</sup> in order to insist (or at least encourage!) the Administration to bargain in a way that moves the conversation forward. They have not been doing this in a productive way as of late – and need a push.

We anticipate receiving a statement from the Administration explaining why the use of Associate Lecturers has expanded so rapidly in recent years (this is in response to our Associate Lecturer proposal which would limit the usage of this rank). Although the category of Associate Lecturer was created to be used relatively sparingly in order to fill short-term staffing needs, it has become almost the only way in which new NTT faculty are hired at the university – giving the Administration great flexibility while creating an expanding class of faculty with little security and poor pay.

We also expect to receive Admin's proposal on Distance Learning. In addition, we anticipate submitting proposals of our own.

If you haven't joined the FSU in bargaining before – please consider doing so. It's both interesting and enlightening!

Sincerely,

Core Bargaining Team

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science, FSU Vice President  
Katie D'Urso, MTA Field Representative  
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Steve Striffler, Director of the Labor Resource Center and Professor, Anthropology, FSU President  
Tony Vandermeer, Senior Lecturer II, Africana Studies

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4/29/2021

Dear FSU Members,

Governor Baker just informed that National Association of Government Employees (NAGE) of the following salary parameters for the next three years:

**1.5% bonus in year one (July 1, 2020), followed by 2% raise in year two, and a 2% raise in year three.**

These will (almost certainly) be the parameters we are given as well – for our current contract negotiations. As you will see from the [attached letter](#) from NAGE to its members (worth a read!), this news did not sit well with the union. State tax revenues are \$1.4 billion above the original benchmark, and billions more are flowing into the state as part of the American Rescue Plan. Massachusetts is flush and state employees have worked incredibly hard this past year. We deserve better.

NAGE will be pushing back and so will the MTA. Stay tuned!

Steve Striffler

President, FSU

*For information on the FSU, links to our contract and bargaining updates, and a calendar of events, see the [FSU webpage](#)*

3/8/2021

RES Funds – New Agreement

Dear Members,

The FSU and Administration reached a Memorandum of Agreement on the allocation of RES Funds. This agreement only applies to the current fiscal year. Our rationale for signing a separate MOA for the

current fiscal year is simple: while the current fiscal year ends on June 30, 2021, bargaining for the current contract may not be finished by that point. Since RES Funds need to be expended in the fiscal year in which they are allocated, a separate agreement would have to be reached if members are going to have access to the funds this year.

As you may know, the pool of RES Funds is \$200,000 per year which is normally dispersed in relatively small sums to faculty to support professional development (after you submit receipts). Much of this money -- often close to half of it -- is not accessed directly by faculty in any given year through this process (though leftover funds are then spent on important things like the library, computer replacement, etc.).

For this year only:

1. \$150,000 will be dispersed in the normal fashion/amounts. Faculty will soon be notified by Admin about their specific level of financial support. In short, support will continue as it has in the past -- the same amount per individual.
2. \$50,000 will be allocated to anti-racism activities for faculty and librarians.
3. Any remaining money will be dedicated to the Healey Library.

Again, this agreement is only for this year. Negotiations around RES Funds for years two and three of the next contract are ongoing (please share your comments regarding RES Funds going forward).

This agreement reflects our commitment as faculty and librarians -- and as a union -- to racial justice by infusing resources into anti-racism initiatives on campus. It's not a perfect agreement, or exactly what we wanted, but it does commit resources to a vitally important effort (we'll send the final agreement as soon as it is drafted and signed). We will push the university to amplify the resources it commits to anti-racism in the future.

Sincerely,

Core Bargaining Team

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science, FSU Vice President

Katie D'Urso, MTA Field Representative

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Steve Striffler, Director of the Labor Resource Center and Professor, Anthropology, FSU President

Tony Vandermeer, Senior Lecturer II, Africana Studies

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12/23/20

Dear FSU Members,

**Update:** During bargaining on Tuesday the Administration verbally presented a possible proposal to change how RES Funds are utilized. A written proposal will soon follow.

At present, there are \$200,000 in RES funds, of which \$50K is dedicated to NTT faculty and \$150,000 to TT faculty (see Article 26.6.1(a) of the [contract](#) for current RES Funds language). Of this, less than half is typically used. Last year, 84 NTT faculty (out of roughly 380 eligible) accessed the money at an average of \$123, using only about 20% of the allocated funds; 244 TT faculty accessed the money at an average of \$255 each (about \$62,000). This means a lot of money is not used, with the remainder being spent on something agreed upon by Admin and the FSU (typically going to the library, computer replacement, etc.).

Admin is suggesting the following:

- 1) The \$50K dedicated to NTT faculty would now reimburse NTT faculty for Travel, allowing attendance at conferences for research or professional development. This would be capped at \$500 per faculty per year. [Note: this money could no longer be used as it was in the past; that is, it could only be used for travel and not for other expenditures for printers, organizational membership costs, etc.]
  
- 2) The \$150K currently dedicated to TT faculty would be allotted to several categories (exact amounts are unclear):
  - a. The largest amount of money would be to allow all new TT hires, and eventually all pre-tenure faculty, to attend a training with the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (<https://www.facultydiversity.org/fsp-bootcamp>).
  - b. A portion of the money would be set aside for “other faculty training,” including anti-racism training.
  - c. A smaller portion of the money would be set aside for “subventions” to help subsidize publication costs.

Any unspent money could be shifted from one pool to the other. If there is still money remaining, it would be transferred to IT for computer replacement.

**Please share your thoughts about this proposal. Our next bargaining session in January 6<sup>th</sup>.**

**Invite:** As part of the FSU’s commitment to expanded bargaining (see the FSU policy [here](#)), we invite you – as members of the FSU bargaining team – to our next bargaining session on **January 6<sup>th</sup> from 10am-12pm.**

Please register in advance for this

webinar: [https://umassboston.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_hEXam9YtQgm4crGxMdGb4w](https://umassboston.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_hEXam9YtQgm4crGxMdGb4w)

Sincerely,

Core Bargaining Team

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science, FSU Vice President

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12/16/2020

Dear FSU Members,

We have now finished well over a semester of bargaining, including impact bargaining due to COVID-19 as well as main table bargaining around the successor agreement (2017-20). The state of Massachusetts has not provided its annual budget parameters, which are necessary for us to begin salary negotiations – although this did not prevent Admin from pre-emptively offering us 0% raises for the next three years. We turned that down and await information from the state.

Bargaining so far has been frustrating. The Administration's proposals have all focused on increasing administrative control at the expense of faculty/librarians and shared governance – all the while looking for new ways to increase workloads, limit academic freedom, and otherwise discipline and control faculty and librarians.

Perhaps most telling, Admin has offered no proposals designed to improve the university, let alone the working conditions or productivity for faculty and librarians. No proposals were offered that might enhance teaching or research. In this case, the lone exception proves the rule: when Admin did throw out the "carrot" of research-intensive semesters (RIS) for junior TT faculty, their "package proposal" was so full of "sticks" that it was effectively a non-starter. To be sure, this is part of the bargaining process. But one can't help but wonder: if Admin recognizes that a research-intensive semester would be beneficial for junior faculty, as well as the research profile of the university, why not just make it happen?

We are hopeful that we will find more common ground in 2021. Faculty, librarians, and the core bargaining team will review priorities, tactics, and strategies over the winter break, although we will prioritize efforts to negotiate the time-sensitive proposals on RES and Travel Funds. We will stay in touch with you about all these developments. And we will likely ask you to join the FSU to pressure our Administration to bargain with the well-being of the university in mind – including not just its faculty and librarians, but also its staff and students.

For a specific update on the most recent and final bargaining session of the semester, please see below.

Please share your thoughts. This is your union.

Sincerely,

Core Bargaining Team

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science, FSU Vice President

Katie D’Urso, MTA Field Representative

Jessica Holden, Librarian III, Healey Library

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Steve Striffler, Director of the Labor Resource Center and Professor, Anthropology, FSU President

Tony Vandermeer, Senior Lecturer II, Africana Studies

Bargaining Update (for previous bargaining updates see [here](#)):

During our bargaining session on December 9<sup>th</sup>, the FSU presented proposals to more clearly define “additional work” for NTT faculty and the process by which it is assigned. We also proposed that continuing appointments percentages for NTT faculty be correlated with the actual percentage of time they work. Finally, we proposed to expand the use of FSU Travel Funds during Covid, when faculty travel is restricted.

This was not our first shot at Travel Funds – we started that conversation in the summer, but have not heard much from Admin in response. And we’re still waiting for their promised proposal to use our RES funds to fund antiracist university initiatives. The only proposal we received from Admin was a slightly modified proposal regarding “fitness for duty” – Admin’s effort to make it easier to dismiss faculty who are deemed medically unfit.

We are pleased to end on a positive note: we reached agreement on a number of minor, contract “clean up” items related to dues check off, the agency fee, and timelines for grievance hearings. Importantly, Admin agreed to our proposal to use gender-neutral language for the successor agreement. The CBT is thrilled about this agreement.

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11/4/2020

Dear FSU Members,

**Update:** During our bargaining session on October 28th, the FSU received two proposals from the Administration (attached), including one on course caps, a 2-2 teaching load, and a research intensive semester for junior faculty. Please note: This is a ‘package proposal,’ meaning the Administration will not provide any one part of it without us agreeing to all of it. This means, for example, that if we want a research-intensive semester for our pre-tenure faculty (which we do), we have to agree also to giving up faculty approval of increasing course caps and 2-2 teaching load for TT faculty awarded on the basis of a punitive system of “accountability” conducted by department personnel committees (essentially, everyone’s AFR would be evaluated as to whether or not they are adequately “research active”; if you are determined not to be, you will be demoted to a 3-3 teaching load).

The entire “package” proposal for Article 15 is [attached](#). Please pay careful attention to all of the additions and remember that they are being proposed in tandem and we that have been told that Admin would not be open to having the FSU pick and choose which parts we like.

The Administration’s other proposal (see [attached](#)) is also a “package proposal” wherein faculty may be allowed to retire immediately after a sabbatical without providing the otherwise requisite service year, in exchange for faculty also being subject to medical evaluations of their “fitness for duty” if Admin learns they might be falling down on the job.

Meanwhile, The FSU presented two proposals. The first suggested a small committee of faculty of color be formed to provide mentorship around teaching, research, service, personnel reviews, and promotion for other faculty of color on campus. The second proposed that NTT faculty should be integrated into their academic departments as voting members.

The Administration also responded to a few of our previous proposals (see [here](#) for previous bargaining updates):

Regarding Associate Lecturers, Administration indicated that they were not favorable to our changes and that any reduction in administrative flexibility regarding their ability to hire and not re-hire Associate Lecturers would jeopardize their ability to grant continuing appointments to Lecturers (in their view, the tradeoff for the long term employment status accorded to Lecturers with continuing appointments is to have a sizable pool of temporary NTT). They said they will be conducting an analysis of hiring practices to determine whether or not there has been a misuse of the Associate Lecturer title. (the FSU has gathered its own data on AL hiring and un-hiring practices across the university; see [attached](#)).

Regarding our proposal that librarian salaries be equitable with those at UMass Amherst, Administration indicated that they are not yet in a position to formally engage with salary proposals until the UMB and state budget situation is clarified.

Finally, with regard to academic freedom, Admin rejected our counter-proposal and stated that they stand by their [original proposal](#). Given how important this issue is on our campus, it is a good idea to take a look at Admin's original proposal and see what they have in mind when they talk about "academic freedom."

**Invite:** As part of the FSU's commitment to expanded bargaining (see the FSU policy [here](#)), we invite you – as members of the FSU bargaining team – to our next bargaining session on **November 13th from 1pm to 3pm**, where the Core Bargaining Team will receive proposals from Admin while presenting some new proposals of our own.

Please register in advance for this webinar (contact the [FSU](#) or [Steve Striffler](#) for Zoom info).

Sincerely,  
Core Bargaining Team

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science, FSU Vice President  
Katie D'Urso, MTA Field Representative  
Jessica Holden, Librarian III, Healey Library  
Maria Mellone, Non-Reappointed (i.e., laid off) Associate Lecturer, Math  
Alex Mueller, Associate Professor, English  
Lorenzo Nencioli, FSU Membership Coordinator  
Jason Rodriguez, Associate Professor, Sociology  
Heike Schotten, Associate Professor, Political Science  
Steve Striffler, Director of the Labor Resource Center and Professor, Anthropology, FSU President  
Tony Vandermeer, Senior Lecturer II, Africana Studies

10/21/2020

Dear FSU Members,

**Update:** During our bargaining session on October 14<sup>th</sup>, the FSU responded to (and rejected) [Admin's proposals](#) for no pay raises (for 3 years), increased workload (and increased course caps), and restricted academic freedom. We also presented two proposals, one seeking salary equity for librarians and the other attempting to limit and redefine the category of Associate Lecturer.

**Invite:** As part of the FSU's commitment to expanded bargaining (see the FSU policy [here](#)), we invite you – as members of the FSU bargaining team – to our next bargaining session on **October 28th from 1pm to 3pm**, where the Core Bargaining Team will receive proposals from Admin while presenting some new proposals of our own.

Please register in advance for this webinar (contact the [FSU](#) or [Steve Striffler](#) for registration info)

Sincerely,  
Core Bargaining Team

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science, FSU Vice President  
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10/2/20

Dear FSU Members,

On Wednesday, the FSU Core Bargaining Team, along with our 30 member Expanded Bargaining Team, received proposals from Administration (see [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#)) that would eliminate raises for three years, curtail academic freedom, explicitly require unpaid work during the period of non-responsibility, and potentially increase course sizes significantly. Quite simply, the administration wants us to do more work for less pay and with diminished autonomy.

There is good news. We did not receive proposals asking for furloughs or increased parking rates – and hence have something to look forward to in future bargaining sessions (lol). Administration is on a roll.

We are perplexed that our own Administration is proposing no raises for the next three years – at a time when enrollments look good and we do not know what state funding will look like two months from now, let alone two years (the state level-funded Higher Ed through October). We were also surprised, if not exactly shocked, that Administration's first proposals call for an increase in unpaid work while giving Administration even more discretion to increase course caps.

Please review the attached proposals and let us know what you think. And stay involved in your union.

An invitation to participate in our next bargaining session on October 14<sup>th</sup> will be coming soon to FSU members. The Core Bargaining Team will respond to Admin's proposals and present some of our own for librarians and faculty on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

Sincerely,

## Core Bargaining Team

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science, FSU Vice President

Katie D'Urso, MTA Field Representative

Jessica Holden, Librarian III, Healey Library

Maria Mellone, Non-Reappointed (i.e., laid off) Associate Lecturer, Math

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8/20/2020

Dear FSU Members,

We just finished our second main table bargaining session, the agenda for which was that administration would respond to the FSU's proposals (detailed below our signature) and present proposals of their own.

Despite having had over a month to prepare, however, administration did not in fact have any proposals to offer. As well, they were largely dismissive, without substantial engagement or discussion, of the FSU's proposals.

They then cancelled our next scheduled bargaining session, a date they themselves had proposed and which was finalized a month ago.

Admin did, however, provide a preview of which *areas* (with no details) their future proposals will cover:

1. Parking (yes, you read that correctly)
2. Furloughs (they'd like to spread this around beyond the administrative level)
3. "Course capacity" (no sense of what this means or pertains to)
4. Distance learning (see #3)

It is difficult not to conclude that Admin is contemplating proposals to increase parking rates, increase course sizes, ask for faculty/librarian furloughs, and change contract language about distance learning. But we have no concrete details.

We invite you to attend our next bargaining session (whenever that may be!).

You may recall that the CBT won expanded bargaining, which means that 30 FSU members can attend bargaining sessions and "watch" them as an audience, just like you would attend an online webinar. We think it is really important for our members to see administration in (in)action during these sessions. As well, it builds power to have our membership beside us in this process. Finally, during the many "caucus" periods (i.e., private de-briefings) that come up during bargaining, we can confer with you and discuss what is happening and get your opinions and advice about how best to proceed.

We'll send details and an invitation to bargaining as soon as it is scheduled.

In the meantime, stay safe, good luck with course preparation, and stay in touch.

Sincerely, and in solidarity,

Core Bargaining Team:

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science, FSU Vice President  
Katie D'Urso, MTA Field Representative  
Jessica Holden, Librarian III, Healey Library  
Maria Mellone, Associate Lecturer, Mathematics  
Alex Mueller, Associate Professor, English  
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Steve Striffler, Director of the Labor Resource Center and Professor, Anthropology, FSU President  
Tony Vandermeer, Senior Lecturer II, Africana Studies

#### FSU Proposals (submitted July 10<sup>th</sup>)

1. 2-2 teaching load for all TT faculty
2. 3-3 Teaching Load for all NTT faculty
3. No course cancellations
4. Implement the recommendations of the Alternative Scheduling Taskforce (see [attached](#)).
5. Re: the \$1000 FSU Travel Fund:
  - a. Expand eligibility to all bargaining unit members (TT faculty, NTT faculty, librarians, etc.) and ensure sufficient funds to cover this expansion.

- b. During semesters in which Covid-19 travel restrictions are in place, allow the Travel Fund to reimburse any expenditure that contributed to the research, scholarship, and/or creative activity of the bargaining unit member.

7/14/2020

Dear FSU Members,

We started main table bargaining last Friday. The FSU core bargaining team was there, along with—for the very first time!—30 additional FSU members, who attended as part of our expanded team. It was really exciting to bargain with administration knowing that our members were in the Zoom room with us, holding it down throughout and ready to caucus with us at a moment's notice.

We presented five proposals to administration, based on your feedback this past Fall and Spring:

- 1) institute a 2/2 Teaching Load for all Tenure Stream Faculty
- 2) institute a 3/3 Teaching Load for all (full-time) NTT Faculty
- 3) eliminate course cancellations due to low enrollment
- 4) implement the recommendations of the Alternative Scheduling Taskforce
- 5) expand the FSU travel fund – (a) In the event that travel is restricted, allow faculty to use travel funds for other research, scholarship, or creative purposes; (b) extend travel fund to Librarians, Clinical Professors (all ranks), and NTT faculty.

We also initiated a discussion about limiting/capping enrollments for virtual courses for both pedagogical and workload reasons.

These were just the initial proposals for the first bargaining sessions – there will be others!!

The Administration will not respond to these proposals until our next meeting (date TBD), but did make it a point to outline the dire financial situation of the university – suggesting that from their perspective, proposals must be cost-neutral or even save money.

Admin also raised the possibility of agreeing to a one-year contract as opposed to the typical three-year deal – which many campuses around the state are now exploring given the uncertain financial future. This has some appeal to unions. Given the financial situation (and political mood), a three-year contract could lock us in to no raises for three years whereas a one-year contract would limit the pain and perhaps allow us to negotiate a longer term contract under an improved economic climate. There will be much discussion about this in the coming weeks.

We will continue to update you. And – we will let you know when the next bargaining session is so you can join us at the virtual table!

Sincerely and in solidarity,

Core Bargaining Team:

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science, FSU Vice President  
Katie D'Urso, MTA Field Representative  
Jessica Holden, Librarian III, Healey Library  
Maria Mellone, Associate Lecturer, Mathematics  
Alex Mueller, Associate Professor, English  
Lorenzo Nencioli, FSU Membership Coordinator  
Jason Rodriguez, Associate Professor, Sociology  
Heike Schotten, Associate Professor, Political Science  
Steve Striffler, Director of the Labor Resource Center and Professor, Anthropology, FSU President  
Tony Vandermeer, Senior Lecturer II, Africana Studies

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*Check out the FSU [Blog](#)*

*Please "like" the [FSU Facebook Page](#)*

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6/26/2020

Dear FSU Members,

At yesterday's Special Session of the General Assembly, the membership unanimously approved (43-0) the [attached agreement](#) with Administration allowing up to 30 FSU members to attend each bargaining session (in addition to the core bargaining team). This represents a significant step towards expanded bargaining – and a more engaged, transparent, and powerful union.

The next bargaining session has not been scheduled yet, but once it is we will send out a request for members to join us at the virtual bargaining table. We will also continue to caucus during bargaining sessions with as many FSU members who want to participate.

Sincerely,

Core Bargaining Team:

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science, FSU Vice President  
Katie D'Urso, MTA Field Representative  
Jessica Holden, Librarian III, Healey Library  
Maria Mellone, Associate Lecturer, Mathematics  
Alex Mueller, Associate Professor, English  
Lorenzo Nencioli, FSU Membership Coordinator

Jason Rodriquez, Associate Professor, Sociology  
Heike Schotten, Associate Professor, Political Science  
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5/22/2020

Dear FSU Members,

We write with three important bargaining updates and a request for your help.

First the good news: Administration (finally!) signed the Spring 2020 agreement that we reached with them in April (please see [attached](#)).

Now the bad news:

You may know that the Provost sent a memo in April (also [attached](#)) to faculty about summer teaching. In her memo, she discussed converting Summer courses to online modality, but without assuring faculty of the \$3k distance learning course development stipend, as stipulated in Article 35 of the [contract](#). We believe that this memo violates the contract, and the FSU Grievance committee will be filing a grievance on behalf of all affected FSU members.

Finally, you may recall that the FSU enacted a new [policy](#) of [expanded bargaining](#), which “will by default allow all FSU members to attend all main- and side-table bargaining sessions.” On May 11<sup>th</sup>, we wrote to you about this new policy, explaining our work to communicate it to administration and their ongoing reticence to engage or comply with this new policy.

At our last bargaining session, on May 20<sup>th</sup>, the CBT attempted to follow our union’s policy and asked Administration to allow expanded bargaining team members to join the meeting (we had 41 FSU members asking for entry). They refused to do so. This refusal is not surprising, given how obstinate they have been throughout this process. But it is a clear signal that we need to insist on expanded bargaining and demand that administration recognize our lawful and legitimate right to do so.

Hence this request: we need your help!

Please write to the Administration and tell them you support (and want to participate in!) expanded bargaining.

Below is a template email you may draw from; please personalize and send to:

Interim Provost Emily McDermott ([emily.mcdermott@umb.edu](mailto:emily.mcdermott@umb.edu))

Vice Chancellor for Human Resources Marie Bowen ([marie.bowen@umb.edu](mailto:marie.bowen@umb.edu))

Employee and Labor Relations Generalist Jennifer Springer ([jennifer.springer@umb.edu](mailto:jennifer.springer@umb.edu))

*Dear Provost McDermott, Vice Chancellor Bowen, and Ms. Springer*

*I write to ask you to agree to expanded bargaining with the FSU. As a member of the FSU, I believe that contract negotiations should be a transparent process that all FSU members can observe. There is no legal or logical reason to prohibit union members from silently observing a process of negotiation that has a profound impact on our lives and the university as a whole. In fact, expanded bargaining will produce a better-informed faculty and stronger university.*

Thanks so much for reading our updates! If you have any questions, concerns, or want to get more involved, please just reply directly to this email.

Sincerely, and in solidarity,

Core Bargaining Team

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science, FSU Vice President

Katie D'Urso, MTA Field Representative

Maria Mellone, Associate Lecturer, Mathematics

Alex Mueller, Associate Professor, English

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