

Event: Faculty Meeting

Date: March 2, 2016

Time: 10:00 – 11:15 p.m.

Location: A102

Today's meeting, a hybrid of a general faculty meeting and a Federation E-board meeting, consisted of reports from LWTech Federation President Jim Howe and from Bargaining Team member Phil Snider.

President's Report (Jim Howe)

- **New treasurer:** Joe Martorelli, who has served as union treasurer for the past two years, will retire at the end of either this quarter or next. Scarlett Kendrick has agreed to take his place as treasurer. At the end of the meeting, her role was confirmed by vote.
- **Faculty senate:** The union is doing not only union work but work that would be more appropriate to a faculty senate. In the interest of having broader faculty governance and spreading the governance workload more equitably among faculty, we need to push toward creating such a senate.
- **Improving benefits for part-time instructors:** In LWTech's relatively distant voc-tech past, all faculty were full-time. Now, more than 70% are part-time. This increase in part-time instructors began in the Academic Core but has spread to all divisions. The Bargaining Team sees numerous problems with this employment structure and is working on creating more paths for part-time instructors to become full-time.
- **Academic freedom:** Our contract has a strong statement on academic freedom. Among other things, it guarantees that a dean cannot override the grade a faculty assigns. The faculty contract and student handbook both establish clear guidelines for the grade-appeal process.
- **Faculty grievances:** The union typically helps to settle 2 – 5 faculty grievance issues per week. Jim noted that these issues are generally not major, but it's crucial for the faculty members involved that they are handled fairly, according to policy.
- **FACTC representation:** Jim is our faculty representative for the Faculty Association of Community and Technical Colleges (FACTC). As part of FACTC, Jim went to a legislative meeting in Olympia last month. Our faculty needs an alternate FACTC representative for times when Jim is not able to participate.
- **Tuition reduction:** An important development this year was the state funding for a 5% tuition reduction for our students. However, this reduction was not funded for our baccalaureate students because the Legislature didn't recognize them as being part of the two-year system. This year, we hope to fund a tuition reduction for these baccalaureate students.

Bargaining Report (Phil Snider)

Phil started by recognizing the hard work and dedication of the volunteer Bargaining Team. This team is involved in "interest-based bargaining," in which faculty and administration work together to define and

achieve common interests. Key interests include keeping the college open and enabling student success. Bargaining has been in progress since January. Ideally, it would have started earlier in the academic year, but there were some delays related to bringing a new Vice President of Instruction and a new Director of Human Resources onboard.

Phil then displayed a list of issues the Bargaining Team has agreed to address. Most items on this list were submitted by faculty starting last September, when the Bargaining Team began requesting faculty input via email.

Phil noted that some issues on the list were relatively easy to settle. They related mostly to making sure that Administration followed pre-existing procedures. Examples of such issues include how to address a failed tenure process, how to implement a sabbatical, how to ensure student participation in tenure, and how to ensure that instructors submit syllabi to the Instruction office. The Bargaining Team is in the midst of discussion of other somewhat more contentious issues, including how to best use non-instructional days and how to ensure rigorous faculty evaluation. Subcommittees are compiling information or researching options.

Several items on the displayed list of issues generated additional discussion:

- **Syllabus formats:** This discussion about current bargaining led to questions about whether all faculty are required to follow the same syllabus format. Several faculty members noted that they've spent considerable time modifying their syllabi to conform to templates their deans have told them they must use. Phil emphasized that our academic freedom gives us the right to determine our own syllabus format. Other meeting attendees noted that a previous step-18 faculty member had created a syllabus template with the good intention of helping faculty in designing a syllabus but that the use of this template had in some cases morphed beyond its original intent.
- **Faculty evaluations:** The bargaining team is working to ensure that evaluations don't have a negative impact on students, faculty, or programs. One faculty member observed that in her three years of employment here she has never been observed by an administrator or peer. Thus, her only evaluations come from students. Jim Howe emphasized that faculty must be evaluated on multiple indices. Were this teacher to be disciplined based on student evaluations alone, she would have a strong grievance case against the college.
- **Compensating faculty for administrative work:** As part of bargaining for fair workloads, the union needs to know what administrative work faculty are doing in their departments.
- **Title IX investigations:** Phil noted that there have been 6 Title IX investigations during his time serving as a grievance officer. Too often, the investigations have been secretive and have otherwise violated acceptable procedures. Speaking for the Bargaining Team, Phil said that "Until this issue is settled, there will be no contract."

Notes recorded by Wes Mantoath, LWTech Federation Secretary