

5/2/2025

Dear Colleagues,

Just a quick update on the status of contract bargaining - We have been meeting with admin every week or two and having some fairly productive discussions as of late. We have additional meetings scheduled for May 7 and May 14, and an all-day session scheduled for May 15. We are hopeful that we can reach a tentative agreement by the end of this semester, but a lot depends on what happens at the May 7 session, in which admin has promised to give us a counter-proposal on salaries and related financial benefits (Article 26). Stay tuned for a more substantive update once we have those numbers from admin.

In solidarity,

The FSU Core Bargaining Team

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science
Ellen Frank, Senior Lecturer II, Economics
Maria Hegbloom, MTA Field Representative
Jessica Holden, Librarian IV, Healey Library
Keith Jones, Lecturer, Africana Studies
Lorenzo Nencioli, FSU Senior Staff Member
Jason Rodriquez, Associate Professor, Sociology
Heike Schotten, Professor, Political Science
Steve Striffler, Professor, Labor Studies

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

4/4/2025

Dear Colleagues,

First: please sign our [petition](#) to demand that the administration bargain with the urgency required, given that our contract expired 9 months ago. Over 100 faculty members and librarians have already signed it!

Wednesday in bargaining we discussed our economic proposals (Article 26; See our proposal [HERE](#)), such as raising salary floors, promotion increases, longevity raises, stipends for program directors, travel funds, among others. The administration presented their assessment of the cost estimates for these items, though they did not provide us with monetary numbers for what they are willing to agree to regarding our economic proposals.

The administration also conveyed their desire to raise parking fees with an “escalator” that automatically increases rates by the same percentage as any raises, in perpetuity. We maintained our position that parking cannot be bargained at the main table and must be negotiated in coalition with the other unions should the administration still wish to pursue this proposal.

The next bargaining session is in two weeks, April 16th, at 9:45. Sign up [HERE](#) to observe the session.

In solidarity,

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3/28/2025

Dear Colleagues,

On Wednesday at bargaining we tried to continue discussion of our proposals. We asked admin to cover all visa costs for international faculty and communicate better with them about immigration processes. We shared three powerful testimonies from courageous faculty members regarding how low salaries and visa costs make it difficult to live in Boston.

Unfortunately, we are still waiting on the Administration to provide real, substantive responses to many of our most important proposals. When we raised this issue – regarding the Administration’s unwillingness to really bargain -- their lead negotiator, Mickey Gallagher, got angry and nearly walked out. This is a common delay tactic of administration that we have seen in bargaining before.

We have been bargaining in good faith for over a year. We await Admin to come to the table in a serious way to negotiate and come to an agreement.

In solidarity,

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3/14/2025

Dear Member,

Yesterday we arrived at bargaining with the intention of discussing **an agreed-upon agenda** about a series of important proposals, including:

- Longevity bonuses
- Retention raises for TT faculty
- Increased salary floors for all faculty and librarians
- Accessible all-gender bathrooms

Admin arrived completely unprepared.

Despite having had our proposals for months, they spent the first 45 minutes of bargaining caucusing by themselves. When they finally joined us at the table, their lead attorney, Mickey Gallagher, stormed out of the room after we asked why the administration has taken so long to respond to FSU proposals made last October -- and why they were completely ignoring our other proposals.

Admin is stalling.

Admin seems to have no commitment to finalizing a decent contract.

After spring break, we will meet again to bargain on a range of **economic/salary issues**. The only way we move bargaining forward is if **we make it impossible** for them to keep **ignoring us**.

We need you there at this bargaining session to tell admin you are tired of waiting for a fair and just contract.

Mark your calendars now:

Wednesday, March 26th

9:30 am

Wheatley 5, 41

More details to follow....but plan on lining the hallways and making your voices heard!

Happy spring break and all solidarity,

The FSU Core Bargaining Team

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science

Ellen Frank, Senior Lecturer II, Economics

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2/28/2025

Dear Colleagues,

After months of getting very little of substance from the Admin bargaining team, they have summarily rejected virtually all our proposals. We urge as many members as possible to show up before the **next bargaining session on Wednesday, March 5** – this will take place right outside **ISC 2003 from 9:15 – 9:45**. We need you to make your voices heard. Coffee and snacks provided! Read on.

Proposals Admin has Rejected

In a time of increased costs and rising economic uncertainty, we made proposals that would **raise our standard of living, improve faculty and librarian retention, and enhance our working conditions** consistent with both our new **R1 designation and our values**.

Among others, Admin has rejected the following:

- **Raises** that match the **across-the-board parameters** (12.5 percent over 3 years) set by the Governor's office
- **Longevity raises** for faculty and librarians who have been here **at least 10 years**
- **Retention raises** for TT faculty after **successful 4th year review**
- Shortening timeline for **NTT promotions and increasing of salary floors**
- **NTT participation in department meetings**
- **Stipends for Program Directors**, who do this work 12 months a year (despite being on 9-month contracts)
- **Credits toward a CLR** for off-load teaching of **independent studies**
- **Support for international faculty** by covering **visa costs**
- Increasing coverage for **bereavement leave**
- Increasing eligibility for **parental leave**
- **More personal days** for librarians and calendar-year faculty
- Access to **all-gender restrooms**

Not only has Admin rejected these proposals; they have refused to provide any rationale or justification. In some cases, it's unclear if they even looked at, let alone genuinely considered, these proposals.

Associate Lecturers

Additionally, after *lengthy* discussions at the table regarding Associate Lecturers (ALs), admin admitted the category is being abused. They agree that people are being hired as ALs when they should be hired as Lecturers, an abuse we believe will continue as long as ALs are cheaper and can be disposed of at will.

Admin nonetheless had the Scrooge-like ingenuity to propose that ALs get a 1.8 percent raise of \$100, increasing their per course rate from \$5500 to \$5600. This “raise” will guarantee that our Associate Lecturers continue to be the most poorly paid faculty in Boston and earn nowhere close to a living wage!

Parking + Raises

There is one thing we are certain admin does care about: raising parking fees. Although they could not find the time to give our proposals due consideration, they nonetheless found ample time to produce a convoluted parking proposal that increases rates automatically, and *in perpetuity*, that effectively negate the already measly and insulting raises they are proposing. Not only is this proposal offensive on its face, but it is also in violation of the ground rules that state all proposals had to be made by March 22, 2024.

Outrageously, Admin’s salary proposal offers raises that result in real wage losses for most faculty and librarians! The Governor’s office set parameters at 12.5 percent across-the-board raises over a 3-year period. Admin proposed 5.75 percent, with the remaining 6.75 percent unequally distributed through merit pools that do not include new faculty, librarians, and many NTT faculty members. (ALs are not included in across-the-board raises, or merit raises, which may be why Admin decided to throw another hundred bucks at them so they could maybe go to Costco or the movies one night per semester).

What do you think?

Impressed with Admin’s proposals? Confused by their rejection of ours? The only way we get what we need and want—and deserve—from this contract is if, in one collective voice, we demand equity, fairness, and the honoring of all of our labor!

Admin will only improve their proposals if we collectively pressure them to do so! Our strength lies in our unity! Attend our March 5 bargaining session ([registration link](#)), or show up to support us at ISC-2003 30 minutes before session starts – coffee + donuts.

Any thoughts, or suggestions, or if you want to get more involved, please just respond to this email.

In solidarity,

The FSU Core Bargaining Team

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science
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12/13/2024

Dear Colleagues,

We have had 2 bargaining sessions since the [last update we sent to you](#) on November 8th. Here is a brief rundown of the most significant developments from the two sessions. *It is important to note that none of these proposals represent the final word on what will ultimately get into the contract- there is still a long way to go and a lot will change between now and when we get a tentative agreement:*

- NTT- Admin provided a counter to our NTT proposals. First, some good news: they agreed to provide university issued computers to all NTT with continuing appointments (though not to all NTT, as we had proposed). They also accepted our proposal to ensure that continuing appointments (that is, a contract without end date that guarantees work at a certain percentage of time) will be guaranteed for the member's *actual* percentage of time. However, they rejected most of our NTT proposals, including the proposed elimination of the Associate Lecturer rank and subsequent conversion of Associate Lecturers to Lecturer. They also rejected our proposals to reduce the time required for eligibility for a continuing appointment.. Finally, admin proposed a new PMYR process for Senior Lecturer 3's (details to come).
- Work Conditions- Admin seemed willing to consider our proposals on gender-neutral bathrooms and preferred names but they indicated that much of what we are seeking in these proposals is already being developed for implementation outside of the bargaining process. We remain engaged on this issue.
- Librarians- Admin accepted our proposed language to count paid leaves as creditable service time for continuing appointment and promotion and to reduce the time required to apply for promotion.

You can see all our proposals, as well as the Administration's proposals [here](#) (the summary of the proposals can be seen [here](#)).

We noted in our [last update](#) that we'd give you a summary of some of our other proposals that we presented to admin (we summarized our proposals on salaries, promotional raises, and stipends; NTT; and work conditions in our last update). Here are a few of them (with more to come later):

- Recognizing Uncompensated Work - We proposed the accumulation of credits toward a CLR for the work we do with students individually, such as teaching independent studies, chairing a MA thesis or dissertation committee, etc. We also proposed formalizing CLRs in the contract for GPDs and undergraduate program directors.
- Supporting Assistant Professors - We proposed a true pre-tenure sabbatical by removing the service obligation Research Intensive Semester (currently, only teaching obligations are removed).
- Academic Freedom – We added language that clearly states we have academic freedom in our teaching.

So, what's next? We expect to have a tentative agreement with the administration by the end of Spring 2025. We have agreed to weekly bargaining sessions with admin starting Wednesday, February 5th, 9:45-11:30. ***We need your help to get the strongest possible contract! Be part of bargaining by observing the sessions and giving us feedback about what you're seeing*** (details on how to register to attend will be provided closer to the dates in question).

Sincerely,

The FSU Core Bargaining Team

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science
Ellen Frank, Senior Lecturer II, Economics
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Steve Striffler, Professor, Labor Studies

11/8/2024

Dear Colleagues,

After months of delayed negotiations (more on that below), we finally presented all our proposals to the Administration on September 19th, September 26th, and October 3rd. On October 17th, Admin responded with brief responses to three proposals and a new proposal of their own. Their stated intention is to give a comprehensive response to all our proposals, though they have already cancelled the scheduled bargaining session where that response was to be given.

You can see all our proposals, as well as the Administration's first proposal [here](#). We encourage you to read them (if you can't read them all, the summary of the proposals can be seen [here](#)). One thing you'll notice: there are a lot of them, and they cover a wide array of topics that will have a significant impact on members' work lives. These are proposals worth fighting for. We hope you will help us in doing just that by joining us at the bargaining table and pushing the administration to agree to them. Our next bargaining session is November 20th from 3-4:30pm in Campus Center 3540. Stay tuned for registration announcement.

In the meantime, here is a summary of a few key proposals (with info on our other proposals to come in the following weeks):

- Salaries, Promotional Raises, And Stipends- Increases of a few thousand dollars to all promotional raises, increases of a few thousand dollars to all salary floors, an increase in the per course rate for Summer/Winter courses, a new automatic longevity raise for years of service, a retention pay raise for members who successfully complete a 4th year review, stipends and course releases for program directors (graduate and undergraduate), university funds to cover all costs related to visas and Green Cards, a doubling of the salary anomaly pool, and more.
- Non Tenure Track Faculty- the elimination of the Associate Lecturer and the automatic conversion of all current Associate Lecturers to Lecturer (meaning higher salaries and potential for eligibility for future promotions), changing promotional eligibility to hire date rather than total full-time equivalent years of service (meaning less time to promotion), and more.
- Work Conditions- guarantee of accessible gender-neutral bathrooms, computers to be provided to all members, and more.

Now, about those delayed negotiations: our side was ready – with proposals in hand -- to begin bargaining in March of this year. The Administration delayed the start of bargaining until the Fall semester by starting a fight over whether we could bargain via Zoom or not. This was a completely unnecessary fight that the Administration also picked with each of the campus unions, often insisting that one union had to bargain in-person while another had to bargain via Zoom. We kid you not.

After presenting our final set of proposals on October 3rd, the Administration agreed to present a comprehensive response to all our proposals on October 31st. They cancelled the meeting on October 30th. We are yet to receive anything substantive from the Administration after months of bargaining. We are in the process of scheduling more bargaining sessions but it is clear that, thanks to these delays, bargaining will continue into the Spring semester.

One final note. So far Administration ineptitude in bargaining is not jeopardizing our state-mandated raises because the legislature will not fund those raises until sometime next semester. However, if the Administration does not get serious about moving bargaining along this could become an issue.

Sincerely,

The FSU Core Bargaining Team

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Steve Striffler, Professor, Labor Studies

9/20/2024

Dear Colleagues,

We had a great bargaining session yesterday with a room packed full of FSU members. Thank you to everyone who attended. We presented proposals (see [here](#) and [here](#)) about promotional raises, longevity raises, retention raises, stipends for program directors, increased salary floors, anti-racism initiatives, travel funds, salary anomalies, reimbursement for the cost of green cards and visas for international faculty, and increased pay for Summer/Winter courses. We also discussed our intent to convert all Associate Lecturers to Lecturers and eliminate the Associate Lecturer category from the contract. (for a bulleted list of proposals that FSU will be making see [here](#)).

We will be making more proposals next **Thursday, Sept 26, from 12:30-2pm** at our next bargaining session. We welcome you to join us, but you must register to attend: (contact the [Core Bargaining Team](#) information).

Sincerely,

The FSU Core Bargaining Team

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science
Ellen Frank, Senior Lecturer II, Economics
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Jason Rodriguez, Associate Professor, Sociology
Heike Schotten, Professor, Political Science
Steve Striffler, Professor, Labor Studies

9/9/2024

Dear FSU Members,

Welcome back. Unfortunately, we wish we had better news to start the semester. The administration continues to undermine and obstruct the contract negotiations for all the UMass Boston unions. Details below, but please join members from all the campus unions at the Fall Convocation this Thursday morning to hand out flyers to request fair and immediate bargaining— 10:30 am right outside the Campus Center Ballroom.

The campus unions - CSU, FSU, GEO, and PSU - are negotiating separate contracts but uniting to ensure a more open and transparent bargaining process that involves our members as much as possible.

Administration appears unwilling to move forward in anything resembling a productive manner – resisting all efforts to make bargaining open, transparent, and more democratic. It has gotten so bad, that they appear uninterested in bargaining at all, given they have so much trouble doing simple things like agreeing to meeting dates, showing up prepared when we do meet, allowing union members to attend the sessions, and collectively working towards an agreement that strengthens UMass Boston. All the unions are experiencing similar resistance and disrespect.

These management tactics undermine negotiations on substantive matters while simultaneously delaying bargaining to such an extent that they may delay the pay raises that the governor has already set, effective January 2025.

Please show your support for all the campus unions rights to a transparent, democratic bargaining process by joining us at Fall Convocation at 10:30 am right outside the Campus Center Ballrooms flyers attached [here](#) and [here](#), but will be provided on Thursday). We will be there to encourage our university leadership to come to the table, to bargain transparently and in good faith, and to seek fair and swift agreements that serve our entire campus community.

Also, MARK YOUR CALENDARS: The FSU has our first face-to-face bargaining session with Admin on Thursday, Sept 19, 12:30-2:00pm.

Please join us for bargaining by registering: (contact the [CBT](#) for registration info).

Sincerely,

The FSU Core Bargaining Team

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Ellen Frank, Senior Lecturer II, Economics

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5/3/24

“The irony of conducting online negotiations while demanding zoom be shut down shouldn’t be lost on anyone.”

- FSU Expanded Team Member

Dear FSU members,

We had an inspiring turnout of faculty and librarians for the bargaining session yesterday.

Unfortunately, the administration refused to bargain with us. Mickey Gallagher, the UMB Director of Labor Relations arrived at the start of the meeting, handed the FSU team a statement requesting third-party arbitration to resolve the disputed ground rules, then said their team was going to take a short caucus and come back. **But they never came back. They stayed in their caucus room the entire time. After almost an hour of us waiting around, they texted us, saying they would only come to the room if we promised to turn off Zoom, excluding some of our team from the session. Our reply? We refuse to negotiate over text message.**

The situation would be laughable if it weren’t so outrageous. As another member of our expanded team put it: **“The meeting was a dumpster fire of disrespect and honestly almost contempt.** Not on the part of the union, on Mickey’s part. **I was pretty surprised.”**

We have agreed to meet on-campus for bargaining. We also have asked admin many times what the problem is with allowing Zoom for those who want to participate but cannot be there in-person, and they have refused to answer that question. We are left to conclude that the answer is quite simply about power: the administration is trying to control who is on our team and can participate (and who cannot).

“Yesterday’s ‘bargaining’ session was yet another demonstration of the administration’s lack of respect for the time and dedication of faculty and librarians. While the FSU was physically and virtually present in large numbers, the administration’s only presence was a brief initial visit by Mickey Gallagher who left the room after 5 minutes supposedly to ‘caucus’ with other members of admin’s team but never to return to the bargaining table. Disrespectful.”

- FSU Expanded Team Member

Admin has told librarians that to attend bargaining as silent observers, they must first get approval from their dean (**herself a member of the Admin bargaining team**) and, then, either take PTO or arrange to make up their work hours, **a complete violation of past practice.**

**The refusal to allow Zoom in the room
and the requirement of librarians to take paid time off to attend bargaining
are repressive moves intended to divide our union
and impose restrictions on who can be on our team.**

For the FSU, this is about our values. Are we a university that lives up to its stated values of anti-racism and health promotion? Will this administration support inclusion, participation, and shared governance? As the administration put it, **in its own statement of their bargaining principles**, is this behavior **“enriching the human core?”**

Or, rather, are we a university whose administration refuses to compromise, that seeks to enforce its own rigid, exclusionary, and, frankly, outdated form of contract bargaining? An administration that seems eager to delay bargaining by bringing in a third-party arbitrator in order to prevent members from participating in their own contract negotiations?

**We are bringing this issue to the next Faculty Council meeting,
Monday, May 6 at 1pm.**

**It is first on the agenda.
Please consider attending, participating, and
helping us build consensus and power vis-à-vis this authoritarian administration.**

**(we note that all FC meetings are held hybrid
and administrators frequently join those meetings via Zoom).**

We will let our expanded team members have the last word:

“I joined the expanded bargaining team because it’s important to bear witness to contract negotiations and maintain a democratic ethic that is at the heart of that process. I was appalled to see management make demands and then leave the room to caucus at the start of the meeting. 30 minutes later they texted that they were ready to meet in person if their demands were met.”

"As full time NTT faculty parents of a lovely but demanding toddler, it has been especially insulting to us to see UMB Management doubling down on their ridiculous refusal to allow Zoom in the room for bargaining sessions. By trying to shut down remote participation, Admin is effectively telling all our members with serious home-care responsibilities that we are to be excluded from these negotiations. This is discriminatory and unacceptable. Zoom access is a life-saver for overloaded workers, and it's become a normal part of university life: it's absurd and outright cruel to deny it to us as union members: Let Zoom in the Room!"

4/24/24

Dear Member,

Here is the latest on the 24-27 FSU contract negotiations. ***Don't forget to register to attend the May 1st bargaining session (see [attached flyer](#) for more information).***

Where Are We Currently?

- FSU bargaining team has met with management twice (Feb. 26 & April 8). Both meetings were focused on concerns about modality/scheduling for this negotiations season. **Unfortunately, despite the fact that both teams have submitted a set of substantive proposals, negotiations have been stuck talking about zoom instead of the important issues that matter to faculty and librarians.**
 - See FSU Proposals [HERE](#)
 - See Management Proposals [HERE](#)

What Is the Issue?

- At the center of our disagreement with management is whether bargaining should be **completely in-person** or whether there should be a **zoom option for members of either team who cannot attend in-person**.
- This disagreement already represents a compromise for the union. FSU originally requested that negotiations be conducted completely on zoom (for reasons of inclusion, transparency, scheduling, and convenience). We met with management and they explained why they believe in-person negotiations are beneficial. The union listened, took their concerns into account, and revised our position. From this we agreed to hold negotiations in-person, with one request - that core bargaining team members who have an occasional conflict (from either side), as well as silent bargaining representatives (who do not participate in the back-and-forth at the table), be able to attend via zoom. This would allow full team participation despite scheduling difficulties and still ensure a primarily in-person process management desires.
- Management has so far refused to accept this modest request for a zoom option.

Why Does This Matter?

- *What management says:* both teams agreed to [ground rules](#) in the last negotiation session that stated bargaining would take place "on campus" unless, via "mutual agreement," the parties determined to meet on zoom.
- *What FSU says:* expanded bargaining is about building a democratic union that centers member voices and concerns. The refusal to allow a hybrid option necessarily excludes many members, either as part of our core team or as silent representatives. Faculty and librarians have diverse work schedules, significant life responsibilities (child/elder care), and often live far from campus (often due to affordability issues). Each of these make participating in in-person bargaining difficult. A hybrid option, which has already proven successful (we used this format in our first two bargaining sessions with no problems) allows for a much more inclusive and democratic union and a transparent negotiation process. FSU wants to ensure that all faculty and librarians can participate in bargaining well into the future.

What's Next?

- If FSU is to continue our efforts to build a democratic and inclusive union, we need to fight for the opportunity for ALL our members to be able to participate in our work. This means **asking management to allow Zoom in the Room**.

- If you agree with this fight for a democratic union, please consider standing with your bargaining team and helping make our concerns known. You can:
 - **Write to our university leaders:** Ask them to allow a hybrid option for bargaining. This compromise would allow the FSU to exercise its right to build an inclusive union and show management's willingness to embrace the spirit of negotiations, a spirit the FSU bargaining team has already demonstrated in our engagement with management.
 - **Attend our next negotiation session:** The next bargaining session is **May 1, 1:00-2:30 pm**. Please consider coming to show your support and provide your feedback to the core bargaining team. You can sign up to attend either in person or on zoom by emailing fsu.bargaining@umb.edu at least 48 hours in advance of the session. (No need to attend the whole time—come when you can and leave when you have to; see [attached flyer](#) for more information).
 - **Talk to your colleagues!** Explain why this issue matters. Zoom in the room allows any faculty member or librarian to play a significant role in their union. It means that even those who do not have the time to fight traffic for an hour or more each way to get to campus and back home again, those who have to get a kid off the bus, those who may prefer to limit their exposure to indoor spaces, especially in places where there is no mask mandate, and those who may need technology support to participate, can all be part of the bargaining process.

Sincerely,

The FSU Core Bargaining Team

Caroline Coscia, Senior Lecturer II, Political Science
 Katie D'Urso, MTA Field Representative
 Ellen Frank, Senior Lecturer II, Economics
 Keith Jones, Lecturer, Africana Studies
 Maria Hegbloom, MTA Field Representative
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4/9/2024

Dear FSU Members,

We had a fantastic bargaining session yesterday. Over 20 of our members were present as part of our expanded bargaining team and we were pleasantly surprised to see that the Administration's bargaining team showed up after they said they would not be coming because a few of our members had to be on Zoom.

Unfortunately, the administration is still refusing to bargain over the issues and is continuing to waste time insisting that *no one* can ever be on Zoom.

The FSU has already agreed to bargain on campus and committed our team to making every effort to be there in-person. But some of our members for varied and entirely legitimate reasons may be unable to attend in-person and should be able to access the meeting with Zoom. This is 2024, not 2019, and quite frankly, we're not asking for a lot. Every day on campus we use Zoom to increase participation, accessibility, and inclusion, and that's all we want. Nevertheless, we argued with the admin team for 90 minutes about this, wasting valuable time that should be spent bargaining over substantive issues. The FSU bargaining team is ready and eager to negotiate.

What can you do to?

1. Join the Contract Action Team (CAT). The CAT's primary role is to strategize and organize. The next CAT meeting is on Friday at 1pm on Zoom. Email fsu.bargaining@umb.edu if you'd like to join in the fun.
2. Email the admin bargaining team directly and tell them to "Let Zoom in the Room." You'll see a template and their email addresses below.

Thanks for all your support,
The FSU Core Bargaining Team

Template email to Admin bargaining team:

Dear Administrative Bargaining Team,

The FSU is ready to begin bargaining. It is ridiculous that you are refusing to bargain because a few members need to be on Zoom. Please bargain now.

Sincerely,

Send the above to the following members of the Administrative Bargaining Team:

Sophie Coddington (Sophie.Coddington@umb.edu)

Mickey Gallagher (Mickey.Gallagher@umb.edu)

Adugna Lemi (Adugna.Lemi@umb.edu)

Denise McNair (Denise.McNair@umb.edu)

Anita Miller (Anita.Miller@umb.edu)

David Pantalone (David.Pantalone@umb.edu)

Stephanie Walker (Stephanie.Walker@umb.edu)

4/3/2024

Dear FSU Members,

Soooooooo...guess what? Admin is refusing to bargain with us because, even though we've agreed to meet them in-person, a few of us still need to be able to join via Zoom – and they won't permit it. Despite the fact that Administrators are working on a "3-2" schedule (meaning they are expected to be

on campus 3 days a week but can work from home the other two), Admin's bargaining team cannot tolerate that faculty and librarians might have obstacles to being on campus (E.g., some of us have two jobs or teach on two campuses; others of us have to pick up kids from daycare, care for elders, and/or face accessibility and transportation issues getting to and from campus).

Refusing a hybrid option is not only unreasonable in the post-Covid moment but also sets limits on the autonomy of our union. Admin is trying to dictate who can (and cannot) be on our team by rigidly refusing to negotiate because a few of us would be on Zoom. We have tried our best to accommodate their demand to meet in-person. Their lack of flexibility and understanding is not just out of touch with reality; it is also a blow to our union's right to determine the members of its own bargaining team. All we need is a tiny bit of flexibility on their part and we can start bargaining.

Please support bargaining and tell Admin this unproductive intransigence must stop!

Here are three easy ways to do this:

- Show up on Monday, April 8th, 1-2:30 p.m. for our first bargaining session with Admin. We will be there – please join us to see if *they* will be!
ROOM: Campus Center - 3540
ZOOM: Email fsu.bargaining@umb.edu to register.
- Please email Admin's bargaining team and tell them they are being unreasonable (email addresses and a template are below)
- Join FSU members at the Chancellor's Inauguration on Friday, April 5th as we support the Classified Staff Union in their action and hand out flyers demanding that the Administration bargain now with the FSU. We will meet on the first floor of Wheatley at 10:30am this Friday.

For those of you who like the fine print, we've included the details of this now-protracted dispute with Admin about bargaining modality below the email template.

Thanks for all your support,

The FSU Core Bargaining Team

Template email to Admin bargaining team:

Dear Administrative Bargaining Team,

The FSU is ready to begin bargaining. It is ridiculous that you are refusing to bargain because a few members need to be on Zoom. I expect that you will attend the first bargaining session scheduled (by mutual agreement) for April 8th at 1pm in CC 3540.

Sincerely,

Send the above to the following members of the Administrative Bargaining Team:

Sophie Coddington (Sophie.Coddington@umb.edu)
Mickey Gallagher (Mickey.Gallagher@umb.edu)
Adugna Lemi (Adugna.Lemi@umb.edu)
Denise McNair (Denise.McNair@umb.edu)
Anita Miller (Anita.Miller@umb.edu)
David Pantalone (David.Pantalone@umb.edu)
Stephanie Walker (Stephanie.Walker@umb.edu)

The Weeds; a.k.a. the Finer Points of the Modality Disagreement

For this contract negotiation, the Administration has been insisting that bargaining take place exclusively through in-person meetings. We agreed to this, saying that the vast majority of our core bargaining team will be physically present for every bargaining session – but we also want to maintain a hybrid option for both core team and expanded team members.

The origin of this dispute stems in part from different interpretations of an earlier agreement about the scheduling for this round of bargaining. The FSU and the administration agreed that bargaining sessions would take place on campus or on Zoom by mutual agreement. FSU made the agreement in good faith, believing that both sides would be able to work out scheduling so that all members from both teams could participate, and would recognize the complexities of organizing meetings with 17 negotiators. After a meeting earlier this semester to talk about scheduling, in which both teams had members participating on Zoom, the FSU agreed to bargain in-person with the understanding that a few of our members would have to participate on Zoom. The administration, however, took the position that bargaining must be exclusively in-person and that *no one* can ever attend via Zoom. In addition to making it impossible to find times that work for everyone to be there in-person, their insistence excludes members of our expanded team who simply watch the sessions as silent observers (and can do this more easily via Zoom as they cannot be seen or heard), and occasional members of our core team who, for a variety of legitimate reasons, cannot always be on campus.

The FSU is committed to an open, transparent, and democratic bargaining process in which all our members can participate as part of our expanded team. For this, a Zoom option is essential.