

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](mailto: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

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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](mailto:Sophie.Coddington@umb.edu))

Mickey Gallagher ([Mickey.Gallagher@umb.edu](mailto:Mickey.Gallagher@umb.edu))

Adugna Lemi ([Adugna.Lemi@umb.edu](mailto:Adugna.Lemi@umb.edu))

Denise McNair ([Denise.McNair@umb.edu](mailto:Denise.McNair@umb.edu))

Anita Miller ([Anita.Miller@umb.edu](mailto:Anita.Miller@umb.edu))

David Pantalone ([David.Pantalone@umb.edu](mailto:David.Pantalone@umb.edu))  
Stephanie Walker ([Stephanie.Walker@umb.edu](mailto: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 8<sup>th</sup>, 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](mailto: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 5<sup>th</sup> 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  
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**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 8<sup>th</sup> at 1pm in CC 3540.

Sincerely,

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

Sophie Coddington ([Sophie.Coddington@umb.edu](mailto:Sophie.Coddington@umb.edu))

Mickey Gallagher ([Mickey.Gallagher@umb.edu](mailto:Mickey.Gallagher@umb.edu))

Adugna Lemi ([Adugna.Lemi@umb.edu](mailto:Adugna.Lemi@umb.edu))

Denise McNair ([Denise.McNair@umb.edu](mailto:Denise.McNair@umb.edu))

Anita Miller ([Anita.Miller@umb.edu](mailto:Anita.Miller@umb.edu))

David Pantalone ([David.Pantalone@umb.edu](mailto:David.Pantalone@umb.edu))

Stephanie Walker ([Stephanie.Walker@umb.edu](mailto: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.