

# FACULTY STAFF UNION

## February Newsletter



- **TENURE DENIAL  
REVERSED**
- **MEMBERSHIP DRIVE**
- **THREATS TO  
ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

## We are stronger together!

The FSU has been working hard to support members through contract violations, filing grievances when the administration does not follow due process in promotion files, and growing union power through a membership drive, among many other activities. Learn about it here!

## Solidarity with PSU

PSU is still fighting for a fair contract. FSU members joined their picket on Feb. 4.

## Solidarity with Minnesota

Labor unions have been a key force of the movement in MN. For ways you can support, see Stand with Minnesota: [www.standwithminnesota.com/](http://www.standwithminnesota.com/).

Your priorities matter. Become a member and join the fight to better conditions for strong research support, academic freedom, shared governance on campus, and more! What do YOU want your union do fight for?

**Join the union!**  
Send [this form](#) to [fsu@umb.edu](mailto:fsu@umb.edu)



**Not sure if you're a member?**

**Contact us and ask!**

[www.fsu.umb.edu](http://www.fsu.umb.edu)

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## Spotlight: Tenure Denial Reversed

This story illustrates at least two things: the university's willingness to compromise academic freedom and apparent **discrimination** in dealing with promotion files, and the FSU/MTA's strength and ability to fight back. A grievance process launched in support of a member was successful in **reversing a wrongful tenure denial.**

**This is a huge victory of our union.** Two individuals from that member's department wrote "Dissenting Opinion" letters that got attached to the tenure file outside of protocol. Despite 21 out of 23 official faculty reviewers across the university having considered the scholarship strong enough to meet criteria for promotion, the Provost decided to deny tenure to the member. Five months later, thanks to the hard work of the FSU/MTA and the member, the decision was reversed. **This is also a victory for Palestinian, Black and Indigenous knowledges.** The letters referred to a racist trope often used to delegitimize the work of historically marginalized scholars. We will not stand for such overt mishandlings of the tenure process. We will continue to protect the high quality and standards of research of our institution.

# Headlines

## ANTI-RACISM GRANT

50K USD were awarded to 7 different **anti-racist projects** on campus, from readings groups to conferences.

## MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

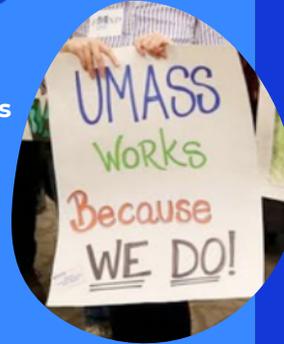
We have been reaching out to non-members to hear about your concerns and how things are going. **Your voice and your priorities matter!** More members mean more union power.

## INTERNATIONAL FACULTY AND STAFF SUPPORT

This year two info sessions were held with Joe Berger about **H1-B visas** and international employees' safety. Email [suisui.wang@umb.edu](mailto:suisui.wang@umb.edu) to join the **international faculty and staff listserv** or access Q&A minutes. Everyone welcome.

## PARENTAL LEAVE SUPPORT

Make sure your contract is respected! More info on parental leave visit [our website](#).



## Spotlight: FOIA Fumble

The UMB admin made a series of mistakes, ignoring requests for transparency, when dealing with a recent **public records request** targeting a faculty member. Most damning, the university turned over emails that included information not subject to public records law, including **private email addresses of the member, student information, and more.** Only after the FSU insisted did the university send a legal notice to the requestor that forbade the use of those parts of the records. The member, with the signed support of around 30 faculty members, filed a grievance alleging **violation of the Academic Freedom** article of the contract (Article 8). The FSU tried to negotiate a new policy around public records requests that would allow members to see the records in advance of them being sent to requestors to ensure compliance with labor law and to protect our academic freedom. This was not accepted; the grievance is ongoing. The MTA filed an **unfair labor practice charge** on behalf of the member and the FSU alleging violation of the union's rights under state law to be engaged in good faith efforts on this matter. We as a union will continue to demand transparency and prompt notification of members when receiving public records requests.