



Here's the Latest in Bargaining

Another week of bargaining is in the books. Monday morning started with the Administration's Team finishing their presentation of their 11-article package. UNAC followed up by rejecting the package and presenting our own new package of 5 articles (see below for details). The Administration's Team responded on Tuesday by rejecting UNAC's 5-article package. They then presented a new package of all 11 remaining articles (see below for details).

NOTICE:

Post-Doctoral Fellows are Faculty, Not Students

Throughout the bargaining discussions about whether post-doctoral fellows and visiting professors belong in the bargaining unit as of their first day of employment, the Administration's Team has repeatedly, incorrectly, and insultingly referred to post-doctoral fellows as "practically students." Their negotiation team insists that these faculty members who hold PhDs are more like students than faculty, so they should not have a workload or be subject to the salary minimums, wage increases, or termination notification timelines laid out in the CBA.

UNAC's Negotiation Team finds this logic disturbing and unacceptable, and thinks our post-doctoral fellows deserve an apology for the disrespectful verbiage from the Administration's Team. Post-doctoral fellows are not students. Post-doctoral fellows are members of the faculty starting out their careers, with at least equivalent training to most new assistant professors.

UNAC's Package of Articles We Thought Both Teams Could Agree To

On Monday morning, we presented a **package of Articles 1, 2, 3, 6, 10**. The UNAC Team viewed these as the five articles both teams were closest to agreement on. We had hoped to TA these five articles on Tuesday, but, as explained later in this update, that didn't happen.

Highlights from our Package:

- **We conceded the land acknowledgement;** it was not a mandatory subject of bargaining and the Administration's Team refused to bargain it, so continuing to push it would have been problematic for UNAC. We are planning other avenues for UA to honor Alaska's Native Peoples and confront systemic racism and discrimination faced by our Alaska Native faculty members. We had hoped the land acknowledgement would be an easily agreed upon item, but we are determined to pursue new avenues beyond land acknowledgements to promote real change.
- **We refused their language about conflicts of interest surrounding UNAC members and shared governance roles,** but we added language in Article 6 stating that UNAC members will adhere to the BOR's conflict of interest policy. This language was accepted by the administration's team on Tuesday, but as part of a package that included furloughs and minimal wage increases that UNAC cannot accept.
- **We refused their language adding furloughs;** they brought it back the next day. Furloughs, as UA proposes them, could be implemented at the individual, unit, department, college, MAU or system level at the sole discretion of administration, with appeal only on an individual basis to the UA Chief Human Resources Office for extreme financial hardship. Shockingly, these were presented as something faculty should be happy about, with the following reasoning from UA: Faculty should be happy about furloughs, despite working for the past five years with only one 1% raise paired with steep inflation, because furloughs are an alternative to program cuts.

The alternative to program cuts should not be furloughs; it should be re-investment in academics and RE-INVESTMENT IN FACULTY. An excellent faculty drives enrollment.

It's time for faculty to be a priority. It's NOT time to furlough faculty who have persevered through all of the challenges presented by Covid-19, with more work expected every year as staff numbers also decline, and with only one 1% raise and no step increases during the past five years. The furlough proposal was a disappointing development.

**Faculty Working Conditions
Are
Student Learning Conditions**

**The Administration Team's New Package:
All Remaining 11 Articles... Again**

Please review our [Bargaining Update from 2/7 & 2/8](#) for the most recent list of UNAC's requests, nearly all of which were summarily dismissed in the Administration's latest package proposal.

The Administration's Team believes that UNAC faculty members should be pleased with their most recent package proposal (draft confidential). They made a handful of concessions that they believe will bring both teams to agreement:

For their 'gives,' several of the items they listed at the table are wording clarifications:

- department chair = department chair/program coordinator
- splitting up regular disciplinary investigations from research inquiries
- Offices and office technology will be assigned in a fair and non-discriminatory manner
- UA administration will (unilaterally) send notification of health emergencies and university plans to all faculty

Or existing language in the CBA:

- continued professional development funding
- Appendix A on pre-disciplinary processes will be incorporated in Article 11 on Discipline.

Highlights of the Administration Team's "Gives" to UNAC Faculty

The Administration's Team thinks UNAC members—each of you receiving this email— will be ready to ratify a contract with the following compromises from the Administration's Team.

Would YOU be willing to ratify a contract with the following changes?

Resolution of Unit Definition

While the Administration's Team agreed to follow the already-legally-settled unit definition for UNAC, which includes all post-doctoral fellows and all visiting professors, they continued to deny these faculty members many of the most important rights in the **CBA**: Article 9 (Faculty Status: Appointment, Evaluation, Promotion, Tenure, and Termination), Article 13 (Workloads), and Article 15 (Compensation).

Improvements to the Promotion Processes for Non-Tenure-Track (NTT/Term) Faculty but NO commitment to multi-year contracts

While they agreed to provide equitable promotion withdrawal timelines and appeal processes for our NTT faculty members, as well as the deletion of language limiting promotion to those who have held their current rank for a minimum of five years, the Administration's Team refused to include a systematic process for granting all long-term NTT faculty members multi-year contracts.

Furloughs as a Potential Alternative to Terminations and Reductions and in Programs

Based on table discussion and table notes:

- Furloughs could be instituted at any level, from the individual to system-wide
- There is no maximum length of potential furloughs
- Furloughs would be determined entirely by administrators, with no established criteria except:
 - Furloughs could be initiated due to current or prospective budget shortfalls
 - Budget shortfalls are defined in BOR policy as current or projected expenses exceeding revenues, all of which are controlled by administration

2% Annual Salary Increase per Year

First, we acknowledge that 2% is better than no raise. However, we are wary that a 2% annual raise will easily be MORE than canceled out by the above-mentioned furloughs combined with a quickly rising cost of living.

UNAC proposed 3% per year or, if higher, the current Consumer Price Index for urban Alaska, which measures inflation and was 7% for 2021. UNAC members' first annual across-the-board raise under UNAC's proposal would be approximately 7%. We are willing to compromise, but 2% plus furloughs doesn't make the bar.

“Took away Restrictions” on Education Benefits by Moving to BOR Policy

Removing the details of the educational benefits from the CBA may seem inconsequential since it currently mirrors BOR policy. However, deletion of benefit details from the CBA could pave the way for unwanted administrative changes to BOR policy on education benefits. Currently, this benefit provides tuition waivers for all faculty members, their dependents, and spouses.

The deleted restrictions referred to by the Administration's Team as a 'gain for UNAC' is a six-month waiting period before education benefits apply, which does not exist in BOR policy. UNAC would be happy to remove that 6-month restriction, but we do not want to remove the detailed description of members' education benefits from the CBA language. Keeping the educational benefits spelled out in the CBA ensures that the benefits can't disappear through the BOR policy revision process.

Where We Go from Here

It will be three weeks until our next bargaining session due to scheduling conflicts and spring break. During this time, UNAC's Negotiation Team will prepare our response to the administration's package proposal. Our next sessions will be March 14 and 15.

Right now is the perfect time for each of you to help shape our next moves by letting us (and them!) know what you think of the above proposals from the administration's team.

- UNAC Negotiation Team contact info below (bottom of email)
- Administration Contacts:
 - lead negotiator, **David Eisenberg**
 - **Interim-President Pitney**
 - Board of Regents: **This link** will give you the regents' individual email addresses. Use those addresses to write the BOR, rather than the generic BOR email address.

In addition, start writing letters to the editor of your local newspaper about bargaining. Start a petition and get your colleagues to sign in. Talk to your colleagues and supervisors about bargaining, and what's at stake.

NEXT BARGAINING SESSIONS

- Monday, March 14 and Tuesday, March 15
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Zoom bomber Fun

Tuesday morning's start was delayed by 45 minutes by request of the administration's team. Meanwhile, some Zoom Bombers found their way into the room and started having fun with the audio, the share-screen, and the white board.

To those of you who witnessed the shenanigans, we hope it provided some comic relief. The Administration's Team sets up the Zoom links for bargaining and had been using the same link since August. They have now changed it and, we hope, will begin to change it more frequently. Be sure to check for UNAC's email on bargaining mornings to locate the correct Zoom link.

UNAC NEGOTIATION TEAM CONTACTS

Lead Negotiator - [Tony Rickard](#), Ph.D. UAF
tony.rickard@unac4996ak.com

President - [Abel Bult-Ito](#), PhD
abel.bult.ito@unac4996ak.com

UAA Representative - [Tara Palmer](#)
tara.palmer@unac4996ak.com

UAS Representative - [Jill Dumesnil](#), PhD
jill.dumesnil@unac4996ak.com

UAF Representative - [Kris Racina](#)
kris.racina@unac4996ak.com

Extended Sites Representative - [Andy Anger](#) (UAF CTC)
andy.anger@unac4996ak.com

Contract Manager - [Melanie Arthur](#), Ph.D.
melanie.arthur@unac4996ak.com

Assistant Contract Manager - [Kate Quick](#), MFA
kate.quick@unac4996ak.com

[United Academics Local #4996](#) (UNAC) is the bargaining unit that represents all non-adjunct, full-time faculty at the University of Alaska. UNAC is an affiliate of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

[Visit our Website](#)

United Academics AAUP/AFT | P.O. Box 755895, Fairbanks, AK 99775-5895

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