



Negotiations Update: 4/18/22 and 4/19/22

HELP YOUR BARGAINING TEAM

Letter Writing Campaigns

Your Furlough Letters Worked!

THANK YOU to those of you who stepped up and sent a letter using the Action Network, a platform managed by our national affiliate, AFT. You helped get the administration's team to back off from the threat of furloughs.

As discussed in our [update for 4/11 & 4/12](#), the [most recent proposal \(Article 10\)](#) from the administration's team had no mechanism for implementing furloughs but did mention them in the limited context of program closures or reductions. While we still cannot agree to including the word 'furlough' in the CBA, we appreciate the significant movement and owe it to the faculty members who participated in our letter campaign.

This week we countered [Article 10](#) by revising the administration team's wording to omit the word 'furlough' and moving it to section 10.1. Our counter adds a commitment to meet and confer on alternatives for bargaining unit members when their jobs are threatened due to program reduction or elimination.

This proposal supports collaborative work between management and UNAC to the benefit of our members and does not commit to any particular measures. We want to ensure the University honors its commitment to our members just as much as we honor our commitment to the academic mission of our universities.

A New Letter Campaign - Compensation Improvements

Now, we have a [new letter campaign](#) focused on getting some improvements to the administration team's compensation proposals. Dues paying members received an email specifically about the compensation letter campaign, and now we encourage everyone to participate and to pass the [letter campaign link](#) along to colleagues and friends. Let's send them hundreds of letters about the need for real compensation improvements after six years with only a single 1% raise and skyrocketing inflation!

Other Actions

- Write your own letters to [members of the BOR](#) and [President Pitney](#) related to bargaining issues of concern to you.

- Plan a local sign-waving event or informational picket with colleagues at your worksite or MAU. Contact your Org VP and/or office staff for guidance and help publicizing
 - The BOR meets in person at UAA on June 2!
- Wear red on Mondays and for your finals. If you have a UNAC shirt, wear that. If you want a UNAC shirt, contact your Org VP and/or UNAC staff for help getting one. (UNAC gear for dues paying members only)
- Use our [Zoom profile pictures](#) when attending bargaining and other work meetings
- Share our social media posts: [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)
- Contribute [your own testimony](#) to our social media campaign

Summary of Events

Compensation Proposals

Across the Board Salary Adjustments

UNAC has proposed:

- Annual 3% increases or the current consumer price index, up to 5% for AY23, 7% in AY24, and 6% in AY25, whichever is higher.
- Annual lump sums of \$1,000 added to base salary each academic year.

We're proposing these increases because it's time to start making up for faculty members' lost purchasing power. ([UNAC-15.4.1.a-b](#))

The administration's team has presented Article 15 four times, in four different packages, with their only change being a 3% increase to salary minimums. They continue to propose:

- Annual 2% annual salary increases and nothing else.
- An explicit threat to each year's 2% adjustment, by adding a legislative appropriation deadline of July 1, stating that "*no retroactive salary adjustments shall be made if appropriation fails to occur before the respective effective dates.*"

The UA administration team's proposal as written would mean the likelihood of no increases in AY23 and only 2% increases in AY24 and AY25 *if* the legislature and governor all approve funding before July 1. If not, the raises to faculty would vanish. ([Admin-Article 15.4.1](#))

Minimum Salaries

UNAC continues to propose:

- Substantial (but reduced from original proposal) increases to the minimum salaries for all of our members, including new hires ([UNAC-Article 15.2](#)).

It's been six years since these numbers were increased, and costs during that time have risen substantially. To stay competitive with our peer institutions, we must offer competitive salaries.

The administration's team has countered our proposal:

- Increases salary minimums by 3% ([admin-Article 15.2](#)).

Market Increases

UNAC's team:

- Reduced the amount of money we're requesting be set aside for market adjustments
- continues to argue for completion of this project, along with a total of \$9M for market adjustments in subsequent years ([UNAC Article 15.4.4.1](#)).

Our analysis shows that if the salary minimums are raised to our proposed amounts, there will be less need for market adjustments. However, we realize that the market adjustments promised to some faculty several years ago have still not been fully implemented.

The administration's team:

- Continues to include vague language stating that "*the University may distribute market increases*" in AY24 and AY25 "*if funds are made available.*" (Admin Article 15.4.4)

Given that they use this exact language to get out of completing the UA Market Compensation Project, we understand that they are not committed to market increases for faculty during this contract.

Equity Increases

UNAC's team:

- Knows that some faculty are paid inequitably compared to their counterparts with analogous experience, credentials, and productivity.
- Proposed an equity-labor-management-committee with a pool of \$1 million to address equity problems within our own membership ([UNAC Article 15.4.3](#)).

The administration's team:

- Continues to propose current language that gives administration sole discretion over equity increases with no commitment to provide these increases at all ([Admin Article 15.4.3](#)).

Benefits Proposals

UNAC Sick Leave Bank

Former UAFT members will recall the UAFT Sick Leave Bank. That bank was transferred to UNAC during the merger and our office has gotten quarterly statements on the bank since 2018, which show \$1.6M in available sick leave. This bank hasn't been used very much since the merger because a transparent method of using funds has not been established between HR and UNAC.

Our bargaining team proposes to insert the old UAFT language detailing what the funds can be used for and how/when the bank can receive future sick leave donations in order to use this bank to benefit our members ([UNAC-Article 16.8](#)). Notably, management's team agrees to include this language, but does not want to include the possibility of resuming future contributions ([Admin-Article 16.8](#)).

UNAC's bargaining team has also proposed a new use for the bank: paid parental leave.

The administration's team cites an IRS ruling from before the Family Medical Leave Act was passed in 1996 that could lead to double-taxation on any donated sick leave used for parental leave. It's a complicated issue and it may prove impossible to use our Bank for paid parental leave.

However, our most recent proposal calls for the formation of a labor-management

committee to study solutions to the long-standing problem of unpaid parental leave for all UA employees. UNAC is ready to work together with the administration to find a path for providing our members, and potentially all UA employees, with paid parental leave.

Pension Plan Contributions

UNAC's bargaining team has proposed:

- A stepped increase to the maximum amount of salary that UA bases retirement contributions on.

Currently, UA makes contributions to our pension plan accounts based on the employees' first \$42,000 in annual earnings; if we paid into the social security system instead of the pension program, UA would be required to make contributions on the first \$147,000 in earnings. This is a big leap, which is why our team has proposed a gradual increase in the UA contribution cap ([UNAC Article 16.2](#)).

The administration's team proposes:

- Keeping their employer contribution levels at the current rate, which has been [the same since 1986](#) and is based on a salary cap that is over \$100,000 lower than the current social security employer contribution salary cap ([Admin Article 16.2](#)).
- UNAC bargaining unit members already make retirement contributions on our full salaries, whether to the TRS system or ORP account for employee contributions, and UA should too.

The fact is that this increase is essential to the well-being of UNAC faculty and all UA employees after retirement. If faculty paid into social security instead of the UA pension plans, employer contributions for most faculty would be much higher. This weakness in our UA retirement plan was recognized several years ago by external consultants that UA hired to evaluate our total compensation (i.e., salaries plus benefits).

[HB 220](#) is currently moving through Alaska's legislative committees and seeks similar solutions to public employee retirement contributions.

Significant Remaining Non-Monetary Differences

Multi-Year Contracts for Non-Tenure Track Faculty

UNAC's bargaining team:

- Continues to push for a systematic approach to offering multi-year contracts to non-tenure track faculty (formerly 'term faculty') after three years of continuous employment through single-year contracts at UA.
- We believe that after three years of employment, these faculty members deserve the stability and job security provided by multi-year contracts ([UNAC-Article 9.1.3](#)).

The administration's team:

- Continues to assert that they need flexibility with these appointments.
- They are willing to place the burden of these uncertain times squarely on the shoulders of hundreds of our non-tenure track faculty, who make up $\frac{1}{3}$ of our bargaining unit ([Admin-Article 9.1.3](#)).

Contents of Promotion Files:

UNAC's team:

- Continues to assert that consideration of student evaluations should be left to the discretion of each unit. The biased, discriminatory nature of student evaluations is widely documented to negatively affect student ratings of professors who are female, not white, and/or teaching difficult subject matter.

- Wants to leave the inclusion of external evaluation letters to the discretion of each unit because these letters may not be appropriate for faculty in every program throughout the system ([UNAC-Article 9.2.3.a](#); [9.2.4.a](#); [9.2.5.a](#); [9.2.6](#)).

UNAC faculty members can always include student evaluations and/or external letters in their review materials if they want to, even if not required.

The administration's team:

Continues to argue for the inclusion of student evaluations and external review letters for all bargaining unit members ([Admin-Article 9.2.3.a](#); [9.2.4.a](#); [9.2.5.a](#); [9.2.6](#)).

Non-Renewal Notice Dates for Non-Tenure Track Faculty Members

UNAC's team:

- Continues to push for improved notice of non-renewal for our non-tenure track members to match the notification timelines for tenure track bargaining unit members ([UNAC-Article 9.4.2.a-c](#)).

The administration's team:

- Continues to push for the current, short notification timeline for non-renewal of non-tenure track members ([Admin-Article 9.4.2.a-c](#))

Adding Indigenous People's Day to Paid Holidays

The UNAC team has proposed:

- Adding Indigenous People's Day (second Monday of October) to the list of paid holidays beginning in AY25 to allow for advanced planning of the academic calendar. ([UNAC16.4.a](#)).
- To avoid increasing the number of paid holidays, we suggested removing the extra day before or after July 4.

The administration's team:

- Continues to argue against this change ([Admin-16.4.a](#)).

What's Next

Watch for the morning emails inviting you to join the Zoom audience for our last two bargaining sessions before President Pitney's April timeline for reaching agreement is missed.

The last currently scheduled sessions are from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 pm. on:

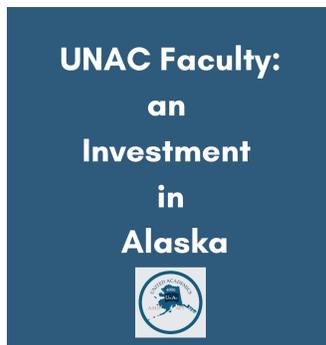
- Monday, April 24
- Tuesday, April 25

If no agreement is reached by the end of bargaining on Tuesday, April 25, our team will update bargaining unit members on next steps. The United Academics bargaining team will continue bargaining for as long as it takes to reach a fair and competitive contract. Help us get there by participating in the actions listed at the top of this update.

Faculty Working Conditions are Student Learning Conditions



Zoom and Social Media Graphics



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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](#)

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