

July 17, 2017

Dear United Academics Colleague,

Your United Academics negotiation team has reached tentative agreement with the University of Alaska on a new collective bargaining agreement. As you may recall, reaching agreement with UA comes after 9 months of negotiations, impasse, and then working with a federal mediator, all of which was preceded by months of UNAC preparation.

Informal agreement for the new CBA was reached by UNAC and UA on June 27, after two days of work with a federal mediator. Tentative agreement was finalized on July 11, and the UNAC Representative Assembly approved the new CBA on July 14, 2017.

The new UA/UNAC CBA is not ideal for our members, but it is reasonable. We also believe that it is the best agreement we could get for our membership given the very challenging budget climate for UA and Alaska. The new CBA, upon approval by the UNAC membership and the UA Board of Regents, replaces our expired CBA and will be in effect until the end of December 2019. An overview of the substantive changes in the new CBA follows.

FIRST, THE BAD NEWS: There will be no across-the-board raises for the three years of the CBA. Market salary increases to base salaries for those members below market benchmarks are possible in the second and third year, but these will be at the discretion of UA in terms of whether any funds are available. If funds are available, UA and UNAC will work together to determine a procedure to distribute market salary increases to UNAC members who are below market. Also, minimum compensation for overloads and summer teaching assignments remain unchanged.

NOW, SOME GOOD NEWS: Prior to reaching impasse in late March, your UNAC team had reached tentative agreement with UA on 16 of the 23 Articles of our CBA. Highlights of the substantive changes include explicit recognition of the value of non tenure-track (NTT) UNAC members throughout the CBA; an improved complaint process (Article 7); explicit recognition of UNAC members' prioritization for "teach outs" for a cancelled academic program (Article 10); clarification of "just cause" and progressive discipline, including a new UA/UNAC MOA (Article 11); clarification of external and internal processes that can be utilized in cases of discrimination (Article 17).

AND MORE GOOD NEWS: During the June 26-27 mediation, UA and UNAC focused only on the 7 Articles for which we had not already reached tentative agreement. Of these, there are substantive changes in 4 Articles.

Article 9: Faculty Status. All non-tenure track (NTT) UNAC members may apply for promotion provided she/he has been in rank for five years. Moreover, there will be a NTT voting member on all unit peer review and university-wide peer review committees for NTT promotions.

Article 13: Workload. This Article now includes improved and clarifying language for workload components, including professional development.

Article 15: Compensation. This Article includes higher minimum salaries, dept. chair stipends, merit bonuses, and the new Regent professor title with a \$10K award. The Article also includes \$300K per year (for three years) for UNAC members' professional development. In addition, UA will provide a Faculty Initiative Fund for our members, administered by the Statewide Academic Committee, which will distribute \$1 million over the three-year agreement in support of innovative research and creative work by our members, including as seed money for external grants/contracts.

Article 16: Personnel Benefits. Recall that all UNAC members receive 15 days of Faculty Time Off (FTO) each year, including 3 days of mandatory closure during the winter break. After January 1 of each year of the agreement, UNAC members will be able to cash out up to 1 week (i.e., 5 days or 40 hours) of unused FTO per year, provided the member has already utilized and documented 5 days of FTO (including the 3 mandatory closure days). If a UNAC member cashes out 5 days (40 hours) of unused FTO, this amounts to an additional 2.5% of base salary. Of course, some UNAC members may decide to use all of their FTO and not cash any out, or cash out fewer than 5 days.

NEXT STEPS. Our UNAC membership must vote to accept the new UA/UNAC CBA as part of the ratification process. UNAC will soon provide voting members with the full CBA and the voting procedure and timeline. Your United Academics negotiation team and your Representative Assembly recommend approval of the UA/UNAC CBA. Upon approval by our membership, the CBA will then go to the UA Board of Regents for their approval and then the new agreement will be ratified.

Thank you for supporting your union and the negotiation process.

In solidarity,

Tony Rickard.