



Union of Part-Time Faculty at Wayne State University

UPTF / AFT, AFL-CIO

Volume 1, Issue 2

November 2007

First membership meeting a success

At Oct. 19 gathering, members share thoughts, ideas about first contract campaign

By Amanda Hiber
UPTF Member

On Friday, October 19, UPTF members gathered at Hannan House for our first membership meeting. After some mingling and snacking, the meeting got underway at approximately 3:20 p.m., with an introduction by the UPTF's new staff organizer, Bryan Pfeifer.

Thomas Anderson of the Bargaining Committee delivered a presentation of the results of the recent Bargaining Survey. One notable figure from the survey is that 39 percent of respondents have taught at WSU for more than 16 semesters. This number defies the labeling of adjuncts as a transient workforce. In fact, as Anderson put it in his presentation (crediting member Rayfield Waller), adjuncts are *intermittent* rather than transient.

Survey respondents were split down the middle in terms of having a non-teaching job: 50 percent of respondents do, and 50 percent do not. This challenges another outdated assumption, that all part-time faculty have other full-time jobs and only teach "on the side." In fact, a great number of part-time faculty



UPTF member Susan Titus speaking

piece together a full-time living by teaching part-time at several colleges, including WSU. In addition, responses to survey questions regarding salary, raises, and benefits were reported.

After the bargaining presentation, members raised questions and made suggestions regarding bargaining issues and strategies. The Bargaining Committee begins formal negotiations with the WSU administration November 16.

Following the bargaining discussion, Dorothy Duensing gave testimony about her abrupt dismissal from WSU's Music department early this semester. (For details on Duensing's

story, see the October 2007 UPTF Newsletter.)

In the last part of the meeting, member and Labor Studies instructor Bill Bryce discussed the importance of member participation and activism, recounting his own experiences as an adjunct and union activist. Members were invited to sign up for UPTF committees, including the Communications Committee and Bargaining Committee. Bryce also announced the details of the informational demonstration to be held November 15 at noon at Gullen Mall, to kick off bargaining.

Member Amanda

Hiber announced that election of officers would take place online, after members had a chance to learn about the nominees, and make their own nominations, if desired. An overview of the duties of each officer was presented, along with current nominees: Susan Titus (Social Work) for President; Rayfield Waller (Africana Studies) for Vice President; Karin Tarpinning (Romance Languages) for Secretary; Nancy Shattuck (English) for Treasurer. An overview of the voting procedure for these elections was presented.

Concluding the meeting, member Susan Titus presented the Organizing Committee's draft Constitution. Members were encouraged to look over the draft, ask questions, and make suggestions. The voting process

UPTF

**Informational
Demonstration**

**Nov. 15, Noon
Gullen Mall**



A Union of Professionals



Momentum Builds For Nov. 15 UPTF Demonstration

By UPTF Communications
Committee

As the UPTF moves closer to its November 15 Informational Demonstration that kicks off the start of bargaining, momentum is building. The union office at 51 W. Hancock is buzzing with activity. Volunteers come and go, spending a couple hours at a time making phone calls to members and collecting leaflets to distribute around campus.

Meanwhile, Organizing Committee members have been contacting labor, community and student organizations, building support. Already there are a number of speakers slated for the Nov. 15 demonstration, including representatives from the Metro Detroit AFL-CIO, AFT Michigan, Interfaith Coalition on Worker Justice, Michigan Emergency Committee against War and Injustice (MECAWI), Graduate Employee Union (GEU) at Michigan State University, Wayne State Graduate Employees Organization (GEO), AAUP-AFT, and Students for a Democratic Society (SDS).

The Informational Demonstration will take place at Gullen Mall at Noon.

"This demonstration will show the broad support for our union on campus and in the larger community. Part-time faculty are absolutely crucial to this university's operation, like all campus workers. It's time the administration compensated us for the indispensable work we do," said Amanda Hiber, UPTF member.

The UPTF begins bargaining for our first union contract with the WSU administration on Friday, November 16.

Members are encouraged to wear their UPTF buttons during the week of bargaining. If you are in need of a button, call the UPTF office or stop by and pick one up.

If you would like to help plan or prepare for the November 15 demonstration, call the UPTF office! Volunteers are needed to distribute flyers and buttons and make phone calls.

There will also be a work session, November 14, from Noon to 7 p.m., to prepare for the demonstration. Please come for as long as you can and help us get ready for our demonstration before bargaining gets underway! Δ

The union is you!



UPTF member Bill Bryce speaking

More Photos from Oct. 19 Membership Meeting



UPTF member Dorothy Duensing speaking



Resolution of Support for UPTF

The UPTF recently received the following resolution of support from the Graduate Employees Union (GEU) at Michigan State:

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT OF UPTF/AFT

WHEREAS, the Graduate Employees Union (GEU), Local 6196, AFT-Michigan, AFL-CIO, represents more than 1,200 Teaching Assistants at Michigan State University; and

WHEREAS, part-time faculty currently constitute about 43 percent of the nation's higher education teaching force and teach many thousands of students enrolled in our colleges and universities, with the number constantly increasing; and

WHEREAS, part-time faculty often teach the same courses as full-time faculty; and

WHEREAS, the majority of part-time faculty earn between one-fourth and one-half of the wages of a full-time faculty member on a per-class basis, often earning less than \$2,000 to teach an entire course; and

WHEREAS, part-time faculty generally are either compensated poorly, or not at all, for advising students or working with their colleagues on academic matters; and

WHEREAS, a great number of part-time faculty have no health care or retirement benefits; and

WHEREAS, many part-time faculty are denied unemployment benefits during the summer and other times of unemployment; and

WHEREAS, the excessive reliance on part-time faculty threatens a basic principle of educational quality, namely, that a corps of full-time permanent tenured faculty should be in charge of the academic curriculum and teaching most of it; and

WHEREAS, many AFT locals and state federations have made the issue of equal pay (and benefits) for part-time faculty a priority in their legislative and bargaining agendas; and

WHEREAS, GEU supports the principle of equal pay for equal work for all workers; and

WHEREAS, access to a secure family wage, full-time job is an essential tenet of the AFL-CIO agenda for working families:

RESOLVED, that the GEU stands in solidarity with our brothers and sisters at UPTF/AFT, AFL-CIO at Wayne State University.

Be it resolved, the GEU calls on Wayne State University to negotiate a new contract with the UPTF/ AFT providing fair wages, just working conditions and health benefits to all employees.

Approved: GEU Stewards Council, October 23, 2007, East Lansing, MI Δ

Union of Part-Time Faculty / AFT, AFL-CIO

51 West Hancock Street, 4th Floor
Detroit, MI 48201

Staff Organizer: Bryan G. Pfeifer

Phone: 313-832-7902

Email: uptf@aftmichigan.org

UPTF Newsletter
Volume One, Number 2
November 2007

Produced by UPTF Communications Committee

All pictures in this edition by Rayfield Waller



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WSU Union of Part-Time Faculty
AFT, AFL-CIO
51 West Hancock Street, 4th Floor
Detroit, MI 48201

Phone: 313-832-7902

E-mail: uptf@aftmichigan.org

An injury to one is an injury to all!

www.aftmichigan.org

Addressee

Mailing Label

Informational Demonstration

Thursday, Nov. 15, 2007, Noon

Gullen Mall at Wayne State University

(Plaza near Student Center and
Undergraduate Library; north of Warren Ave.)

*Come join the UPTF and its campus community supporters
as the union launches the
bargaining of its first union contract with WSU*