

THE WESTERN UNION

UFWW Executive Board

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ONE YEAR AND NO AGREEMENT Bargaining update meeting set for January 31

One year ago this week, the UFWW Bargaining Team submitted the first full faculty contract proposal to the university administration. Since then, the Bargaining Team has held a number of negotiation sessions with the WWU administration, meeting as often as the scheduling priorities of the administration's legal counsel and bargaining team would allow.

These negotiations have been tough but usually constructive and have led to tentative agreements on a number of important topics. However, despite this progress, the WWU administration remains dug in on several key bargaining topics, including issues related to compensation and workload. In light of this entrenchment, the UFWW Bargaining Team has filed a request with the Public Employees Relations Council for assis-

tance from an outside mediator.

As we prepare to go into mediation, it is crucial that all members of the faculty have the facts about where the two sides stand on issues that affect working conditions for us all. Accordingly, the UFWW Executive Board has scheduled an all-faculty bargaining update meeting for **Thursday, January 31, 2008 in Arntzen Hall 100**. The meeting will **begin promptly at 4 pm and end at 5 pm**. The meeting will feature a presentation by members of the UFWW Bargaining Team who will provide details about the latest proposals offered by both the UFWW and the university administration.

Given the importance of the topic, your attendance is crucial. A strong faculty turnout will send a clear message to the university administration

that the faculty are paying close attention to the negotiations and are eager to see a fair agreement as soon as possible. Thus, in a very real sense, the level of faculty participation in this meeting is likely to have an impact on our working conditions and the likelihood of securing a competitive salary schedule.

It is important to note that faculty of all ranks, including those in tenure-track and non-tenure-track line, are strongly encouraged to attend, regardless of union membership. The meeting will be attended by members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee who have called for broad faculty participation.

If you have questions about the meeting, please contact Chief UFWW Steward, Steven Garfinkle at Steven.Garfinkle@wwu.edu or by phone at 650-3456.

All-Faculty Meeting

— Bargaining Update —

Day: Thursday, January 31, 2008

Time: 4 to 5 pm

Location: Arntzen Hall 100

Who should attend: All WWU tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track faculty

DUNSHEE RECEIVES UNION AWARD

On December 5, the UFWW announced that State Representative Hans Dunshee is the first recipient of the UFWW Distinguished Alumnus Award. Rep. Dunshee earned a MA in Political Science and Environmental Policy from Western. While Dunshee claims to have been a “mediocre student at best,” Political Science Chair, Sara Weir, who introduced Dunshee, reported that he always turned a critical eye to the readings assigned for classes and was eager to engage in debates that could shed new light on complex political issues.

This inquisitive and critical nature has served Dunshee well in his 12 years in the State Legislature where he has become a champion of higher education and environmental issues. He is currently a member of the House Appropriations Committee and

Chair of the House Capital Budget Committee, positions that place him in an important role in decisions related to funding for the state’s universities. Although President Morse did not attend the award ceremony, members of the university administration did have the opportunity, as did UFWW president Bill Lyne, to express their perspectives on these issues to Dunshee during his visit to campus.

In accepting the award, Dunshee thanked the union for our advocacy of increased state support for higher education. Addressing the faculty in attendance, Dunshee said, “You will make this institution better because you have organized. Service from the Fire Department didn’t get better because we bought them new equipment; it got better because the firefighters organized.”



State Representative, Hans Dunshee (left) receives the UFWW Distinguished Alumnus Award from union president Bill Lyne.

THEY CATCH ‘EM, WE CLEAN ‘EM AND COOK ‘EM

BY BILL LYNE, UFWW PRESIDENT

One of the many beautiful things about collective bargaining is that roles are clearly defined. When we meet the Trustees’ representatives at the bargaining table to negotiate wages, benefits, and working conditions, we do so as legal equals. We represent only the faculty and the will of the faculty determines our priorities and positions. And we always pick our own representatives. This is somewhat different from the way that faculty representatives to administration-appointed committees are usually chosen. Often, the Faculty Senate is asked to provide a list of names, from which a smaller number are chosen. For the Presidential Search Advisory Committee, for example, the Senate provided the Board of Trustees with eight names from which they chose three.

As an *ex-officio* member of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, I participated in the discussions that generated the list of eight names that were forwarded to the trustees. The UFWW Executive Committee fully supported every name on that list and we have full confidence in the three colleagues who were chosen by the board. Angie Harwood, Jeff Newcomer, and Barbara Mathers-Schmidt are all outstanding faculty members

who have contributed a lot to this university. We have no doubt they will represent the faculty well in this search.

Though they are not obliged to consult anyone or take into account anything other than who they think will be the best president for the university, Western’s Trustees have chosen to follow a very inclusive process in making their choice. As part of that process, the Trustees invited the UFWW executive committee to meet with the Presidential Search Advisory Committee and search consultants. At that meeting we expressed our gratitude and respect for the job President Morse has done leading this university for the last fifteen years. She has played a big role in making Western the outstanding institution that it is, and we wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

We also responded to the committee’s request for our perspective on what they should be looking for in the next president with five suggestions:

1. A Strong Commitment to the Faculty: The new president should recognize that Western has an outstanding faculty that is desperately underpaid and has often felt disrespected by the administration. The new presi-

dent should recognize faculty as the heart of the institution and should feel that a very important part of her or his job is to dedicate the resources necessary to recruit and retain the best possible faculty that can provide our students with the best possible education.

2. Willingness and Ability to Work with the UFWW: The university will be strongest when the administration and the faculty work together. Union-administration solidarity can be especially effective at the state level. We are missing a lot of opportunities now.

3. Strong Managerial Skills: Western has grown rapidly over the last decade, and there has not been much opportunity to stop and assess how well our structures and processes are working. The change in leadership presents an opportunity for fresh eyes to refine and streamline our administrative structure. The new president should have a demonstrated ability to hire good people, give them the authority and resources they need to do their jobs, and hold them accountable.

4. Big Plans for Fundraising: Private money has become an unfortunate but unavoidable necessity in public higher education. Western has outstanding

students and faculty, a unique and beautiful location, and significant wealth nearby. The next president should bring great expectations for fundraising. Our endowment should come much closer to matching the quality of the institution.

5. A Commitment to the Liberal Arts and Sciences: The statewide pressures toward vocational and technical training have the potential to move us away from our core commitment to the liberal arts and sciences, a commitment reflected both in tradition and the new strategic plan. The big winners in the state’s commitment to what has come to be called STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) are going to be the research universities, the community colleges, and the new UW branch campus in Snohomish. Western could avoid being an afterthought in these discussions and funding decisions with a recommitment to becoming the state’s distinguished liberal arts institution.

Hiring a new president falls outside of the scope of collective bargaining. It is clearly a Board of Trustees prerogative. Their job is to hire the new president, our job is to train her or him. We wish the trustees good luck in their search, and we will sup-

A LIFE OF CONTINGENCY

The high costs of the growing use and abuse of non-tenure track faculty

By Katie Stables and Kyle Crowder

In many ways, Rosemary Vohs is the model faculty member. She has served Western Washington University for over 20 years and has been recognized by her students and colleagues as a top-notch instructor. She teaches a number of key courses and has participated in curricular developments in both the Communication department and the Woodring College of Education. She is also fully engaged in the scholarly activities of her specialty areas – storytelling, public speaking, and children’s literature – and continues to perform a range of services to the university, including the supervision of independent-study projects, serving on a variety of committees, and bringing storytelling conferences to campus. But two things set Vohs apart from many of her colleagues who perform similar duties: Vohs is not compensated for much of her service work and scholarly activities, and she can never be sure whether she will be invited back to continue her service to Western.

Vohs is one of a growing army of faculty members hired into non-tenure-tenure track (NTT) positions and finds herself as part of a national trend. In fact, the increasing reliance on NTT faculty and corresponding erosion of tenure represent among the most profound transformations in higher education in recent decades. According to data collected by the U.S. Department of Education, just over 43% of the faculty at degree-granting colleges and universities were in NTT positions in 1975 (see figure on page 4). By 2005 this proportion was up to over 68%. Notably, part-time NTT faculty represented the fastest growing segment of faculty during this time, increasing from 30.2% to almost half of a growing faculty population. Today, less than one-third of college faculty members nationwide enjoy the relative security of a

tenure-track appointment.

In comparison to community colleges and Bachelors-granting institutions, Masters-granting institutions tend to have slightly lower reliance on NTT faculty. In 2006-2007, Western employed 345 NTT faculty employees, representing almost half of the faculty population. Among NTT faculty at Western, 48% had appointments of less than 0.5 of the full-time equivalency (FTE) and 26% held appointments of 0.25 FTE or below.

At Western, the most common titles assigned to NTT faculty are Affiliated Faculty and Lecturer – labels that, in many cases, poorly describe the types of duties actually performed by these colleagues. Across the country, an even wider range of titles may be applied to NTT faculty, including instructor, specialty faculty, adjunct professor, or simply limited-term or contingent faculty, thereby hindering efforts to effectively compare working conditions across universities. While their professional responsibilities may vary, the common condition for faculty working under all of these titles is that none have long-term employment commitments from their university.

From the perspective of university administrators, utilizing NTT faculty holds some important advantages. In general, the use of NTT faculty may represent the opportunity to quickly adjust the size and distribution of the faculty across departments and possibly to bring in professionals to teach occasional, highly specialized courses. Most importantly, hiring faculty on NTT lines allows administrators to limit the proportion of the university budget dedicated to faculty compensation as NTT faculty members typically receive salaries far below tenured and even untenured tenure-track faculty. At Western, for example, the average

Characteristics of Non-tenure-track Faculty
Western Washington University, 2006-2007

Number of NTT faculty	
Lecturers	283
Affiliated Faculty	36
Other NTT faculty	26
Number of years of service at Western	
Less than 5 years	42%
5 to 10 years	29%
More than 10 years	29%
Average FTE per NTT faculty member	
Lecturers	0.59
Affiliated Faculty	0.30
Other NTT	0.66
Average Salary per 1.0 FTE	
Lecturers	\$38,673
Affiliated Faculty	\$29,507
Other NTT	\$38,923

annual salary per full-time NTT position was \$38,195 in 2006-2007, and 80% of NTT faculty made less than \$38,000. In contrast, the average salary for tenured and tenure-track faculty at Western was just over \$62,000, far below salaries at most of our peer institutions but still dramatically better than NTT faculty with similar teaching loads. The university enjoys additional cost savings by employing part-time faculty who typically receive limited benefits, depending on the number of courses taught.

Despite these administrative benefits, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) has for decades been sounding important warnings about the heavy reliance on NTT faculty (<http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/research/conind2006.htm>). Most important among these are concerns about potential threats to educational quality. In most cases, NTT faculty hold teaching qualifications and training similar to those of tenure-track faculty, and comparable ability to produce high quality educational experiences for our students.

For many NTT faculty, however, the very nature of the appointment makes it difficult to meet this promise. At many universities, including Western, NTT contracts are not offered until a few weeks or even days before the start of a term. In many instances NTT faculty are expected to fill whatever holes remain in departmental offerings, regardless of their disciplinary expertise or level of preparedness.

During the past several years, Laura Overstreet, a NTT instructor who has taught a number of different courses in Western’s Sociology Department, has come to know well the perils of contingent faculty work. Overstreet, who holds a PhD and quickly gained a reputation as an engaging and effective instructor, has yet to secure a long-term contract and has been forced to cobble together courses at a number of institutions to make ends meet. This search, which has recently had her moving her family across state lines and back again, means that Overstreet has a hard time predicting where her next contract will come from and must

Shared concerns for NTT and tenure-track faculty (continued from page 3)

spend much of her time scrambling to prepare new courses. For Overstreet and other contingent faculty, the opportunity to refine current course offerings or build long-term collaborative relationships with students is a rare luxury indeed.

According to the AAUP, the contingent nature of their employment may render some NTT faculty reluctant to engage students and colleagues in challenging and controversial debates and likely restricts academic freedom in general. This vulnerability may also limit the willingness of even long-term NTT faculty from becoming involved in faculty governance and collective bargaining activities, or to take chances with innovative new teaching activities that make positive student feedback less certain. Moreover, the overuse of limited-term, NTT faculty, most of whom are compensated only for the classes they teach, means that an increasing share of the responsibility for advising, curriculum development, and faculty governance falls to the shrinking proportion of the faculty on tenure-track lines.

Of course, most NTT faculty

at Western *do* challenge their students and *do* offer high quality courses, and many provide a variety of non-teaching services to the university. Western's Bill Lay has survived the poor pay, uncertainty, and partial citizenship associated with contingent employment for over twenty years. He has taught a large array of courses both on and off campus and has put his degree in curricular design to good use in designing core courses for the Woodring College of Education. Like his tenure-track colleagues, Lay maintains an active research agenda and is a regular contributor to college and university committees. He also advises students, edits the college's newsletter, and represents his department as a UFWW steward. But Lay makes these and many other contributions to the university without fair compensation and in the absence of the protections associated with tenure. He recognizes that his ability to do so and to survive on a fluctuating series of quarterly, annual, and supplemental contracts is somewhat unique: "My life circumstances are such that I am able to 'cut my pattern to fit my cloth' which most people are

not able to do."

Overall, NTT faculty are drastically underrepresented among UFWW members (NTT faculty make up almost half of the faculty but only 18% of the union membership), likely owing to the contingent nature of their employment and more limited compensation. Nevertheless, the union leadership has remained highly cognizant of the fact that the central concerns for NTT faculty – fair compensation, stable and predictable workloads, job security, and academic freedom – are shared by all members of the faculty. We have also recognized that the erosion of tenure for the increasing reliance on NTT contracts represents an important threat to the core mission of the university. Thus, we have endorsed the AAUP's general call for universities to convert NTT lines to tenure-track positions whenever possible. More directly, our bargaining team has fought hard to ensure that NTT and tenure-track faculty receive comparable pay for comparable work and have access to the resources needed to provide high quality educational services for our students. ■

YOUR UNION BY THE NUMBERS

9.6 Annual percentage increases over two years necessary to bring Western faculty salaries to the 75th percentile of faculty salaries at peer institutions chosen by the university administration.

7 Number of months of active bargaining needed for the administration at Central Washington University to reach a first contract agreement with Central's faculty union. In characterizing the negotiations, CWU Associate Vice President Wayne Quirk said, "We were able to have candid conversation...we could trust each other." According to Quirk, the main goal from the administrative standpoint was to get faculty salaries up to that of competing universities.

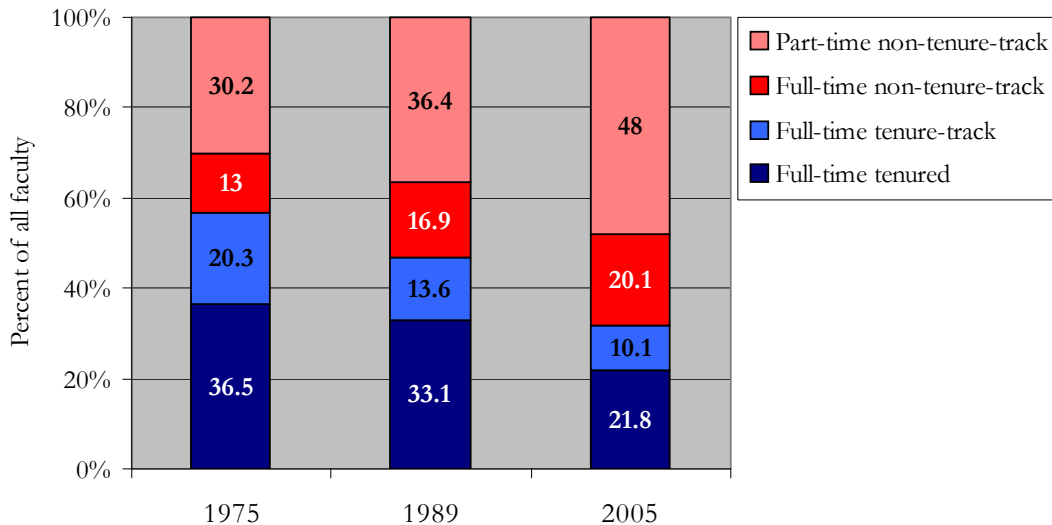
12 Number of months since the UFWW Bargaining Team presented its full contract proposal to the administration bargaining team.

5 Number of key bargaining issues to be discussed in detail at the Jan. 31 All-Faculty Bargaining Meeting. These include the role of the Faculty Senate, conditions for non-tenure-track faculty, grievance and arbitration procedures, workload, and compensation.

Trends in Faculty Status, 1975-2005

All U.S. Degree-Granting Institutions

Source: U.S. Department of Education, IPEDS Fall Faculty Survey



The Western Union is a quarterly publication designed to foster communication between members of the UFWW.

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