

October 6, 2008

Here are a few opinions about the new Tentative Agreement written by members of our negotiating team. Not every member has submitted a statement yet, but we will add more as they come in.

Deborah Dahl-Shanks

I support the TA because I believe it has made a huge step forward in recognizing the need for our district to reach employment equity for PT faculty. This agreement recognizes the need for part-time faculty to attend conferences (whether as participants or presenters) by adding "conference leave" to part-time faculty paid leaves of absence. The new contract will also recognize the new law concerning the maximum a part-time faculty may work at 67% of FTE. After many years of trying to add dental to part-time benefits, the new contract will clearly articulate the addition of the "dental" option for eligible part-time faculty along with health benefits. And finally the "Part-time Faculty Staffing Preference" document (formerly the Rehire Rights Policy, now revised) will have its own Article permanently in the contract.

Although this year's agreement does not reflect it, we did make progress towards ultimately achieving compensation parity through formulating a comprehensive plan. We have agreed that this year, the District and UF will finalize a plan to move to a pay-per-load system that integrates parity pay and recognizes the need to concretely address parity for all faculty across the board. And we expect pay parity to be central issue in salary negotiations next year.

Michael Zilber

I am very pleased to endorse this tentative agreement. The negotiations were open, honest, frank and mainly productive. I believe we need to continue advocating for a humane family sick leave policy that recognizes the anguish faculty face when forced to choose between work and caring for a stricken loved one. However, on balance we have strengthened faculty's working conditions and raised salary in a perilous economic time, and kudos go to the principled and positive leadership of Jeff Michels and my fellow negotiating team members in the most recent negotiations.

Brendan Brown

I'm pleased with the settlement because it was a good "problem solving" process where everyone's concerns to improve the contract were heard and considered. And, an additional 2% on top of our growth formula (negotiated last year), helps bring salaries closer to where we once were - #1 in the Bay Area.

Jeffrey Michels

The bottom line here is that we added to our salary increase for 08-09 and addressed a number of problems without making any major concessions. We didn't make trades but we made progress. So I think the Agreement bodes well for the future. I'm disappointed that we didn't manage to come away with any more release time for our overworked department chairs and program managers. And we fell short of our goals to expand office hour options and family leave. But we made some progress in all these areas in that we didn't find the District closed to our concerns. And I expect that as we go forward this year, we may reach breakthroughs on at least some of the issues where talks stalled this year. In the mean time, we made a lot of progress on the staffing preference/rehire rights agreement. We improved A/C options; we expanded the sabbatical definition to more explicitly qualify creative projects. We made some important progress for part-time faculty. And we're in a fairly good position going into next year, even amid the State's budget crisis. In short, the Agreement is enough of a win for faculty, especially with the extra salary increase, that we should ratify it now and then take our lingering concerns into the next round of negotiations in the spring.