

Report on Negotiation Sessions 11 – 13

Our last three negotiating sessions (April 21, May 1 and May 7) concentrated on Article 12 (Grievance Procedures), Article 14 (Appointments/Evaluation) and Article 21 (Professional Development). Most of our discussion focused on a wide range of issues in Article 14.

Article 14 – Appointments and Evaluation. Our team submitted a comprehensive counter to the Administration proposal. Probably the most critical issue concerns the question of who writes RPT guidelines. We maintain that RPT guidelines are most effectively written by faculty at the department level. The Administration wants the ability for Deans to decide on College-level guidelines and to apply these guidelines to departments where deans don't accept departmental guidelines. This is a basic divide.

Other Article 14 discussions involve an Administration proposal to change the tenure-track probationary faculty review process from the current 3-2-2 timeline to a more "streamlined" 4-3 timeline, with one pretenure review in the third year. We are working to assess which timeline works best for all faculty members. There are compelling arguments on both sides. The Administration has also proposed new teaching criteria concerning "student learning outcomes" and knowledge of "pedagogy," which would be difficult to measure and could be applied capriciously. We proposed clearer criteria concerning the effectiveness of teaching, which would be easier to demonstrate. Another issue involves our proposal to extend the probationary period more than once for family/parental care. We have also had some discussion about greater job security for non-tenure track faculty and who votes on promotion cases.

Article 12 – Grievance Procedures. We have narrowed the differences on proposals about the grievance process. The current process largely will be maintained, but the Hearing Panel will be able to participate in grievance meetings between the Provost, grievant and union representative and will retain authority to make recommendations regarding the disposition of grievances.

Article 21 – Professional Development. We continue to note the need both for improved funding and to be able to use funding for a wider range of professional development purposes. An area of contention is whether guidelines for the use of professional development funds should be made by members of the department and the chair together, as we proposed, or whether the chair should be able to decide unilaterally.