

Your Union

Union of Nontenure-Track Faculty



Save the Date

Early March:

Watch our website! We'll be going live with our new web design in short order. The new site will feature a newsletter archive, Designation B criteria by college, and links to articles and media programs about fixed-term faculty nationwide.

www.untf.org

March 20:

Higher Education Legislative Action Day
Downtown Lansing
See page 4 for details

\$67,000 IN ADDITIONAL PAY FOR UNTF MEMBERS THIS YEAR

After months of meetings with MSU officials, the UNTF Executive Board is happy to announce that we have reached agreement over the UNTF raise grievance filed in May 2013. The settlement calls for additional raises retroactive to October 2012 and additional raises retroactive to October 2013. The amount of raises varies by college but overall the settlement will result in an additional \$67,000 in raises to be distributed to UNTF members this academic year.

UNTF staff spent many hours tracking down each UNTF member who was declared ineligible for a raise in 2012 and/or 2013, and unearthed the errors which have been corrected in this settlement. A few things to note about the process:

- UNTF has been told by HR that the entire distribution process should take 6-8 weeks to complete. Money received will be retroactive to October 1, 2012 or October 1, 2013 as appropriate.

Continued page 2



LEFT: UNTF 2014 Bargaining Team. Front row: **Penny Gardner**, Office Manager **Joe Marutiak**, **Rich Manderfield**, **Deb Carmichael**. Back row: **Dave Ragan**, **Ashley Hewlett**, **Jason Price**. NOT PICTURED: **Cheryl Caesar**.

ABOVE: AFT-Michigan Leadership and Activist Summit, co-hosted by UNTF and the Graduate Employees Union. *Photo credit: GEU@MSU.*

2014 Contract Negotiations

Our Negotiations Steering Committee has been meeting since last fall to develop proposals for changes to our current contract. Below are some of our key issues, based on many conversations with members, responses to our survey last fall, and our grievance history over the past four years.

Traditionally, bargaining begins with non-economic issues and then proceeds to those with a financial cost; these negotiations will be no different. Stay tuned to your email and our website, www.untf.org, for updates throughout the next few weeks.

Designation B: Increase access to Designation B (three-year contracts for long-term employees), clarify the review process and establish default criteria for departments who have not published them, stipulate that rejection of an application for Designation B cannot be based only on student ratings.

Appointments: Impose penalties on departments that do not comply with current contract stipulations about reappointment procedures

Grievance Procedure: Expand the initial timeline in which a formal grievance may be filed

Academic Freedom: Strengthen our current language by encoding current policy in the contract, regardless of future changes

Office space: Make all offices and mailboxes workable and FERPA-compliant

Raises and benefits: Make pay and benefits competitive with other institutions in the Big Ten

Grievance Victory Cont.

Continued from page 1

- Since the raise money is merit-based, each dean and chair has the discretion to distribute it as long as it goes to UNTF members. However, the terms of the agreement stipulate that the money made available to colleges and departments should have the names of individuals who have been wrongly overlooked attached. These individuals must be **considered** for the merit pay according to the same criteria as others in their department. As in the regular merit process, these faculty members are not necessarily guaranteed a 2% increase. Each affected individual can expect to hear from their chair about the results of the process as it applies to them.

The settlement calls for MSU to issue a report with the final distribution of the funds and the date of all the pay adjustments.

The discussions on the grievance led MSU to make a series of changes in the merit pay process in 2013. This led to a number of UNTF members getting raises that would have otherwise been considered “not eligible”. Since these raises have already been awarded, they are not part of the grievance settlement.

Professional Development Travel Fund Report

This January the UNTF Executive Board decided to establish a trial Professional Development Travel Fund. UNTF members in good standing were invited to apply for a \$200 grant for presenting at a conference or workshop that would enhance their growth as a faculty member. "One frustration we'd been hearing from our members again and again is about the fact that fixed-term faculty are often barred from applying for travel funds made available to tenure-stream faculty and graduate students," said Financial Officer Rich Manderfield. "We hope to get the University to more fully fund this work and in the meantime are offering some help for our members."

This spring and summer, UNTF members will use these funds to travel to Texas, Switzerland, France, Cuba and other places. Here are just a few of the topics they will present on:

- disability and universal design in theatre
- online pedagogy in discussion-based courses
- urban regime theory
- taxation compliance in African nations

Best wishes and safe travels to all our grant recipients!

Meet the 2014 Bargaining Team!

Deb Carmichael has been teaching at MSU since 2007. In addition to teaching first-year writing, she is the managing editor of The Journal of Popular Culture.

Rich Manderfield has been teaching full time in the Department of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures since 2004 and has been involved with the UNTF since the early days of its organization. His participation is motivated by the conviction that collective bargaining is fundamental to democracy.

Dave Ragan has been teaching ESL in universities since 1978. He has been an active member in four faculty unions in three states and Japan and helped organize bus drivers for the Teamsters in Miami. When he retires in (he hopes) 3 years, he will join his wife in Malaysia.

Jason Price is in his third year at MSU teaching Sound Design for Theatre. He is a professional musician and has performed this season at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and in Germany, Holland, Ireland, and Poland and is an Artist in Residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Penny Gardner is an Assistant Professor in Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures. In addition to being the current President of UNTF, she is a feminist social justice activist and the self-declared number one MSU Womyn's Basketball fan.

Cheryl Caesar graduated from MSU, went on to California and then spent 25 years living and teaching in Paris. She received her doctorate in comparative literature from the Sorbonne; got interested in culture studies; returned to MSU in 2009 and now teaches first-year writing to mostly international students, who contribute great stuff to our new culture shock website, [Dive In](#).

Ashley Hewlett has taught for the ELC since 2011 when she started as a semester hire. She bakes regularly and is often found sweeping up furballs from her two cats. She joined the bargaining unit to be better informed about the role of fixed-term faculty in the MSU community.



Who's our final team member? YOU! Even though you won't be sitting at the bargaining table, you can still participate by paying attention to your emails and newsletters and encouraging your colleagues to become full members. A strong bargaining team is a team with a united and active membership behind them!

Many thanks to our dedicated team for volunteering their time and talent in order to improve working conditions for all 550 fixed-term faculty in UNTF.

Union of Nontenure-Track Faculty
2990 E. Lake Lansing Rd.
Suite 201-E
East Lansing MI 48823

Building Connections across Michigan

Members of UNTF have been busy reaching out to teachers all across Michigan this semester:

- Many thanks to members from AFT locals at MSU, University of Michigan, Wayne State, and Central for their assistance in contacting and having conversations with UNTF members this January. Thanks to their efforts, our membership rates continue to grow.
- You may encounter some new faces this semester: AFT-MI staff member **Eric Lindemier** and LEO (UM) organizer **Jordan Adams** will be lending their time and expertise to keeping our members up to date on bargaining and membership issues this semester.
- On February 8, UNTF and MSU Graduate Employees Union (GEU) hosted teachers, paraprofessionals, and higher ed faculty on MSU's campus for a day-long Leadership and Activist Summit. Participants practiced sharing their stories of union activity while networking with other AFT members from across the state.

Upcoming event: On March 20, join other faculty members from across the state for **Higher Education Legislative Action Day** in Lansing. We will attend breakouts on issues pertinent to higher education and meet with legislators about access, affordability, administration, and appropriations. Register at aftmichigan.org.