



Gretchen Gould <gretchen.gould@uni.edu>

Faculty Handbook - Important Update

1 message

Joe Gorton <joe.gorton@uni.edu>

Tue, Mar 7, 2017 at 3:33 PM

To: uf-announce <uf-announce@uni.edu>, HRS-UF-Non-Ten <HRS-UF-Non-Ten@uni.edu>, HRS-Acad-Admin <hrs-acad-admin@uni.edu>

Dear Colleagues:

I'm writing to discuss United Faculty's role in transferring provisions from our Master Agreement into a faculty handbook.

For more than 40 years, United Faculty has been a relentless advocate for fair and equitable policies that support faculty and our families. That advocacy will continue as we stand up for a faculty handbook that includes benefits and protections historically provided by our Master Agreement. **Achieving that outcome is United Faculty's primary goal.**

BACKGROUND

The necessity to create a handbook was thrust upon us with very little lead time. Our immediate task is to quickly develop an initial handbook that can be put into place on July 1st. There is agreement among faculty and administration leaders that the initial handbook will be a "stop gap" approach to serve as the foundation for a more detailed document.

We have also agreed that the following faculty and administrative leaders will be responsible for oversight of the handbook development process. Joe Gorton (United Faculty), Gretchen Gould (Faculty Senate), Tim Kidd (Faculty Chair), Jim Wohlpart (Provost), Nancy Cobb (Associate Provost for Faculty), and Kyle Fogt (Associate Counsel).

In April, the leadership committee will have a consultative session with Faculty Senate to hear feedback on the draft handbook. A survey of faculty responses to the draft is likely.

United Faculty and Faculty Senate leaders have appointed the following faculty representatives to the handbook committee.

Becky Hawbaker, COE, United Faculty
Carissa Froyum, CSBS, United Faculty
Jim Mattingly, COBA, United Faculty
Amy Petersen, COE, United Faculty (also a member of the Faculty Senate)
Tim Kidd, Faculty Senate, CHAS
Tom Hesse, Non-Tenure Track Faculty, CHAS

Provost Wohlpart has sent a separate announcement regarding the representatives from the administration.

UNITED FACULTY'S ROLE

United Faculty's main goal is to ensure that none of the benefits or protections accorded by our current contract are weakened by a faculty handbook. That could be challenging. The sad reality is administrators are too often motivated to weaken employee benefits and protections. This is especially true during periods of economic and political turbulence. We must make sure faculty interests are not marginalized. The good news is UF has more than four decades of experience in succeeding against such efforts. As always, we will focus on collaboration, honesty, and accountability.

Here are some of the means through which United Faculty will pursue our goals.

1. **Faculty Ownership.** United Faculty will keep you fully informed on good news and bad news regarding development of the handbook. We will not sugar coat anything. We will inform you if the administration opposes hard won faculty centered policies. Nor will we fail to credit the administration when it is appropriate to do so. As always, we will use surveys and other means to understand faculty preferences.

When universities face major change, a unified faculty is a potent force to be reckoned with. **Never doubt the reservoir of faculty power on this campus.** United Faculty will continue to build faculty power and use it when necessary. An important part of these efforts will be collaboration between the Faculty Senate and United Faculty (see comments below)

2. **Legal Remedies.** We will continue to rely on advice and remedies offered by our retained legal counsel. Changes to the collective bargaining law have not reduced United Faculty's access to various legal interventions.

3. **American Association of University Professors.** AAUP is monitoring this campus very closely. I speak with AAUP's president and/or executive director at least twice a month. We will keep AAUP fully informed on any administrative recommendations that could compromise tenure, academic freedom or faculty governance.

4. **Board of Regents.** When appropriate, United Faculty or our legal counsel will reach out to the Board of Regents.

5. **Political Support.** United Faculty has a strong relationship with a growing number of legislators throughout Iowa. We are ready to rely on those relationships to help ensure a fair and equitable faculty handbook.

6. **Public Opinion.** UNI is owned by the people of Iowa. Iowans deserve to know whether the faculty handbook will help our university attract and retain highly qualified faculty or whether it will have an opposite effect. For this reason, UF reserves the right to use our media relations program to keep Iowans informed on progress and problems in the development of fair and equitable policies that support UNI faculty and our families.

THE FACULTY SENATE

For more than four decades, United Faculty has taken responsibility for advocating for wages, benefits and many conditions of employment. During that same period, the Faculty Senate has centered on educational policy and curriculum. There have been several occasions in which our duties and responsibilities have coincided. This is one of those instances.

The past few months have been a period of unprecedented collaboration and solidarity between United Faculty and the Faculty Senate. Simply stated, Gretchen Gould, Michael Water, and Tim Kidd have been absolutely amazing. Without their leadership, all of the problems associated with changes to Chapter 20 would be so much worse. Part of the good news is that these leaders will continue to be involved in the faculty handbook process.

A NEW ERA

We are entering a new period in the history of our union. I know from my experience in similar union environments that the most important predictor of our success will be the solidarity and size of our membership. Thank you to everyone who supports UF with your membership. Thank you to everyone who has taken an active role in our advocacy. If you have not yet joined, please do so as soon as possible by going to our website at <https://ufaculty.uni.edu>.

NEW UF MEMBERSHIP DUES SYSTEM

The new Chapter 20 law prohibits public employee unions from collecting membership dues through payroll deduction. For this reason we will soon roll out a new system for dues contributions.

FACULTY APPRECIATION DINNER - Hosted by United Faculty

April 8th is the date for the Third Annual Faculty Appreciation Dinner. Des Moines Register Columnist Rehka Basu is our keynote speaker. Scott Cawelti will emcee and President Nook will offer brief remarks. Be sure to save the date. Commons Ballroom. Reception at 5:30. Dinner and Awards at 6:30.

FACULTY WORKING CONDITIONS ARE STUDENT LEARNING CONDITIONS

Onward,

Joe Gorton

President, United Faculty