

► Bargaining Update: Job Security

Kirsten Herold

In weekly updates via email, I give the bare bones of what has been happening in negotiations. If you weren't at the Friday bargaining session and missed the email, check out the blog at theleosshare.blogspot.com. In this column, which will be a regular feature of LEO Matters during negotiations, I will discuss one bargaining topic in particular, beginning here with job security.

In these tough economic times, job security weighs on everybody's mind. While it is in the nature of non-tenure-track positions that employment is uncertain, we are hoping to improve job security for long-term lecturers and new hires alike through the bargaining process.

For long-term lecturers, we are talking about putting an end to major reviews. Somehow Management seems to think that only fear motivates people to do a good job. We disagree. We think endless major reviews are unnecessary and unsettling. Although nearly all LEO folks pass their major reviews, the process causes much anxiety even among long-term lecturers. And it takes up tons of time for lecturers and their departments alike, time that could be much better spent on professional development, for example. Therefore we are proposing that two major reviews ought to be enough. After that, the lecturer should have an open-ended appointment, still subject to supervision and intervention if the lecturer's performance tanks. This scenario is very different from tenure; in fact, it is the kind of employment enjoyed by the vast majority of university employees.

For Lecturer Is and IIIs (lecturers without presumption of renewal), we are proposing moving the interim review back from the fifth to the fourth semester of employment. Successful completion of the interim review would then result in a modest raise and a two-year appointment. In other words, the lecturer who passes the interim

review would be assured of a path to the major review (barring layoff). We are also proposing that it be impossible to fail the major review unless the reasons have already been identified, either in the interim review or subsequently in writing. The result of the major review should never come as a surprise!

We know Lecturer Is feel very exposed about their job security. It is our hope that these changes will help clarify communication between the lecturer and the department, and make the path to the major review less scary and arbitrary.

► Bargaining Framework: Can the University Afford to Give Us a Raise? Can it Afford Not to?

Ian Robinson

Times are tough. Michigan has the nation's highest unemployment rate. Republican state senators have insisted that state financial support for our students be cut, perhaps as much as 20% in the next budget. In such a climate, can UM afford to pay us more than a token salary increase? Where would the money come from?

How about a capital campaign to build endowment funds earmarked to pay lecturers a decent salary? Picture it: UM's "development" people market our amazing classes to potential donors; they make short films featuring students explaining how our classes changed their lives, or inspired them to stay in Michigan and help revitalize Detroit; they document how we struggle to make ends meet on our salaries. For contributions above a certain amount, our benefactors get their names in our syllabi! Contribute even more and the favored lecturer is named the Walter P. Googenheim Distinguished Lecturer in Anthropology!

Are you laughing? Questioning my sanity? Why is this a ridiculous scenario? Isn't the quality of undergraduate education as

important as the things for which we actually run capital campaigns? Isn't it equally important to treat the faculty who do so much of that teaching fairly and with respect? Why shouldn't this be a capital campaign priority?

Aside from the obvious issue of academic freedom, which has already been compromised by UM's heavy reliance on non-tenure-track (NTT) faculty, the reason this scenario will never happen is that highlighting our current situation would embarrass the Administration. When the President of AFT-MI visited the Ann Arbor campus with his daughter recently, he asked the student tour guide what share of undergraduate teaching was done by NTT faculty. The student responded, "About 90% of our faculty are full-time."

What a clever evasion! Almost all professors are full-time as are a third of all lecturers in Ann Arbor, but 35% of undergrad teaching at UM is done by lecturers. Why are student guides trained to conceal the share of the teaching that lecturers do? Most likely because the Administration knows that many parents doubt the quality of NTT faculty teaching. The parents are wrong—most of us are excellent teachers—but the Administration doesn't want to admit that either, because then parents would ask, "So why do you deny them tenure and pay them so shabbily?" Hmm. Best to avoid the subject entirely!

Avoiding the subject is no longer an option. As we noted in the December issue of "LEO Matters," it is a scandal that the median salary of full-time Lecturer Is would have to increase by \$2,500 every year for the next six years to get it to what public high school teachers with a Masters earn in their first year! An equal increase is required to get the median salary of Lecturer IVs close to parity with that of untenured Assistant Professors in Flint and Dearborn, and two thirds of the way there in Ann Arbor.

What would it cost to close these unacceptable gaps? For our three campuses, if current levels and



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See for yourself what's going on in negotiations—Dearborn 3/19; Flint 3/26; Ann Arbor 2/19, 2/26, 3/12, 4/2, 4/9, 4/16.

types of lecturer employment remain stable, it would require an extra \$12 million to raise all full- and part-time salaries by the needed amounts. That's on top of the \$42.4 million that UM spent last year on 1,400 lecturer salaries. Compare this number with the \$30 million the Administration has set aside to hire 100 young professors in 2010, or the \$108 million paid for the Pfizer facility, or the \$226 million earmarked for the stadium expansion.

Still, where is an extra \$12 million to be found at a time of budget cuts? UM will almost certainly raise tuition every year, whether or not we get a raise. In 2009-10, tuition fees generated about \$1.1 billion, up \$64.8 million from the previous year. If UM raises tuition by 3% in each of the next three years—a rate of increase well below the average of the last two decades—it will bring in an additional \$102 million in the third year. Even if state funding falls by \$30 million—the nightmare scenario—and our salaries increase by \$12 million over that period, these tuition hikes still net the University \$60 million in revenues by the third year.

Our pay increase, however, does not need to come from increases in student tuition. We would prefer that it does not. It would be far better if it came from a marginal—0.7% or less—shift in the priorities that govern General Fund spending. It is in times of economic constraint, when “business as usual” is no longer viable, that priorities need to be reconsidered. Undergraduate education must become a top priority, and the faculty who specialize in teaching undergraduates must be recognized as first-class citizens of this institution. UM is like a great ship that cannot change direction quickly, but a one degree course correction over three years is well within its capacity. It's also the right thing to do.

This column is the first in a series that will address aspects of the conceptual framework that has shaped LEO's bargaining strategy. In my next column, I will discuss how and why the University should change its priorities.

► At the Table

Now that negotiations are underway, we want you to know who is serving on the teams that face each other at the table. Note that LEO's Bargaining Team is supported by a larger group of equally hard-working LEO activists—the Bargaining Committee, which has been working for months to research the issues, develop proposals, and shape contract language.

LEO

Elizabeth Axelson, *Chief Negotiator, English Language Institute, Ann Arbor (AA)*

Jim Anderson, *English, Flint (FL)*

Catherine Daligga, *American Culture, AA*

Dennis Daniels, *Writing Program & Linguistics, Dearborn (DB)*

Sheryl Edwards, *Social Sciences, DB*

Bonnie Halloran, *Anthropology, DB*

Kirsten Herold, *English Language & Literature, AA*

William Morris, *Business, DB*

Michelle Orecchio, *Romance Languages & Literature, AA*

Greg Sax, *Philosophy, AA*

Joe Walls, *Business, AA*

Stevens Wandmacher, *Philosophy, FL*

Management

Christine Gerdes, *Chief Negotiator/Asst. Gen. Counsel, Academic Human Resources (AHR), AA*

Bekah Ashley, *Managing Dir. of Academic Affairs, Engineering, AA*

Bob Barnett, *Assoc. Dean, CAS, FL*

Rima Berry-Hung, *HR Consultant, DB*

Jim Burkel, Sr. *Academic Labor Relations Rep., LSA, AA*

Derek Collins, *Assoc. Dean, LSA, AA*

Gabriella Eschrich, *Assoc. Prof., CASL, DB*

Jeffery Frumkin, *Assoc. Vice Provost & Sr. Dir., AHR, AA*

Kali Israel, *Assoc. Prof., History, AA*

Janice Jedele, *Office Clerk, AHR, AA*

Beth Manning, *HR Admin. Supervisor, FL*

Alexandra Matish, Sr. *Academic Labor Rep., AHR, AA*



Get Organized!

Read the bargaining updates that come directly to you in print (*LEO Matters*) and online (weekly email).

Talk with your colleagues about what's going on in negotiations and attend a session together.

LEO Links

leounion.org

theleosshare.blogspot.com

twitter.com/leounion

Facebook: Lecturers' Employee Organization

LEO office: 734-995-1813

Why Me?

Dennis Daniels, Writing Program and Linguistics, Dearborn LEO Benefits Sub-Committee, LEO Bargaining Committee

My life inside UM: *I spend Tuesdays and Thursdays on the third floor of Dearborn's CASL building with a great "assortment" of colleagues. I think about classes and search for new materials for my students on an uncomfortably slow PC, while trying to keep my coffee consumption at a sustainable level.*

My life outside UM: *Being new home owners (after 40 years of renting!) keeps Zeal and me busy. I look forward to time for travel and camping in the backpacking budget mode. I read books when not reading student papers. I'm not online at home, and I'm still using rabbit ears. Public libraries are not "big government."*

Why me? *I had some experience in the formation of a teacher's union in the early eighties in Tokyo, and when LEO was being formed I participated in mailings and campus meetings. Being concerned over reports of unfairness and economic difficulties from hardworking teachers and after having attended Dearborn LEO meetings and job actions, I spent time last year on LEO's Benefits Sub-Committee. The differentials and asymmetries that already exist and the new ones proposed that make "things" hard, especially for part-time, branch campus LEO members, led me to "take a turn" on the Bargaining Team. Let me know about your concerns and also think about doing committee work in the 2012-13 bargaining year!*

My favorite... *place is in a shaded hammock on a seriously downscale tropical beach. Because...novels can be read in a day, fresh fruit shakes are nearby, and the ocean is within crawling distance—all on a lecturer's salary.*