

URI/AAUP/PTFU

Part-Time Faculty United



URI PTFU Executive Committee

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FALL 2015

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*FROM THE PRESIDENT**Edward S. Inman, III (Political Science)*

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome back to the Fall 2015 - Spring 2016 academic year. I hope you have a pleasant and productive fall semester.

The URI/PTFU Executive Committee and the Negotiation Committee spent a great deal of time and effort over the past summer months in working on issues of significant importance to both individual part-time faculty members as well as on issues that impact the bargaining unit in general.

In this message I want to focus on two major items that have been touched upon in the last few PTFU newsletters: 1) an update on the status of contract negotiations, and 2) our publicity campaign.

CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE

As mentioned in our earlier announcement concerning the status of contract negotiations between URI/PTFU and URI/BOE (RI Board of Education), the last salary offer (August 6, 2015) proposed by the URI/BOE was for a six year contract that leaves URI part-time faculty being paid a salary that remains below poverty level wages.

While several important changes in contract language proposed by URI/PTFU that were approved, our proposals for a significant salary increase, and some health coverage, have all been rejected by URI/BOE. Future discussion and resolution of the Collective Bargaining Agreement issues has now moved to Arbitration. As always, our bargaining committee will put forth to the arbitrator the same strong argument, accompanied by substantial documents and data, we have presented in our continuing negotiations.

OUR PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN

I want to also mention the status of the public phase of our campaign. In addition to our online petition, articles addressing the conditions of employment for PTF at URI have appeared in state-wide newspapers, including: Narragansett Times, Westerly Sun, The Good 5c Cigar (URI student newspaper), South County Independent, and the Providence Journal. We held an in-person informational picket at a meeting of the RI Board of Education/Council of Post Secondary Education that was attended by more than 25 supporters and received excellent coverage in the Providence Journal. This public campaign continues with recent articles from PTFU being published in the most current issues of the Providence Journal and The Good 5c Cigar.

The URI/PTFU Negotiation Committee and the URI/PTFU Executive Committee remain committed to achieving a fair and equitable successor contract for the outstanding contribution made by URI's part-time faculty to the University of Rhode Island and especially, to its students. At present, adjunct professors at URI are the lowest paid part-time faculty, when compared with other regional public research institutions in New England and beyond. We aim to correct that situation!

Thank you for all you do.

In Solidarity,

Ed

SAVE THE DATE:

The Fall 2015 General Membership Meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 14, 2015 (reading day) and will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Warwick at 4:00pm. (Agenda to follow)

RHODE ISLAND JOBS WITH JUSTICE

The PTFU Executive Committee voted to join RI Jobs With Justice. Jobs With Justice is a national organization with many local chapters across the country. RIJWJ is a local coalition that brings together labor unions and community organizations in Rhode Island to win economic and social justice for RI workers. The organization believes that all workplace struggles are inter-connected, and that in order to win fair practices and fair income levels labor unions must stand together. RI Jobs With Justice believes that long-term multi-issue coalition building in the community and the workplace are the foundation for building a strong coalition of inter-connected labor and community groups. RIJWJ believes in unity so that labor and community organizations can take on struggles that none of us could win alone. (Source: Website: RI Jobs With Justice) URI/PTFU is pleased to acknowledge RIJWJ, for their support in the URI/PTFU contract negotiation process.

DELIVERY OF PETITION TO PRESIDENT DOOLEY

The CHANGE.ORG online petition, STOP DISRESPECTING AND DEVALUING URI'S PART-TIME FACULTY, will be delivered to President David Dooley sometime in mid-October. The petition has been hugely successful with approximately 400 signatures accompanied with statements in strong support of the substantial contributions made by URI's part-time faculty to the university community and that they should be paid a fair salary that recognizes and rewards their contributions.

We need you to participate in this important action especially to protest the poverty level wages paid URI's adjunct faculty.

The date, time, and location of this event will be sent to you via separate email next week. Please watch for the notice and make every effort to attend this very important event.

If you haven't already done so, please copy and paste the link below into your browser and sign the petition asking President Dooley to intervene and bring parity to URI part-time faculty salary.

<https://www.change.org/p/uri-president-david-dooley-stop-disrespecting-and-devaluing-uri-part-time-faculty>

NATIONAL SCENE:

THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR HOW UNIVERSITIES TREAT ADJUNCTS,

by Caroline Fredrickson. *The Atlantic*, September 15, 2015

In early June, California labor regulators ruled that a driver for UBER, the app- based car service, was, in fact, an employee, not an independent contractor, and deserved back pay. The decision made national news, with experts predicting a coming flood of lawsuits. Two weeks later, FedEx agreed to a \$288 million settlement after a federal appeals court ruled that the company had shortchanged 300 California delivery drivers on pay and benefits by improperly labeling them as independent contractors. The next month, the company lost another case in a federal appeals court over misclassifying 500 delivery drivers in Kansas. . . . If you think you notice a pattern here, you're right. . . .The ranks of this "contingent workforce"-- defined as temporary and part-time workers and independent contractors-- have been growing for decades. . . . Nowhere has the up-classing of contingency work gone farther, ironically, than in one of the most educated and (back in the day) secure sectors of the workforce: college teachers.

In 1969, almost 80 percent of college faculty members were tenure or tenure track. Today, the numbers have essentially flipped, with two-thirds of faculty now non-tenure and half of those working part-time, often with several different teaching jobs. Teaching students is -- or at least is supposed to be -- the core mission of higher education. That colleges and universities have turned more and more of their frontline employees into part-time contractors suggests how far they have drifted from what they say they are all about. To say that these are low-wage jobs is an understatement. Based on data from the American Community Survey, 31 percent of part-time faculty are living near or below the federal poverty line. And, according to the UC Berkeley Labor Center, one in four families of part-time faculty are enrolled in at least one public assistance program.

cont'd

HIGHLIGHTS:

"Thirty-one percent of part-time faculty are living near or below the federal poverty line"

"When an adjunct carries similar responsibilities as full-time staff but for less than half the salary, colleges may be evading their legal obligations as employers."

"You never know when a class will be cancelled or a full-time professor will bump you at the last minute."

"Without job security, adjuncts may lack the independence they need to challenge students by critiquing commonly accepted ideas."

Copy and paste the link below to read the complete article here:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/09/higher-education-college-adjunct-professor-salary/404461/>

MISSION STATEMENT

The PTFU continuously works toward our mission and commitment of addressing matters that directly impact both individual and collective areas of concern to URI/Part-Time Faculty. The PTFU goals include giving a voice to URI's Part-Time Faculty, empowering them as equal members of URI's teaching community, ensuring that members' rights and entitlements gained from collective bargaining negotiations are respected and enforced. We will continuously work towards enhancing the work experience and environment for the Part-Time Faculty and continue to seek employment necessities, salary, equity and time in service rights. We strive to achieve these goals by leading and growing a sustainable and unified union group with a view towards advancing the status of URI's Part-Time Faculty.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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**THE URI/PTFU NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT SHOW
YOUR SUPPORT THROUGH CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP**