



KEAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
An Association of Professors, Professional Staff and Librarians
Local 2187, American Federation of Teachers
Kean University, Union, N.J. 07083
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KFT General Membership Meeting
26 January 2005
Center for Academic Success, Room 106

I. President's Report

*D. Casale referred to a handout of this semester's scheduled meetings for the KFT, as an insert to the KFT VOICE.

There will be 4 luncheon meetings, and another general membership meeting at the end of the semester. The luncheon meetings were well attended in Fall 2004.

*There is a deadline of 3/10/05 for applications for a KFT student scholarship. From \$10-12,000 a year is given in scholarships to Undergraduate and Graduate students each year by the KFT. Applications are now available in the KFT office. There will be a dinner in April to honor the recipients.

*The KFT won an award from the AFT for its local COPE activities. A plaque was presented. J. Erickson, the KFT Political Action Chair of the KFT, and B. Lees and T. Sensor, KFT Membership Co-Chairs were thanked for their work in enrolling KFT members in COPE.

*Three members of the KFT Executive Council will be attending the AFT National Conference (focusing on civil and women's rights) in April in Minnesota, as approved by the KFT Executive Council. J. Castiglione, E. Filardo and C. Damiao will be attending.

*D. Casale will be attending a conference at Hunter College for the National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education Professions, as approved by the KFT Executive Council.

*D. Casale announced that there were some changes in personnel recently. I. Nesoff, KFT Grievance Chair, is on sabbatical this semester and will return in Fall 2005. J. Castiglione has been appointed as Grievance Chair. Also, I. Nesoff also was fortunate enough to become a grandfather for the second time. D. Casale will take over as Negotiations Chair, since J. Castiglione will now work as Grievance Chair.

*E. Filardo had brought to the KFT Executive Council's attention the "America's Future" project. The KFT Executive Council approved a table to be set up to encourage students to participate in this effort. Since there has been a significant cut (for 100,000 students) in

PELL grants to begin in Fall 2005, students and their families are being asked to share their stories to bring these cuts and the effects of these cuts to the attention of politicians and the media. At Kean, \$9 million was just bonded. P. Connelly stated that the money will come from higher tuition and increased student fees. The goal is to stop the cuts from occurring. E. Filardo has a sign-in sheet if anyone is interested in participating in the "America's Future" campaign. Last year, students had a petition drive with 900 signatures about the parking problem at Kean. The Administration made some promises before it was brought to the Board of Trustees. The KFT needs to advocate for students to establish solid political ground for both students and KFT members.

*D. Casale announced that in the past two blast e-mails sent out, the need for terms and conditions to be respected was emphasized. A three-tier approach is needed to do this:

1. Negotiations: There is a need to continue, although it is frustrating, efforts at negotiating with the Administration. We will aggressively pressure for negotiation, since we need to be at the table with them. We are behind in negotiations with the administration compared to most other colleges in New Jersey.
2. Legal aspects: We need to make sure that the contract is enforced and protect our members' rights. To accomplish this, legal protection our contract must be aggressively pursued.
3. Political Aspect: It is crucial for us to assert our influence with students and political leaders. The Board of Trustees meeting on 12/6/04 had a good turnout to protest the non-reappointment of faculty. We are strong when we speak as a unified body and when many people speak. S. Young, Managing Staff rep to the State Council, has tried to impress legislators over the past 1½ years, about problems at Kean and Montclair State. J. Cryan, an Assemblyman in Union County, is interested in Kean's situation. He is interested in Kean's desire to take over the Schering-plough facility since this would take away a tax ratable for the town. Legislators want to know if Kean is spending money usefully and if hikes in tuition are being hidden in student fees. As indicated by a handout, there was a letter sent to A. Sires, Assemblyman. His business partner is a new Kean Board of Trustees member. Attendance at legislative functions is required indicating our loyalty to Kean and the fact that our Union is being stonewalled. In a recent issue of the Star-Ledger, a large spread in "Outlook in Higher Education" D. Farahi was quoted about the Theatre at Kean and its efforts to become a cultural center. There are those who are questioning why this is needed when NPAC and the Rahway Arts and Center are close, as well as the new theater at MSU. Money needs to go towards more full-time faculty and Professional Staff. There is almost a 2 to 1 full-time faculty/ adjunct ration here at Kean. A handout about the governor of Indiana and Missouri repealing collective bargaining rights for state employees was distributed.

*D. Casale referred to J. Castiglione to talk about the grievances and potential ULPs we have. C. Damiao and J. Castiglione are currently the Grievance Committee Co-Chairs. There are a large number of grievances against the Administration right now. Fourteen untenured faculty were not reappointed. Many were highly qualified. One member has already been hired by Seton Hall University. Some of these faculty members have filed grievances. In one case there are suspect student evaluations and in another there appears to have been an unclear set of expectations. A major grievance addresses the attempt by the Administration to change, unilaterally and without consultation, the evaluation forms for Professional Staff. This is being treated very seriously. If it cannot be resolved at the grievance level, it will move to a ULP. Members are reminded that if there is a violation of contract, there is a 45-day window in which to move forward, so such violations need to be addressed immediately.

II. Treasurer's Report

*E. Comerford reported that two new computers were approved by the KFT Executive Council for purchase for the KFT office since one needed repair and they were ten years old and needed replacement to accommodate enhancement of the KFT web site. \$10,000 has been allotted this year for scholarships. Last year, a \$50,000 endowment fund was established by the KFT. 5% will be paid out in KFT scholarships and the remaining \$2,500 will go toward the endowment fund so it will increase. We are just about at a break-even point with expenditures and budget.

*In this past week, the KFT received a "Comparative Credit Peer Review" (as handed out) done by the outside agency A.G. Edwards which assessed the university financial structure. The data in the report was based on the 2003 fiscal year. There were trends in it that warrant explanation; e.g., what are the implications of the increased FTEs (12,978 in 6/03); in the 2005 estimated budget, for the first time, there is an expenditure of capital projects in the amount of \$7 million and other building projects of \$6 million. Part of that money obviously comes out of the operating budget. Kean pays the least amount of money per student (\$4 per student) for research (the total out of the operating budget that goes to research) out of the NJ colleges/universities (not counting UMDNJ and Rutgers), with some colleges listed as \$100 per student. We are also opening up a satellite campus at Raritan Valley Community College. The decision to bond \$90 million was made with a handful of people; i.e., the Board of Trustees. We need a voice in the budget process. There is a joint effort with the Faculty Senate to have a say about the budget. There may also be a 10% cut from the State to all State agencies. East campus is being renovated and Graduate programs are being promoted. In 6/03, the report indicates that we had the lowest percentages among our sister institutions in undergraduates (78%) for the total FTEs. William Paterson University has 84% undergraduates with a total of 10,771 FTEs and Montclair State University has 83% undergraduates with a total of 10,874 FTEs. However, in 6/03, we had the largest number of FTEs. Kean has increased its use of instructional adjuncts to respond to the increased student population with a cheap strategy. Our budget is based on 8,000 FTEs as officially reported on the Kean web site.

III. Negotiations Report

*C. Kelly and D. Casale have been trying to negotiate with the Administration, but have been unjustifiably stalled. The months of October, November and December were not shoeing progress in the context of negotiation. D. Davis of the State Council has drafted language for a ULP. Subsequently, five negotiation meetings, beginning with 2/4 and every Friday after that, were set up with the Administration and if one is cancelled by the Administration for no good reason, we will move forward with a ULP. On the issue of chair compensation, the KFT will have a meeting with department chairs on 2/2/05. The Administration has already received a KFT conceptual document.

IV. Political Action

*J. Erickson indicated that legislators are relatively quiet in respect to higher education right now. They have been busy discussing property taxes, the budget shortfall and the proposed minimum wage increase. There is an Accountability bill for oversight of colleges, which would include a labor member on all Boards. The bill passed in the Assembly, but has been held up in the Senate because it is illegal to have a Union member on the Board of Rutgers University.

V. Social Report

*N. Rodriguez stated that \$3,000 was spent for the holiday party in December. Please e-mail her regarding the quality of the food, price and the venue. We had run out of Coke and plates and the bartender left for a while (although there is a minimum payment for the bartender of five hours, even if he/she is used less). The cost for the same kind of party as that in Fall of 2003 would have been \$9,000. For use of the Blue Room in the University Center, a set up fee of \$25 is now being charged. It has been investigated and because we are an independent organization, we are not obliged to utilize food services. If we have a luncheon at Downs Hall, we can order from the outside because we are not using the Kean operating budget. Student organization is incorporated and they do not use food services. Last year, food services would not sign-off on a food waiver to allow us to use an outside food vendor. The alternative is to bring in food from the outside. N. Rodriguez will investigate outside food vendors and will bring information back to members. There will be luncheon meetings for Professional Staff, Librarians, Untenured Faculty and Faculty. If anyone has any special dietary needs, inform N. Rodriguez ahead of time.

Meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Linda Bradbury, Secretary to the KFT.