



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
18 February 2004 3:30 pm
Hutchinson Hall, Room 100

I. President's Report

*D. Casale reported that there were meetings on Monday-Wednesday and will be one on Thursday for the Provost Search. There will be an Open Forum for each of the four candidates in the Kean Hall conference room. Both the KFT and KUAFF will have an appointment to meet with each of the candidates individually for one-half hour each. Discussion ensued. There will be a check done with the unions at the candidates' institutions. Candidates need to be questioned about their ideas re: scholarship and research by faculty, faculty office hours, their definition of the Provost's role, their concept of the library's place at a university.

*D. Casale encouraged members to vote for the KFT election. Ballots were sent out 2/13/04. If someone did not yet get a ballot, contact J. Erickson or N. Hall.

*D. Casale reported that there was a meeting between D. Casale, J. Castiglione, D. Davis and T. Lisa and P. Connelly re: administration of the new Master Contract for changes in the contract affecting Faculty, Librarians and Professional Staff. There will be additional meetings in March, April and May with this group.

*D. Casale announced that the new and current Master Contract is in the September 2003 AFT VOICE, including a salary guide, and the highlights of the contract. The books for the contract are still being printed up, but the new contract is in effect now. It should be noted that the Librarians have been changed to faculty status with step increases. There are strong protections for intellectual property rights and guidelines for on-line courses. The KFT will meet with the Librarians, Provost and P. Connelly re: contract changes. There will be an educational campaign regarding the contract changes.. The anniversary raises should be reflected on your paychecks. T. Lisa stated she is following the new contract. Be vigilant about discrepancies in the Administration following the contract, including the step increases.

*D. Casale announced that a hearing has been scheduled for March 11, 2004 with the Public Employee Relations Commission (PERC) re: an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) against the Kean Administration for illegal capping of overloads. As per the Master Contract, overloads remain uncapped and voluntary.

*D. Casale announced that a new Board of Trustee's member has been appointed. Trustee Lesniak approved of the appointment. He new Trustee had met with N. Yovnello. He is the former President of the Carpenter's Union. Tom Wirth is still a candidate for the Board and will be pushed by the State Council for appointment. There will be a meeting set up with the new Board appointee.

*D. Casale announced that J. Erickson will set up a legislative breakfast to meet with legislators to extend for political outreach.

*D. Casale announced that there was a Taskforce formed by the President on Student Academic Support Services which addressed faculty office hours and responsibilities. The Taskforce's report was handed out. The Provost has rescinded from pushing changes in office hours unilaterally and without negotiation. President Farahi has been dropping into Department meetings and implying that the Taskforce Report passes as negotiation. Discussion ensued. There is a question as to what constitutes (or should constitute) as office hours (moderating a writing group, club, literature magazine, chat room; e-mails, faxes, phone calls from home, etc.). Within the last two weeks feedback has been and is being procured. It is apparent that a lot of work with students is done outside of the office hours in the faculty department office proper. Technology has allowed for even more contact with students, who don't come during the regular office hours, leading to greater efficiency and servicing of students on their time. There would not even be adequate parking on campus if faculty had to be in their office even more hours.

*D. Casale indicated that 13 faculty have filed a grievance as a collective body from the group of faculty who were not promoted last year after having received letters from then President Esposito that he was recommending them for promotion to the Board of Trustees. There will be an arbitration date for late March. There is an effort to have the hearing on campus. The Board of Trustees next meeting is on March 8 (during Spring Break) for action on the next pool of promotion candidates.

II. Local Negotiations Report

*J. Castiglione , KFT Negotiations Chair, indicated that the Taskforce Report has broad implications and emphasized that any change in terms and conditions of employment must be negotiated. The Report is stating that:

- faculty office hours should increase from 3 to 6 per week and from 6 to 9 for Chairs.
- Faculty should have a mandatory three day schedule
- Because advisement falls under other responsibilities, the departments must mandate changes in advising services.

J. Castiglione emphasized that any change in past practice must be negotiated and must accompany a change in compensation. Much discussion ensued. Technology has allowed for more student interaction on their own terms during non-office hours with e-mails, faxes, and phone calls. Many faculty do not have students come to see them during office hours. An issue of disrespect is apparent with this Report. There is an effort to micro-

manage the faculty. With a 3-day mandatory schedule, it would be impossible to do research and creative works in an appropriate manner. What does this say about the Administration's commitment to professional development of faculty? There is a punitive undertone to the Report. No study has been done to indicate that 6 (not 4, 4.5, etc.) is the needed number of hours to have faculty office hours. Relationships with student do not hinge on the number of office hours. Faculty advise students wherever they are. Many faculty are in their offices now in excess of the recommended 6 hours required. 80% of the faculty would be punished for the 20% who do not advise. At William Paterson University and Montclair State University there are Professional Advisors who are trained and well-versed in the connections and inter-relatedness with the myriad academic programs available. It is less productive to be in the office during additional hours.

D. Casale indicated that there are a number of issues re: the Report:

- An issue of respect. The Administration asked, where is the faculty's professionalism? There has to be mutual respect for professionalism needs to be addressed.
- An increased number of hours. What is our position?
- The taskforce has tried to redefine faculty responsibilities. If more responsibilities taken on, more resources are needed. In July and August, faculty are not required to be here. Increases in responsibilities must be commensurate with increases in salary.

Further discussion ensued. The Report is giving simplistic answers to complex problems. Surveys indicate that students are generally happy with advisement. If they cannot find faculty, that is because there are almost twice as many adjuncts without required office hours than full-time faculty with office hours. Students seeking faculty for general education distribution advisement are seeking adjuncts. The Administration wants to move forward without making a close analysis of the data and instead responding to gossip. Real advisement takes place at times other than the middle of the semester. The College Advisors have different responsibilities. The Taskforce starting meeting at the end of September, beginning of October for a total of 44 hours and the Report was due in November. Therefore, no time was given for data gathering and analysis. Adjuncts and the large number of undecided majors are the crux of the problem for which the Administration must take responsibility. Many things can be done to gather data: students can be surveyed, faculty can keep track of students and their numbers seen during office hours, quantification of e-mails, faxes, chat room, instant messaging, etc. The task force report is one-size fits all and is inflexible. Technology should allow for flexibility to meet students on their own terms, and that's not on campus. The Administration reacts to student complaints. Their policy seems to be to get the weeds by burning the garden and the Administration is using the weeds anecdotally to try to enforce changes. The Weekend College component must also be considered. The issue is complex and needs meaningful fact finding. Such importance placed on advising would require that it be an explicit part of program review. It would be interesting to see President's Farahi's office hours when he was in faculty. The Administration has the right bring a proposal, and we have the right to reject it. B. Wailoo motioned to reject Administration's proposals, but withdrew motion due to lack of a quorum.

*J. Castiglione reported that he has been meeting with committees of Chairs and Professional Staff to negotiate with the Administration.

III. Social Committee Report

*N. Rodriguez made two announcements:

1. The next KFT General Membership Meeting will take place on Wednesday, 3/17/04 at 1:30 pm and will be a luncheon meeting. Flyers will be distributed.
2. There were only 13 responses to the survey last year asking members if they prefer the April KFT party to be on-campus or off-campus. The on-campus cost is \$5,000. The off-campus cost would be comparable to have it at The Galloping Hill Inn, The Sheraton or The Hilton Hotel. It appears that people's non-responsiveness indicates that it doesn't matter if it's off-campus or on-campus. Discussion ensued. Non-responsiveness may indicate that no change is deemed necessary. Perhaps another survey with on or off-campus question asked as well as day of the week. A call of hands for on-campus party was 21 in favor; off-campus party was 5 in favor. It was determined that an additional survey of members would be conducted.

M. Rodriguez-Solis moved to adjourn the meeting due to the late hour; seconded by T. Velez.

Motion unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Linda Bradbury, Secretary to the KFT