



KEAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
An Association of Professors, Professional Staff and Librarians
Local 2187, American Federation of Teachers
Kean University, Union, N.J. 07083
Phone 908 737-3925 Fax 908 737-3929

KFT General Membership Meeting
5 October 2005
Hennings Hall, Room 113
3:30 pm

I. Approval of Agenda

B. Lees moved to approve the agenda; seconded by J. Castiglione.

Agenda unanimously approved.

II. Approval of Minutes

J. Castiglione moved to approve the minutes of 30 March, 2005; seconded by R. Katz.

Minutes unanimously approved.

III. President's Report

Opening Day & preliminary findings

*M. Rodriguez indicated that the greatest complaint at the Opening Day KFT meeting was that there was not enough food. Vice President N. Rodriguez is reviewing outside vendors for possible use for other festivities. The food for last year's opening day cost \$7,000, with an additional fee of about \$50 for set-up. It is important that responses to the invitation be given by the deadline dates so that the appropriate amount of food for the attendees can be planned for.

Continued coordination with other labor presidents and need for coordination with student volunteers

*M. Rodriguez stated that she met with the local presidents of the CWA, IFTPE, and the KUAFF. There seems to be intimidation by what's happening at Kean. They attended a meeting with Senator D. Payne. It is imperative that members unify as one voice. The more divided we are, the more there are opportunities for the Administration to try to take away our rights. We need to connect with the student leadership at Kean. Please try to do so. The issues that affect us affect them as well. An informal survey that M. Rodriguez did shows that they are aware that they are being short-changed in services.

Actions taken after Kean B/T censorship

*In preparation of the 9/12/05 Board of Trustees meeting, M. Rodriguez sent to the Board her remarks according to their new policy. Audrey Kelly told M. Rodriguez that the

Board of Trustees read her remarks and were not interested in listening to her in person. The KFT legal counsel, Weissman & Mintz, was consulted and they indicated that the new policy is a violation of the Master Contract. The Union is entitled to go to the Open Forum of the Board meetings and raise any issue that is of concern to the membership. It constitutes a violation of the first amendment free speech rights. The lawyer is working on an interpretation of our rights in this matter. The Open Forum legislation of N.J. is more restricting of topics, but the Board has gone further in requiring submission of the statement to be made. In the last Board meeting, this issue was never listed on the agenda. President Farahi brought it up at the meeting. It is essential that members attend the November 19th Board meeting at 8:30 a.m.-it is the last meeting of the semester. The next one will be in March 2006. No university in New Jersey is facing what we are facing at Kean. Other colleges indicate that everything is quiet at Kean. M.Rodriguez emphasized the importance of having a strong presence there. We need to present our dignified face to the Board of Trustees. We must face the Board and say that this is our institution. These are our students.

Meeting with Senator Lesniak

*The KFT met with Sen. Lesniak at his home at his invitation. He indicated that we should have access to the Board and that he would introduce legislation to make sure it happens on all campuses. He had previously cancelled several times when he was supposed to meet with the State Council and the KFT.

*The State Council COPE committee and the State Council approved a list of the COPE endorsements. A survey was sent to legislators who are running for office and matched with endorsements from the AFL-CIO. Those who responded and also had the AFL-CIO endorsement received the COPE endorsement. A handout was referred to, listing the endorsed candidates. Those that are asterisked received local COPE fund donations for their campaigns.

*Kean University was not acknowledged, nor was Sen Lesniak or President Farahi when President Clinton and Sen. Corzine appeared here for a rally. It was questioned as to whether this was intentional and it seems to have been, since Sen. Corzine does not want to be associated with any scrutinized public officer. Both J. Cryan and Sen. Lesniak are being scrutinized. A. Estrada was on stage with Sen, Corzine at the rally. M. Rodriguez has contacted him for support. He has given money to Kean every year for the last five years, but did not do so this year because of the anti-labor climate as well as the deplorable treatment given to Latinos in key positions at KU.

Candidate Jon Corzine

The Corzine campaign headquarters has asked for volunteers to go on labor walks from 9-12 on Saturdays. Whoever attends should tell the KFT so we have a record of it and should identify themselves as KFT members to the Central Labor Council. A sign-up sheet was passed around for volunteers. He is a labor-friendly governor and has a grade of 100% from the AFL-CIO, as reported in the Sunday Star-Ledger this past weekend. Discussion ensued. According to the Provost, the Corzine rally was not a Kean event, and therefore Administrators could not be involved in the event. This comment was

interpreted as face-saving. Sen. Corzine appeared before the State Council. He spoke about his respect for labor and that he'd support State oversight of the public colleges. He indicated that more than two labor people should be on each of the Board of Trustees of the public colleges.

Follow up on OPRA requests

*M. Rodriguez indicated that budget information we get is partial information. We will soon be negotiating with the State. The budget line given only shows all salaries lumped together. The last OPRA request filed was for the salaries of the top administrators. Discussion ensued. It was heard that there is a "yellow book" in the Kean library with the salaries of all the Kean administrators. President Farahi is the highest paid president of our sister public colleges in New Jersey, including his sign-on bonus of \$35,000. His base salary is \$265,000. He also received a raise in salary 14 days after being selected as President. Previous presidents were not paid at this high of a rate. We also need to know what other perks the administrators receive. Increases that the administrators receive should be reflected in our future salary increases. Let the KFT know if any other issues need to be explored.

Advocacy role played in the UPC-Creation of Ad-hoc Middle States KFT Committee

Kean will be going through a Middle States periodic review. The KFT needs to be represented in this review. We can raise the issue of accountability. The retention rate is problematic for the university. The university was asked for retention rates in the past, especially as per ethnic groups. The aggregate retention rates have declined yearly since 2001 in every graduating class in every year. We have not yet heard the news on retention rates for this year. Anecdotally, the retention rate is worse and the retention rates for transfer students was lower for the first time. The Senators on the Faculty Senate need to raise the key issues.

Approach to Star-Ledger reporter

*M. Rodriguez spoke to a Star-Ledger reporter and told her that there are two times more adjuncts than full-time faculty (that's why the full-time faculty were required to have more office hours), and about the change in policy for speaking during the Open Forum before the Board. The reporter told her that most colleges are doing the same thing. M. Rodriguez indicated that as a reporter, she should be interested in the right to free speech. If anyone has contacts with the Star-Ledger, please ask them to come to the Board meeting on Saturday, November 19, at 8:30 am.

Department Representatives

*The KFT wants to activate department links with the Union. One of the greatest problems is that people experience intimidation. We are not treated as professionals, so people are fearful. If there would be a person in each department to whom people could turn, then, that person could liaison with the Union. Nineteen people in the Union cannot do the job alone. If you are interested, let us know. Discussion ensued. The department reps would not have to attend the Executive Council meetings. Whether a situation is

grieve-able or not is a question that people often ask. The department reps would let us know how well the contract is enforced daily or not.

IV. Treasurer's Report

*E. Comerford stated that a financial review was done in the summer and a summary will be coming. There was a slight excess of \$2,000 left in the budget from this past year. We tried to stay within the budget and live within our means so that dues do not have to be raised. We received a 2% increase in our salaries in September and will receive another 2% in February. The dues monies collected will reflect these increases. The AFT and State Council also raise their dues. They receive 55-60% of the dues collected from our members. Our dues are just under 1% of the salary, making it the lowest in the State. We are down about 36 members from June. The new hires that became members will only be known in the first pay date in October. The new hires are paid less than senior members who left, and therefore their amount of dues is less. If you know of anyone who is not a KFT member, encourage him or her to join. Fifty percent of the new faculty joined as members and COPE election cards are coming in afterwards. The State Council sent notifications to employees to indicate whether they are full members or agency members. Discussion ensued. The KFT has \$329,000 in assets. That's our strength. We have tried not to dip into the reserve. We had dipped into it for the scholarship endowment fund. We also give scholarships on an individual basis. Scholarships are an important aspect of the Union.

V. Strategic Plan

*M. Rodriguez stated that the KFT met during the summer to develop a strategic plan with specific goals. We take the job seriously and want to concentrate on a few achievable goals. Equity, fairness and respect can only be achieved if everyone participates. Those of us who spend most of our lives here are disrespected. A survey of members was distributed at the September meeting and is available on the KFT web page. Three important questions were analyzed and a handout was referred to. For those who responded to the survey, in answer to the first question, "Do you feel the Administration supports its personnel?", the average score was 2.13, closest to "Little value". In response to question #7, "To what degree do you believe the Administration is acting in good faith regarding its collective bargaining obligation?", the average score was 1.60, between "Virtually not at all" and "Barely meeting its obligation". In response to #9, "Do you think the KFT needs to be ___ with the University Administration?" the average score was 3.06, closest to "Somewhat more assertive".

VI. Web Master's Report

*J. Alexander is the KFT web master. Feedback is needed to improve the web site. A blog is available which is set up to protect people's identities.

VII. Planning for Media retreat

*A media retreat for KFT officers is planned for 10/20/05.

X. KFT Committee Reports

Negotiations Report

*J. Castiglione reported on Negotiations since C. Kelly could not be at meeting. In regards to the Tenured Faculty Research Initiative, an agreement is being worked on. There are sure signs of progress due to pressure placed on the Administration. A Compensatory time agreement was reached for 80-85% of the Professional Staff who are I considered NL employees. A handful of segments have temporarily been kept off the agreement. The Administration has agreed in concept to apply the agreement to the excluded titles. The agreement is on the KFT web site (kft2187.org).

Another agreement signed in September is in regard to the University Promotions Committee. A letter was sent out, with a copy of the document itself, explaining that the time to appeal non-reappointment was changed, along with the calendar.

The KFT is working on agreements for Chair compensation, 9 + 3 teaching load, summer advisement compensation and librarian promotions.

The KFT is looking at the range adjustment program. Currently, four years of peer and student evaluations are required. The Administration is willing to cut back on the number of evaluations required if the amount awarded is cut down. The amount currently is \$10,000-11,000, if you receive a range adjustment at the higher ranges. The KFT needs feedback on the range adjustments.

A second draft of the Tenured Faculty Research Initiative agreement is being completed. Feedback is needed on that as well.

In the summer, faculty is not required to work. Some chairs have responsibilities for advisement. The KFT is trying to work out some compensation for the augmented work. William Paterson University has such an agreement. Faculty members who want to do advising are trained, are assigned a limited caseload, and are compensated for it. Montclair State University relies on Professional Advisors in the academic departments.

Grievance

*J. Castiglione is handling faculty grievances, and M. Wuethrich and S. Holderman are dealing with Professional Staff grievances.

Any faculty member who has been affected by a cap on summer teaching, let the KFT know about it.

A ULP has been filed due to a new evaluation of Chairs, which included management responsibilities.

It is critical to enforce the contract. If you believe there has been a violation of the contract, let the KFT know. There is a 45-day window for most grievances. If it passes the 45 days, the possibility to grieve will be lost.

XII. New Issues

*There was an Iraqi labor leader tour of the U.S. SUNY-Stonybrook invited them and they visited many universities. Labor issues cut across all cultures. There is a \$100 video that can be used by anyone available.

*C. Fantaousakis is chairing a committee for KFT participation in the Middle States periodic review. The committee members have not yet met. We need to take any opportunity to present issues of governance. We have lost such opportunities in the recent past.

*There is a growing number of academic specialists being hired. They have become the equivalent to Professional Staff as adjuncts are to full-time faculty.

C. Fantaousakis moved to adjourn; seconded by J. Bloustein.

Motion to adjourn unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Linda Bradbury, Secretary to the KFT.