



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

CAS 105

Monday, April 6, 2009

3:30pm – 4:30pm

President's Report:

Announcements: KFT is currently planning a professional staff luncheon scheduled for this summer. Linda Bradbury (VP) is taking the lead in organizing this event, so as soon as the details are solidified KFT members will be notified.

Due to the many concerns expressed by KFT members about the state health benefits audit forms they received via home mail, the KFT in consultation with the State Council had asked members of the KFT to delay filling out the forms and submitting them to the state health benefits program until further instructed. The forms sought to verify employee eligibility or dependent eligibility within the state health benefits program. State Council was able to get a temporary suspension of the program until major problems were resolved, and so now, to the extent that you can complete the forms, do so, but please remember to try and protect your identity as best you can by blacking out your Social Security # and other financial information. If you lost the form, go to the State Council website to find a link to a replacement form.

Report: To date, nothing has been decided about the proposed wage freeze and furloughs. Information published in the newspapers about the proposed wage freeze and furloughs is speculative at best.

President Castiglione urged KFT members to be more active in protecting the bargaining unit Contract. KFT members can go to the State Council web site and write a letter or edit the letter on the site that urges State representatives to honor our Contract. This action on the KFT members' part will help the Union leadership.

If you are aware of any wasteful spending at Kean please inform the KFT about it. The KFT will forward that information to the appropriate State office or agency.

The KFT Resolution regarding the impending wage freeze and furloughs was approved at the last meeting. As it stands now, the Civil Service Commission ruled that Governor Corzine has the right to furlough state workers, but to date the colleges are

not affected. President Castiglione stated that he is not sure how the furlough ruling will be applied, but the KFT will alert members when it has firm information.

State Council continues to work with the State College and University Presidents in trying to get more stimulus money from the State to help lessen the blow on higher education. President Farahi has scheduled a budget meeting for April 7, 2009. This meeting will not be a negotiations meeting but will be informational.

J. Erickson attended a recent State Committee meeting where it was stated that the State can increase money to institutions if they can prove they spent allocated monies in the previous year. *KFT member asked: Is there a reorganization plan for Kean? Is the Administration considering stopping the assignment of overloads completely?* The KFT could not answer these questions because it had not heard anything. President Castiglione did comment that Kean has a lot of administrative waste and is extremely top heavy in the administrative ranks.

There has been a settlement with KFT concerning the issue of faculty office hour policy. Faculty can go back to the original (5) office hour policy at least until the end of the semester. This is a clear victory for our bargaining unit and for proper process. The KFT will continue to negotiate this issue asking for four hours over three days for faculty and eight hours over three days for chairs and no office hours after 8:00 pm. President Castiglione interjected that since the official office hour policy for faculty has been restored back to the original policy, please urge your colleagues to make their office hours official by announcing them in class and posting them on their office doors and on KeanWise.

There is also a settlement on the Promotion Committee grievance. The KFT Observer will henceforth have access to the applicant files for the purpose of determining the existence of procedural violations. The settlement outlines a process for having any problems rectified expeditiously to hold faculty harmless. This is a major victory to fairness and equity in the promotion's process.

Comparison of promotions with our sister institutions indicate that Kean is far behind them in the number of faculty, librarian and professional staff promotions, pro staff reclassifications and faculty range adjustments offered. The lack of career advancement opportunities undermines the morale of the faculty and staff.

Recent problems with the A-328 process in one department remind us that faculty must be vigilant of their own A-328 application so that it is subject to proper procedure. If you find a violation, please let us know as soon as possible.

Negotiations Committee Report: C. Kelly reported that the Administration insisted that the "new work rules" were intended to improve the quality of academic advisement in addition to increasing retention and graduation rates. The Administration did not

provide any data to support this claim. C. Kelly iterated to the Administration that Kean is a commuter population and not a primarily residential campus so scheduling faculty for academic advisement may be problematic. Other issues to be considered when scheduling faculty for academic advisement are: some faculty will be better than others; academic departments vary in size of faculty and students; and the non-flexibility of the “new work rules.” The KFT will continue to negotiate these issues. In fact, at the next negotiations meeting scheduled for Thursday, April 9, 2009, the KFT will propose that the full time faculty course load be changed to a three course load assignment from the current four course load assignment. The proposed change in faculty course load will allow for the facilitation in scheduling of faculty for academic advisement.

Transition to Retirement Program will be implemented and faculty must apply to be considered. KFT is demanding that it receive a letter from the Administration assuring that faculty accepted into the Program will have half-time teaching assignments. The KFT will continue to negotiate this issue and if at any point negotiations cease, the KFT can and will go to PERC.

The Negotiations Committee will continue to pursue getting compensation for faculty who participate in training after the academic year ends.

The Administration still wants to conduct evaluation of faculty every semester. KFT reiterated its position on this issue stating that there are many faculty evaluation processes in place already: reappointment, A328, promotion, etc. The KFT will consider the Administration’s evaluation process if data resulting from the evaluations are used for assessment and professional development accompanied by funds. We do not want the Administration to use data for retention or personnel decisions.

The KFT and Administration agree with the modifications to the Performance Based Promotions Program for Professional Staff. There has not been any disclosure of the number of possible promotions.

Grievance Report

Two grievances have been filed: 1. Leave time concerning the “Snow Day” for March 2, 2009; and 2. Procedural violations in the elections run by the faculty senate.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:35 pm

Respectfully submitted by,
Eleanor McKnight, Secretary