



## KEAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

*An Association of Professors, Professional Staff and Librarians*

Local 2187, American Federation of Teachers

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### **KFT General Membership Meeting**

**April 22, 2021**

**3:30-5:15 pm**

***Virtual (via Zoom)***

#### **I. President's Report**

- A. *KFT Committee Sign-ups.*** President Castiglione reminded and encouraged members to sign up for committees, and he explained how to do this and why it is so important. He also asked members to urge their colleagues to fill out the committee forms.
- B. *Carey Brown PERS Election.*** President Castiglione reminded members about Carey Brown's election and to vote for him if you are in PERS.
- C. *Update on deadline for final grades.*** Frank Argote-Freyre reported that the Administration is considering moving the deadline to May 10, but as this would create problems, he has suggested May 17 but has not gotten a response yet.
- D. *Furloughs & filing for unemployment.***
  - 1. President Castiglione reported that individuals teaching Summer 1 and still needing 10 days of furloughs will be assigned furloughs by the University May 10-21. Those not teaching Summer 1 and needing 10 furlough days will be assigned by the University starting May 17.
  - 2. President Castiglione stated that anyone hired this calendar year should not be getting a furlough and that anyone who got one anyway should email the KFT office to seek help.
  - 3. President Castiglione explained that those who did 4 furlough days in July in effect did 5 regular days because of the 4-day summer workweek, but some Managers may not understand this.
  - 4. President Castiglione explained that May furloughs will bring weekly unemployment benefits + \$300 of enhanced benefits from the government, so many junior colleagues may almost break even. He shared again the document from the Montclair AFT Local he had emailed about how to get these benefits. He noted the importance of Slide 18. He also reminded everyone that the Slides are for Montclair, not Kean, but the other information is the same, and he urged members to set up an account now, so that they can get into the system right away when the time comes. He also cautioned members to watch out for fraud, and he explained what to do if they have been a victim of fraud.
  - 5. President Castiglione stated that he will issue additional clarification later about attending graduation during furloughs. There are many complex issues involved.

6. President Castiglione suggested that furloughed members set up an automated vacation email redirecting people to their ED or Dean's office.
  7. President Castiglione responded to questions about Workers' Comp relating to furloughs.
- E. *Lecturer reappointments.*** President Castiglione reported that all Lecturers who applied for reappointment were reappointed, and those who had 5+ years of service received 2-year contracts.
- F. *Lecturer vacation rollovers.*** President Castiglione took up a fact reported by a member that Lecturers cannot roll any more vacation over to 2022. He said that the KFT will inquire about this and report back.

## **II. Updates on Professional Staff Concerns**

- A.** Walter Mack reported and urged members to email him with issues and especially if they have documentation – this has been very helpful.
- B.** W. Mack stated that the ProStaff reappointment process is rife with problems and procedural violations, and the KFT is working on solutions. He also thanked ProStaff KFT members for documenting violations.
- C.** W. Mack mentioned other additional issues currently under discussion: hostile work environment, out of title work (Article XVI of the Master Contract), the promotion process, the reopening of the university, furloughs, working on Saturdays, comp time.
- D.** President Castiglione added that members should know their rights and read the Master Contract. He repeated that the KFT Office email address is confidential.
- E.** W. Mack added that managers must inform ProStaffers of their rights in writing whenever they ask ProStaffers to work on Saturdays, out of title, and so on.
- F.** Frank Argote-Freyre raised the problem of one particular manager as a hostile person who has treated ProStaff shabbily, as well as the problem of reclassification for changed job duties / salary upgrades not happening for years.

## **III. Treasurer's Report**

- A.** Reva Narasimhan walked members through the KFT budget. She reported that the legal fees that were built into the budget might not be needed, which would mostly clear the projected deficit. However, the KFT may take a hit from the furloughs and the resulting lost member dues. She also moved some reserve money to a money market account and moved our main checking account to a new bank, so that the reserve account now gets a small interest benefit, and we now have no fees.

## **IV. Local Negotiations' Report**

- A.** Frank Argote-Freyre urged members considering retirement to include in their planning the possibility that last year's retirement package offer will be renewed.
- B.** He responded to a question about the 1-credit compensation for Spring 2020 course conversions. He said that he is still working on the 35 claims and the University will inform the claimants when their cases are resolved.
- C.** F. Argote-Freyre noted that the faculty promotions process may be overhauled.
- D.** F. Argote-Freyre mentioned that we have a new Labor Council, Zaire Estrella-Chambers, who will work with Ken Green on transitioning into the position. F.

Argote-Freyre broached the grade extension issue with her. He is also working with her on settling Professional Staff non-reappointments from last year.

- E.** F. Argote-Freyre reported that all Lecturers were reappointed and one is moving to a Diversity Fellows position. The KFT's Lecturers Proposal is asking for 5-year contracts and 30-33 teaching credits among many other demands, but it appears there will be little progress until the new SVPA is in place.
- F.** In response to a Chat question about Lecturers converting to tenure-track status, President Castiglione clarified that the University has the power to convert Lecturers to tenure-track positions at will, but currently this is completely governed by the administration. Hopefully, the Lecturers' Proposal will establish fair procedures and a transparent path.
- G.** A Chat question raised the issue of EDs vs. Department Chairs. President Castiglione explained why this is a Senate matter rather than a KFT matter.
- H.** President Castiglione reported that Jeff Toney, as SVP of Research, will no longer handle personnel evaluations, promotions, and so on, all of which will be governed by the new SVPA.
- I.** A Chat comment raised the question of how the advising center will affect 12-month Lecturers. President Castiglione responded that he will inquire about this.

#### V. Fall Reopening Concerns.

- A.** **Craig Donovan reported on the Ventilation issue:** According to HR, all Kean buildings have had their ventilation upgraded according to CDC standards. C. Donovan will check on this after getting the full report and will report his finding back to us. There was some discussion of the fact that many rooms have no windows or windows that do not open, and that some faculty and staff are concerned about working in those rooms with other people and suggest that those rooms should not be used for classes.
- B.** **Other concerns raised by members in the Chat and vocally:**
  1. **Mandatory masks, mandatory vaccines for faculty and students?** Members suggested the University poll students and faculty about their feelings on these.
  2. **Official Union position on Fall reopening?** President Castiglione mentioned that the Council agreed that we don't have enough information as a body to take a position on this yet. Professional Staff colleagues expressed concerns about the July 6<sup>th</sup> date for their return to campus.
  3. **Remote office hours?** President Castiglione will raise this with the University.
  4. **Remote classes?** President Castiglione noted that according to the University, students overwhelmingly want to return to in-person classes, but there appears to be a substantial minority who are interested in remote classes.
  5. **Access to vaccines?** President Castiglione noted that Kean has been vaccinating employees and may soon make it easy for students to get vaccinated too. A member reported that vaccines are ongoing in Downs Hall. President Castiglione suggested that we photograph our vaccine cards when we get them as a backup record in case they get lost.

#### VI. Additional Questions & Concerns. None.

**VII.Meeting adjourned at 5:15 pm.**