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**

**Thurs. Feb. 3, 2022**

**3:30- 5:12 pm**

***CAS 106 and Virtual (via Zoom*)**

1. **KFT Election Nominations Petitions**
   1. President Castiglione turned the meeting over to Brian Baldwin, Chair of the KFT Election Committee.
   2. Brian Baldwin thanked the other Committee members (Celene Krauss, George Avirapattu). He then explained the history of KFT elections and clarified the procedures for contested vs. uncontested elections.
   3. ***Election for KFT Officers***
      1. B. Baldwin described the nomination procedures followed prior to this meeting and those to be conducted at this meeting.
      2. B. Baldwin announced that he had received one set of petitions prior to the meeting and asked if there were additional petitions to be submitted. No additional petitions were submitted, and B. Baldwin announced that nominations were now closed, and that the election was uncontested.
      3. B. Baldwin next read the names of the nominees: President: James Castiglione; Vice-Presidents (3): Ana Wetzel, David Joiner, Frank Argote-Freyre; Secretary: Shannon Case; Treasurer: Reva Narasimhan; At-Large positions (8): Jacqueline Keil, Matthew Halper, Thomas Abraham, Daniel Gover, Norma Bowe, Carey Brown, Anisah Abdul-Baasit, Richard Harrell
      4. B. Baldwin asked for a motion to declare the election by acclamation. Celene Krauss moved. George Avirapattu seconded. There was no discussion and the motion was called to question. B. Baldwin asked the Secretary (S. Case) to read the motion: “There is a motion to declare the election of KFT officers by acclamation and to authorize the chair of the KFT Election Committee to cast one vote for each of the nominees.” A voice vote followed. The motion to declare the election of KFT officers by acclamation carried unanimously.
      5. B. Baldwin cast one vote for all of the uncontested nominations for each elected position and congratulated the newly elected officers.
   4. ***Election of Delegates to the AFT National Convention***
      1. B. Baldwin read the names of the nominees: James Castiglione and Carey Brown.
      2. B. Baldwin asked if there were additional nominees. There were none, and B. Baldwin announced that nominations were now closed and that the election was uncontested.
      3. Tom Walsh moved to declare the election of Delegates by acclamation. Barbara Lee seconded. There was no discussion and the motion was called to question. B. Baldwin asked the Secretary (S. Case) to read the motion: “There is a motion to declare the election of Delegates to the AFT National Convention by acclamation and to authorize the chair of the KFT Election Committee to cast one vote for each of the nominees.” A voice vote followed. The motion to declare the election of the Delegates by acclamation carried unanimously.
      4. B. Baldwin cast one vote for both uncontested candidates and congratulated the newly elected Delegates.
   5. ***Follow-Up Remarks from the President***
      1. Pres. Castiglione gave a heartfelt thanks to the Election Committee for its hard work and for the clever solution they developed to circumvent the problems of a Covid-era election. He also thanked the Members for their contribution.
      2. Pres. Castiglione explained that Walter Mack decided not run again for VP because he wanted to allow someone else to move into leadership. He thanked W. Mack for his many years of service, and he thanked Ana Wetzel for stepping forward to run in his place.
2. **President’s Report**
   1. ***Concerns RE: Return to Campus***. Pres. Castiglione asked Members for feedback about their return to campus.
      1. ***Masking?*** Members reported that some students are not complying. A member stated that those students must be reported to the Student Conduct Board.
      2. ***Booster mandate for employees?*** Members generally agreed.
      3. ***Booster mandate for students?*** Members generally agreed.
      4. Pres. Castiglione mentioned that the Council met with Governor Murphy to request state support for masks, boosters, etc., but the Gov. would not agree to the meeting. He also noted that Kean has mask supplies to dispense for free.
   2. ***Interfolio for A-328, Lecturers, Promotions***.
      1. Pres. Castiglione directed Members’ attention to the latest KFT email detailing important changes that the KFT secured for those seeking promotion:
         1. Peer observations dating back an additional 2 years can now be used (9/2019 through 3/2022).
         2. The due date has been extended from 2/28/2022 to 3/11/2022.
      2. Pres. Castiglione asked for feedback on using Interfolio this cycle. A summary of the main points follows:
         1. Interfolio is cumbersome, repetitive, primitive, glitchy, and often inappropriate. The Faculty Activity piece can be eliminated. Student names do not belong in a faculty members’ dossier. The whole thing needs to be revised. Candidate’s statement should be first. Teaching evaluations are cumbersome; summary charts should be prepared by Campus Labs for all candidates. CampusLabs data should be linked to Interfolio; faculty should not be burdened with uploading all of this data; if data exists electronically, it should automatically populate; the systems should be dynamically linked. Need to delineate publications submitted vs accepted vs published. Interfolio asks for additional info/documents not required in the Letter of Agerement.
         2. Lecturers were required to submit materials from previous reappointment cycles, which is at odds with the normal procedure.
         3. One colleague stated that the whole process was terrible, frustrating, opaque, and time-wasting; that new requirements were announced willy-nilly and in an untimely way; and that he was not promoted and received no information about why or how to appeal.
   3. ***Faculty Promotion Concerns*.** Pres. Castiglione summed up the KFT’s work in this area as follows:
      1. We have been making progress toward negotiations over a new procedure for performance-based promotions for ProStaff. The University has our proposal and we are hoping for a counter soon.
      2. Meanwhile, we are hearing about deviations from our current procedures.
      3. The President might alter his recommendations as a result of the appeals process. The KFT will urge him to expand the number of promotions. Managerial holdovers from the previous administration may be involved.
      4. The KFT has advocated for promoting all assistant professors. This may not occur all at once, and we cannot guarantee any outcome, but we will take today’s member feedback to the President and do what we can to increase the number of promotions for faculty, ProStaff, lecturers, and Librarians.
      5. Concerns members cited include: appeals process lacks clarity; morale is a concern; concerns about transparency and feedback; administration would be wise to use promotions to build support among faculty
   4. ***Responsible Collective Negotiations Act*.** Pres. Castiglione explained that the Act was passed but in an enfeebled form. The non-imposition clause was removed, and the expanded scope of negotiable issues was rejected. He stated that the one real benefit for unions is that if a non-member pursues arbitration for a grievance, the non-member must pay for the litigation, which protects the union members from non-members seeking union benefits without paying dues. Pres. Castiglione reiterated that non-imposition is still a big goal, and as we move forward with the new NJ Senate President (Sen. Nick Scutari), we may try to resurrect it in the future.
3. **Local Negotiations Report**
   1. ***Research Release Time***. Frank Argote-Freyre learned that the Provost will present a proposal to allow TT faculty to request 6 credits release time for research.
   2. ***Lecturers’ Proposal.*** F. Argote-Freyre stated that this Proposal will be negotiated on Feb. 8 at 11 am.
   3. ***Promotions this Cycle***. F. Argote-Freyre stated that he is still waiting for feedback on the number of faculty who were actually promoted. He urged those who were not promoted to appeal. He emphasized that we cannot get a sense of the big picture until we know the exact numbers and types of promotions that were granted.
   4. ***Art History***: We have been promised a resolution lifting the termination of the faculty by end of Feb., but we have yet to receive the University’s final proposal on this. The University has given us its word that the jobs will be saved.
   5. ***Questions from Members, with F. Argote-Freyre’s response in [brackets] :***
      1. *Does the research release time apply to those just hired?* [Response: We don’t know because we have not seen the proposal yet.]
      2. *Will Lecturers qualify for research release time?* [Response: No. It is only for TT faculty.]
      3. *Will the new research release system do away with UFRI and RTR?* [Response: Probably, because we need a completely new process to get us to R2 status.]
      4. *Art History: Shouldn’t we be pushing harder on this?* [Response: The University has been told all along that this is our top priority, and the University has already agreed to rescind the retrenchments. We take them at their word.]
      5. *UPC and Procedural Violations:* Christopher Bellitto expressed concerns about apparent deviations from procedure this promotion cycle. He said that the President did not inform the Committee of the number of promotions in advance and did not meet with the Committee to discuss his differences with the Committee’s rankings. [Response: Once we learn for certain who was promoted and who was not, and once we have collected reports of suspected violations, we will be able to survey the whole state of affairs and decide on the best course of action for the membership.]
      6. *Research Release Time:* A member voiced concern that new faculty will get release time while colleagues hired somewhat earlier will not, which is unfair. [Response: We understand fully, but we cannot weigh in on this before we know the big picture, and see the details of any forthcoming proposal.]
      7. *More Promotions Concerns*: A lengthy, detailed discussion continued past the scheduled end of the meeting among a few remaining members regarding promotions, the UPC, the appeals process, and other related matters.

**Meeting adjourned at 5:12 pm.**

**Respectfully submitted by:**

*Shannon Case, Secretary*