

AFT Local 6262 - Executive Board Meeting

Location: Zoom

January 21, 2023

Attendees: Dan Portillo, Warren Heaton, John Francis, Aaron Silverman, Jessica Small, and Pete Virgadamo

Absent: Frank de los Reyes

Guests: 10 adjuncts and Anthony Solis of CFT

Dan Portillo, the president of AFT Local 6262, began the Open Session of our meeting at 2:10 pm and welcomed our guests as well as our new CFT rep, Anthony Solis. After the agenda was amended and approved, Dan turned the meeting over to the adjunct faculty to allow them to express their concerns. As with our December meeting, Secretary Pete Virgadamo will enter the words of the adjuncts in complete sentences, their names will be given as XX, as will be the names of their departments, and the responses of the Board members will be given in outline form.

XX – spoke of her problems with dual enrollment in which 2 sections were combined into one, which gave her 41 students – is this an overload situation?

Aaron Silverman – stated that the class limit is 35 students.

Warren Heaton – confirmed Aaron’s words:

- classes are capped at 35 students
- you could drop the extra 6 students to force COC to create a new section
- otherwise you will be putting in a lot more work
- without extra pay

Pete Virgadamo – asked who in COC informed you of the overload situation?

XX No one... I checked the enrollment figures online, which at one time went up to 43 students. This has already meant a lot of extra prep time – what should I do?

Warren – AFT needs to file a grievance

- it is COC’s error to over enroll the class
- COC needs to adjunct her adjunct pay for this overload
- we cannot allow COC to do this again and again
- this is her first semester teaching at COC and it is unfair to burden her with all this extra work

XX – There are lots of issues with dual enrollment, in fact I have a long list of problems associated with dual enrollment. I have to do 60 hours of instruction but I am paid for only 51 hours.

Warren – thank you for bringing these problems to our attention

- we will pursue a grievance on these matters
- Dan and Aaron will reach out to you
- so many of these problems are new to us
- but are part of COC's 'churn and burn' approach to adjunct faculty

Dan – spoke about the upcoming Orientation for new adjuncts

- he has not heard from Omar about a date and time
- but they usually come on the Wednesday before the semester starts
- we will probably use the same plan as in previous Orientations
- he also asked Pete to forward the 'welcome letter' to him

Warren Heaton, the Vice President of Negotiations, spoke at length about last semester's strike:

- which ended before the start of the Winter Session
- he did not want adjuncts to lose that income which would have inflicted a substantial loss to them
- he continued, saying the strike had a positive impact on negotiations
- COC needs to 'sunshine' the negotiation proposals which include for the first time
- the promise of COLA and a large increase on top of that
- AFT is seeking a one year contract while COC wants a 2 year contract
- this time we will not allow 18 months of negotiations
- we will strike again and need to start to build momentum for such action
- in addition to compensation, there remain outstanding issues
- such as we will not work for free, we need to end COC's policy of unpaid labor for adjuncts
- Aaron added that we should add more compensated committees for adjunct faculty

Warren then spoke about more key issues:

1. COC is more willing to pay thousands of dollars to lawyers than to use that money to pay adjuncts
2. during the strike, COC harassed adjuncts, which is an unfair labor practice
3. we are not alone - there is a class action suit in progress which is state-wide and covers all adjuncts in California
4. COC imposed a contract on us that continues with unpaid labor in the form of unscheduled office hours
5. COC is hoarding cash from pandemic funding by putting it into its bloated reserve funds

Aaron added that massive class overloads:

- are being taken by full-time faculty members
- which reduces the overall number of sections
- which hurts the adjuncts

XX – asked several questions about the different enrollment caps for full-time faculty versus adjunct faculty. This is a problem that started when COC removed remedial courses in the department and piled all students into 101 classes, then converted 101 classes into 4 unit course. Now the full-time faculty grab all the 101 sections for themselves, leaving nothing for the adjunct faculty.

Warren replied to this problem:

- stating that full-timers get paid over cap but adjuncts do not
- adjuncts have to be treated the same way as full-timers
- with lower caps and more pay
- in our next round of negotiations, Warren wants to include a ‘me too’ clause
- meaning that if the full-timers get something, the adjuncts would automatically get the same thing

XX - spoke about the hours of time devoted to grading student lab reports and the adjuncts are not paid for it.

Warren – stated that his issue is new to us

- we need to fight for every hour of work at COC
- as hourly employees we will no longer work for free
- this would not be tolerated in a big corporation
- and we should not allow it at COC

Jessica Small, the Vice President of Membership, had no new items to report.

Vice President of Membership Action – this position is currently vacant.

John Francis, the Vice President of Outreach, spoke on several items, especially the Newsletter:

- during the strike period he issued email blasts in lieu of the Newsletter
- he received lots of good feedback about these communications
- now is the time to get back on track and return to the Newsletter
- also he is working with Jessica to make the email lists accurate by adding new names and addresses
- Warren praised John’s work for all the communications during the strike and updating our website
- which provided real-time information to the adjunct faculty

Pete Virgadamo, the Secretary, spoke about several items:

- in regard to the December minutes, he changed the format
- to include the full words of the adjunct speakers
- although the words of the Board members will continue to be in outline form
- also he used 'XX' to protect adjunct names and to allow them to speak more freely
- he next talked about the 'interim grades' used by COC during the strike, asking if this was a violation of the Ed Code?
- and what will be the impact on student transcripts if they transfer to 4 year schools?

Warren – replied that he was unsure of the legality of issuing grades

- before the semester was over
- he said the term 'interim grades' came from COC, not from AFT
- and he is sure that some classes had no subs at all during the strike
- most likely the students left the room and did not report it
- some grades were taken from Canvas without a Final Exam
- if this had happened during an Accreditation visit, it would certainly have raised a red flag

After Pete's report, Dan asked if there were any more questions from the adjuncts before we went to the Closed Session.

XX- stated she has taught at COC since 2xxx and is not familiar with the word 'caps.'

Warren – replied that details on 'caps' was most likely explained in Orientation, if at all

- this is not required information
- but we should add it to our Newsletter

XX- asked why the seniority rules are not followed in the Winter Session and Summer School.

Warren – said that we fought and won for seniority in the semesters

- but COC has adamantly refused to implement it in Winter and Summer
- instead, they go back to the old 'family and friends' way of giving those class assignments
- now there is seniority even in the Ed Code, which we pushed through the Legislature and won that fight
- but Governor Newsom, who has done a lot of good for education
- has vetoed the bill to impose seniority in Winter and Summer
- he has also vetoed the bill to increase adjunct teaching load from 67% to 86%

XX – had two thoughts, first she reported that her department chair used the wrong assignment list and she was not given any classes. She complained and they created two new classes for her.

Warren – that was fortunate

- it was the type of mistake that hopefully does not happen in the future
- beginning this semester COC will use a new automated system
- to assign classes for adjuncts for Fall, 2023
- with this new system, there will no longer be two dates for figuring out seniority, such as DOH and DOC
- there will now be one master list based on DOH
- he hopes it will be a success but anticipates some ‘growing pains’

XX – her second thought concerned the enormous amount of work that the strike created for our Board. She asked if the adjuncts can form an ad-hoc strike group to help the Board.

Warren - his reply focused on the idea

- of creating a ‘foreman’ in each department and perhaps a ‘captain’ for each academic division
- they would work with the adjuncts in strike activities
- this would be similar to the structure in other unions like UAW
- but the pandemic upset that plan because we lost 25% of our adjunct faculty
- we are slowly rebuilding our numbers of adjuncts and our membership

Warren - continued with his ideas on rebuilding our faculty and our union

- it begins with more adjuncts attending our Board meetings
- and bringing to our attention previously unknown issues
- we rely so much on our adjunct colleagues for their experiences in the classroom
- but this process of rebuilding is like working on an airplane while it is flying!

After answering all of the adjunct questions, President Dan Portillo adjourned the Open Session of our meeting at 3:22 pm. The next meeting of our Executive Board will be held on Saturday, February 25th, at 2 pm and again on Zoom.

Pete Virgadamo
Secretary,
AFT Local 6262