

Forward

Forward: The Official Newsletter of UC-AFT Local 2141

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Next Membership Meeting

March 9th
Noon-1 p.m.
Location TBA

Topics:

- Budget
- Negotiations
- The future of collective bargaining

Interview with Nick Tingle—With Chris Dean

An Interview with Nick Tingle

On December 15, 2010, I sat down with Nick Tingle, the former long-time president of the local 2141, to discuss the early history of UC-AFT and his memories and thoughts of the union. Nick has been an unit 18 lecturer for over 25 years, and is looking at retiring at the

end of this year—leaving behind a legacy of service to his union, his colleagues, and his students. (Last year Nick was awarded the Faculty Senate Distinguished Teaching Award for lecturers.) This interview is our attempt at the local to preserve and share some of the “institutional knowledge” that Nick

has gained during the course of his time here at UCSB.

What follows is a slightly redacted account of that interview. It provides you with a sense of how far lecturers have come, in terms of receiving proper compensation and respect from UCOP and the UC, and how far we have yet to go.

PDF Awards—By Dana Driskel

Self-improvement is a good thing both personally and professionally.

UC-AFT negotiated the Professional Development Fund (PDF) into the contract in 2003. Since then, the PDF has helped Unit 18 members to write books, attend conferences, deliver papers and create special projects that further their careers as teachers and scholars.

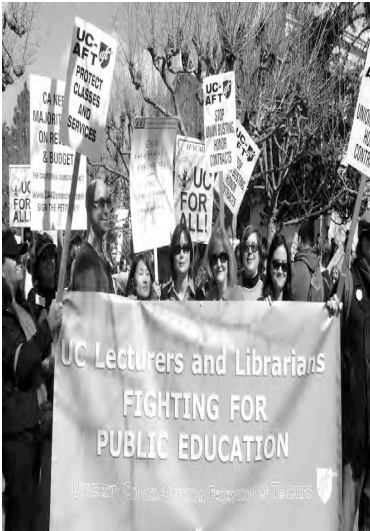
So far the fund has, since it's inception in 2003, supported 104 separate lecturers and funded 191 different projects.

Last year's recipients were:

- Joseph Bruzzese
- Ann Carlyle
- Brian Donnelly
- Dana Driskel
- Gina Genova
- Leslie Hammer
- Jennifer Johnson
- Brett Kia-Keating

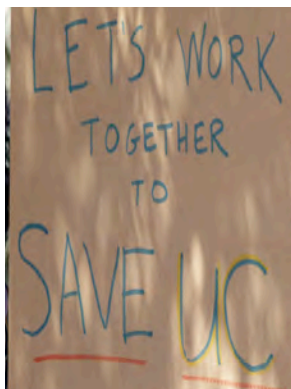
- Thomas Koch
- LeeAnne Kryder
- Katia McClain
- Larry McLellen
- Eric Nebeker
- Paul Portuges
- Jon Ramsey
- Cissy Ross
- Jill Sharkey
- Chikako Shinagawa
- Madeline Sorapure

We encourage non-senate faculty from every discipline to submit proposals for this year's round by the April 4, 2011 deadline.



UC-AFT members rallying in support of funding for public education

“We were hired on one-year contracts. We were told, moreover, that these contracts were self-terminating.”



Sign from a recent action at UCSB

Interview with Nick Tingle--Continued

Also, it's entertaining as all get out.

Chris Dean: What do you remember about the origins of our union here at UCSB? What sort of stories and thoughts stick with you?

Nick Tingle: I think you have to go back to the position of lecturers before the union. We were called visiting lecturers, and that says it all.

Chris Dean: Yeah it does.

Nick Tingle: We were hired on one-year contracts. We were told, moreover, that these contracts were self-terminating. This scared the hell out of us—it was sort of like Mission Impossible. Which meant that legally they didn't even have to tell us that we were fired.

So you would just not receive a reappointment, and that meant that you were fired. There was no appeal whatsoever. This was, clearly from my position, an untenable situation. It

couldn't go on like that.

Chris Dean: Had visiting lecturers been here for years and years?

Nick Tingle: No. It started, like it did in many places around the country. Cutbacks to higher education began to occur in the mid 1970s all over the place, and then the business of what we call “departmental flexibility”. Departments had become tenure heavy, so there weren't enough people to move around to different majors like Business-Economics. Then in California Proposition 13 hit and undermined funding at the University.

So, all of a sudden in 1979, they began to hire lecturers, and these are people on one-year contracts. And we grew in the English Department, and at one time there were 60 of us. I don't know if we were all full-time or not. I couldn't tell you. I was looking for work and couldn't find it.

Then somewhere about

84 or 85, I was pigeon-holed by a person over in the French Department who said, “Do you know that the AFT wants to become your sole representative?” She herself was an AFT member—more from that era of McCarthyism. We had a number of AFT people around. I said, “No I didn't know.” And she said, “You have to get organized.” I said, “That's great.” And she said, “You're going to have to do it.”

So it was me and another guy at that time. We were involved, so we did [start to organize]. What that meant is that for about three or four years my wife got upset with the amount of time I put into it. We tramped the campus trying to get people to sign up—to join the union. Actually it was to let them know that this vote was going to take place, and that they ratified the AFT as our sole representative in bargaining with the University.

Some weird stuff happened. We'd be

Interview with Nick Tingle--Continued

handing out flyers that got thrown in the trash. Pictures of Albert Einstein, he was an AFT member. I was finding those in the trash. Having a colleague who was senate faculty telling me that he couldn't talk to me anymore because I was a union member. Weird junk like that. We finally held our ratification vote and we had 45 people show up out of 250 [laughter], but they all voted yes. So we ratified the union, and for me it was a no brainer.

So we got that through, and what followed were three years, as I recollect, of hard bargaining which was just horrible. I was not on that committee, and I thank god that I wasn't because every member of the committee was told by his or her physician "get off that committee" because they were all suffering from health problems.

For a long time they kept thinking that we were teaching assistants and kept arguing that we were. It took a long time to establish with them that

we were not teaching assistants, that we were fully in control of our class, and so on and so forth. Apparently there was a stalemate at one point, and I don't know why or how, but the Chancellor at Berkeley stepped in and broke the stalemate. And said, "You've got to face the facts—we need these guys." That's not going to change anytime in the future, anytime soon."

And so was it a victory? Yeah. And so like all victories many factors played into it. So finally we got a contract.

The upshot of that was, for me and my colleagues in the Writing Program, a disastrous period however, because the University said it was going to go along with the contract and it didn't. We had ten people who had served their eight years and were up for review, but the university only approved four slots. So how do you get ten people through four slots? You don't. So it was "blood against the walls." People didn't stay—it was awful. People that I had known

for eight years didn't get through.

I got through, and of course I suffered survivor's guilt.

Chris Dean: Sounds a bit like the Somme.

Nick Tingle: It was horrible. Walking down the corridors and not being able to say hello to people because you just felt too awkward.

But that was true of the union for the next, I would say, five or six years. Legal battles over just this kind of thing. It's not the eye of needle thing. They finally went to court, and the university was all about "academic freedom"—that was their argument about whatever they do, it was about academic freedom. And the judges said that it was ridiculous. You cannot just be laying off people that have already worked for all these years. You can't do it. It doesn't make any sense.

The "fresh blood argument." Jesus. That passed over time. Looking back, I would

clearly not still be here if not for the union.

Finally we began to get some salary increases; although here in California it is clearly not enough to live a decent life. Too many of my colleagues are still living like graduate students—suitcases in and out of people's homes. It's ridiculous.

However, the job security is far, far greater than it was in 1980. The things in place are hard to overturn, because when you join a union you are buying lawyers. And these lawyers may not help me in my particular case, but they may very well help people on down the line. And the University doesn't like lawyers and they don't like bad press. And the union can generate bad press and it can hire lawyers.

Chris Dean: The only other question I had is you mentioned that the initial bargaining was kind of nightmarish. What do you remember about bargaining over the whole of your time here at UCSB?

Interview with Nick Tingle--Continued

"The job security is far, far greater than it was in 1980."



Nick Tingle

"I really do consider our last contract to be somewhat miraculous."

Nick Tingle: I think that the really good person to talk to about this is Bob Samuels of course, but Bob would tell me about things like they would have a time to meet, and those guys from the other side wouldn't show up for four hours.

Just humiliating tactics of that kind.

They would change lead negotiators in the middle of a negotiating session, so, as Bob said, we would have to "reeducate them" as to what a lecturer was and what we do. You didn't know if they were malicious or incompetent. I've come to believe it was incompetence. That we are just not that high on their priority schedule of commitments. Their real brain power goes to negotiating with big business and the government, not unions.

But they have a lot of commitments to a lot of unions. I think that's another problem. Their resources may be stretched thin too. On top of that, and maybe

Bob knows better than I, who was actually generating the directives for the people who were actually negotiating the sessions. Where did these decisions come from about how we were getting treated?

I mean I really do consider our last contract to be somewhat miraculous. I had been arguing for something like 20 years that I was not temporary [laughter]. I had been here for 25 years. I mean is life temporary? Yes?!

Chris: [Laughing] In a grand philosophic sense, yes.

Nick Tingle: We are not temporary. And our last contract actually recognized we are not temporary. . . we are, quote unquote, contingent, our pay code ends in the same series of zeros of that of tenure faculty. So our employment is indefinite.

This is both good and bad. And some people are arguing, and this could be true, that 65 to 70% of all college

classes are being taught by contingent or adjunct faculty. I'm not so sure that's good for students to have a transient faculty suffering from the anxieties of not knowing if you're going to be hired one quarter to the next, and constantly being reviewed and evaluated—feeling like you're in a god damn beauty contest for your job. That's not good.

So something has to change. Maybe be more accepting of unions—maybe that would reduce some of the tension. It doesn't get around the issue that we all have to face: that unions do have to exercise responsibility in evaluating the performance of their members, which is extremely difficulty and touchy subject.

But overall, "Go union."

Unit 17 and 18 Bargaining Updates—By Bill Quirk

Unit 18 Bargaining Update

Negotiations for the Unit 18 (non-senate faculty) contract began with the first meeting between representatives of UC-AFT and the university on February 28th.

In early February, both sides exchanged opening proposals. You can view the proposals in their entirety here:

<http://ucaft.org/content/unit-18-bargaining-opening-proposals-exchanged>.

The first meeting was dedicated to setting ground rules for the negotiations process and to clarifying and explaining

rationale for each side's proposals. The next scheduled bargaining session will take place at UCI on March 11th. UC-AFT is holding a local meeting on March 9th at Noon to discuss local responses to the bargaining survey and bargaining issues that are priorities for UCSB lecturers. The meeting location is to be announced.

Unit 17 Bargaining Update

UC-AFT Librarians have formed a bargaining committee with representatives from each

campus. The committee will work directly with a smaller bargaining team, headed up by chief negotiator, Mike Rotkin. Sally Weimer, Gary Colmenar, and Anna DeVore have agreed to serve as UCSB's representatives on the bargaining committee.

Negotiations will only open on articles affecting compensation; these articles include Wages, and Professional Development.

As an opening salvo, UC's lead negotiator, Peter Chester, offered to waive negotiations for the year.



Sign from a recent action at UCSB

Post-Wisconsin Unionism—By Bill Quirk

In Wisconsin, the newly elected Republican Governor, Scott Walker, announced a plan to effectively eliminate collective bargaining rights for public employees.

His proposal would limit the scope of negotiations to wages, and would require that unions hold annual recertification elections.

Locally, Lanny Ebenstien recently announced his intention to get an initiative on the ballot in 2012 that would end collective bargaining rights for

California's public workers. The Wisconsin proposal is being met by historic protest from public workers and their supporters.

The protesters understand that the right of workers to organize and negotiate the terms and conditions of their employment creates better and more stable jobs. Also, these rights have historically provided workers with livable salaries which en-masse contribute to the tax base, and the discretionary spending sector of the economy.

The role of unions in the overall economy aside, the Wisconsin situation raises the following question: what would employment as a lecturer or librarian at UCSB be like without the right to negotiate improvements in our working conditions?

In 1984, we wouldn't have been able to end the rule that forced lecturers to move on after 6 years. In 2003, we wouldn't have been able to negotiate the continuing appointment, which relieved post-six lecturers of a rehire review

“What would employment as a lecturer or librarian at UCSB be like without the right to negotiate improvements in our working conditions?”

Post-Wisconsin Unionism—Continued

Local Union Officers

E-board Members

Gerardo Colmenar
Chris Dean
Dana Driskel
Ralph Gallucci
Katia McClain
Larry McLellan
Carole Paul
Sally Weimer

Field Representative

Bill Quirk
805-689-0645

We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://ucsb.ucaft.org>

every three years. We wouldn't have the non-senate faculty professional development fund and the one million plus dollars UCSB lecturers have received through it. Finally, we wouldn't have a process for evaluating workload and ensuring that additional non-teaching work is given some form of credit.

Librarians wouldn't have the requirement that new assignments be included in their statement of responsibilities along with an evaluation of total workload. We wouldn't have a consistent and fair review process, due process rights for layoff and reduction in time, or

third party arbitration to settle disputes of the contract.

However, maybe most importantly, we wouldn't have the opportunity to make a hundred more improvements in the future.

No doubt, we've had tremendous success over the last two decades. Now we must be prepared to defend those successes against those who would capitalize on the economic downturn and deficit budgets to eliminate basic worker rights. If our rights are not immediately and directly threatened, then we must support those whose rights are.

With the current attack on public sector workers and our unions, the best response from individual union members is to be an active participant in your union.

We can no longer take our unions, and the importance of our role in them for granted. If you're not currently a member of UC-AFT, please join. If you are a member, seek ways to get just a little bit more involved. Robust, participatory, and democratic unions will contribute to the real solutions required by the downturn. More importantly, they will be able to fend off attempts to make us the scapegoat for economic problems we did not cause.

2010 Bargaining Survey Results—By Chris Dean

This December, UC-AFT ran a bargaining survey to get a sense of issues that were important to membership across all the UC campuses.

At UCSB 82 people responded to the survey, revealing some interesting concerns. One "demographic result" that is interesting is that 56.8% of the people responding have a post-six appointment—a possible indication that our post-six membership is increasing.

When members were asked what might be improved upon in our current contract, which we are bargaining for at this very moment, there seemed to be some consensus on the following issues:

- Most members were concerned with salary and workload issues.
- Many members commented on the need to negotiate workload down to more reasonable levels.
- And, ultimately, almost all of those who responded to the open ended responses commented on concerns about job security.

Your union is going to continue to solicit your concerns about bargaining, and **on March 9, 2011, from Noon-1 p.m.** there will be a meeting where you can voice your concerns and comments about issues that should be a part of bargaining for our new contract.