

aaup-ud

Bargaining Update

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September 19, 2026

Dear Bargaining Unit Members,

We have news to report from the 9/14/26 Faculty Senate meeting and from the 9/16/26 bargaining session. To begin with senate news, and to follow up on our update of 9/12/26, Interim Provost Farquhar did, indeed, introduce as new business a resolution to define five year rolling-contracts for CT faculty. The resolution removed the requirement that a CT faculty member on such a contract must receive a “satisfactory” annual review to receive a new contract every year, thus fixing a problem created by the original resolution posted on the senate agenda released on 9/7. However, the resolution did not address the central provision that we had proposed at the table: that, **in the case of a nonrenewal after a full peer review, a CT faculty member would retain four more years on their contract.** At the same senate meeting, Senator and Chief Negotiator Deni Galileo introduced a separate resolution defining five-year rolling contracts as we proposed at the bargaining table: as contracts that renew annually for five more years AND are honored for four more years should a nonrenewal occur.

Interim Provost Farquhar has expressed his interest in reconciling these proposals, and the administration’s bargaining team confirmed in our 9/16 meeting that their position was that the four remaining years of a five-year rolling contract should be honored in the event of a nonrenewal. Thus, **we are cautiously optimistic that one resolution will reach the senate floor with the support of both the administration and Senator Galileo and his seven co-sponsoring senators supporting the AAUP-UD’s position.** If the resolutions cannot be reconciled, we are hopeful that, with the continuing support of faculty, Senator Galileo’s resolution will prevail in a senate vote.

To move on to other issues discussed in the 9/16 bargaining meeting, we presented a **new salary proposal** to the administration in which we asked for slightly reduced salary increases and shifted one year’s structural raises from being based on a percentage of salary at rank mean to

being a percentage of individual salary. (Remember that the administration has proposed that all raises be based on percentage of individual salary, thus always favoring higher-paid faculty. However, our proposal includes two mechanisms for raising salaries: one based on percentage of individual salary and one based on percentage of mean salary at rank, the latter of which favors lower-paid faculty.) Unfortunately, **our salary proposal was rejected at the table, and the administration counter-proposed with one in which they moved just slightly upward in salary and retained their same mechanism favoring the higher paid.** They also continued to propose a four-year contract, whereas we are proposing a three-year one, the latter of which aligns with longstanding practice. Overall, there remains a substantial gap in the amount and structure of the two sides' salary proposals. Moreover, **the administration's team has proposed not to honor any raises retroactively despite the fact that they have lengthened the bargaining process by (re)introducing multiple unacceptable proposals** that would limit faculty rights and privileges and, in some cases, undo protections that the previous administration agreed to during the last round of contract negotiations just three years ago. In fact, the last administration agreed to honor raises retroactively when we bargained beyond the contract renewal date. The AAUP-UD bargaining team believes that the current administration has taken this unusual position in an attempt to gain concessions from us, and we will steadfastly resist their attempts to do so and insist that raises be retroactive.

Turning to **benefits, the administration has not proposed to lessen them currently. However, they have proposed to eliminate the language from the CBA that prevents the administration from reducing benefits in future years** of the contract unless they first bargain with the AAUP-UD. In other words, the administration wants to be able to reduce benefits unilaterally after the contract has been signed. In a smaller meeting between several AAUP-UD bargaining team members and HR representatives, the latter indicated that the Benefits Advisory Committee* should replace mid-contract bargaining on benefits. We quickly pointed out that this committee, although an important element of faculty/staff participation in the benefits selection process, simply makes recommendations, not decisions, about benefit plans. The AAUP-UD has already pushed back on this proposal.

In more positive news about benefits, **the administration's team has indicated that they will agree to provide a Medicare supplement plan, not just a Medicare Advantage plan, to faculty who retire under this contract.** We hope to have a tentative agreement on specific language about this provision soon.

Regarding the academic freedom statement, **the administration has introduced a proposal with modified language.** On a positive note, their language does indicate that academic freedom extends to faculty members' ability to criticize the institution whether or not as participants in shared governance. However, they also retain a preceding sentence indicating that the faculty could criticize the institution within shared governance structures without mentioning other

settings. Another concern that we have about their language is that they wait to list the protections of academic freedom in teaching and in research until the second paragraph, after they have described the limitations on extramural speech. We hope that this does not mean that the administration's focus is more on limiting speech than on promoting academic freedom where faculty need it the most—in the classroom, the lab, and the library. Causing us the greatest concern about the administration's proposed new language is that they have included the statement, very similar to their previous one, that "faculty should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter that has no relation to the subject matter being taught." They still have not responded to the [arguments that we have made against the use of this language](#), which is based on an AAUP statement from 1940 that was clarified 30 years later. In the 9/16 bargaining session, we pointed out yet again that the same AAUP materials that they cite also indicate that tenure is the basis of academic freedom, whereas their proposals seek to eliminate the guardrails against the unlimited use of contingent faculty. To our suggestion that they were cherry picking language about academic freedom from these AAUP documents to suit their purposes, they responded, "We stand by our proposals."

Also related to academic freedom, **the administration continues to reject our proposal to add the following language about AI use to the CBA:** "In accordance with the principles of academic freedom, the use of technological tools, including ones involving generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), shall be a matter left to the discretion of individual faculty, and faculty shall have the autonomy in choosing whether and how to incorporate such tools into their courses, research, and other scholarly activities." At the 9/16 meeting, we pointed out the disconnect between the administration's team rejecting this language and the administration saying the following in their [bargaining update of 7/17/26](#): "[F]aculty have the authority over their teaching, research, and service methods, including whether and how to use AI or other educational technology. No one is suggesting otherwise." The administration's team explained this disconnect by saying that the academic freedom statement already covers AI use, and it does not belong as a separate item in the collective bargaining agreement (CBA). We dissented by saying that AI use absolutely is a term/condition of employment because it directly affects how we teach, conduct research, and perform service; therefore, it belongs in the CBA. We also indicated that our language about AI use being covered by the academic freedom statement is a necessary addition to that statement—we agree that the existing statement applies to A.I. use, but we also believe that this now needs to be stated explicitly because faculty have told us that they are feeling pressured to use AI, and in at least one College, faculty are being directed by administration to use it in the classroom. **The AAUP-UD will continue to discuss how to secure explicit language extending the protections of academic freedom to AI use.**

Insofar as **giving the AAUP-UD freedom to speak at New Faculty Orientation for a mere 15 minutes, the administration has again rejected our proposal.** Their rationale is that the provost's office already invites the AAUP-UD to participate in the event and this matter does not

belong in the CBA anyway. To our argument that some recent administrators have not invited the AAUP-UD to new faculty orientation, the administration's team did not respond. To our argument that the right to present at new faculty orientation appears in the CBAs of other institutions—including Rutgers, CUNY, and Cal State—the administration's team responded by saying that what other institutions do is irrelevant to this point. They also indicated that they thought they could find forty CBAs that lacked this provision for every one we cited. We doubt that this is the case—there are plenty of other examples of CBAs both inside and outside of academia with provisions for union participation in new employee orientations. But, regardless of numbers, perhaps the administration should reconsider whether it wants to be in the vanguard of shared governance or in the back.

In the matter of **faculty being afforded the right to use and change their preferred pronouns, no questions asked, the administration's team continued to assert that a process already exists. However, they admitted that this process is not “visible.”** They have assured us that they will provide more specifics about this process and their plan to make it visible shortly.

Thank you for staying informed about the bargaining process—we realize that we have sent you many updates filled with much information to digest. We may be calling on you soon to do even more, and we hope that you will answer our call. After all, your support for our CT faculty petition already has led to the administration's agreement that CTs should be compensated based on promotion or years of service and will likely still lead to a positive definition of five-year rolling contracts. As we address other vital issues, such as compensation and academic freedom, we need to remember that we are stronger together and that sometimes it is necessary to demonstrate our strength to the administration.

As always, we welcome you to forward any questions to admin@aaupud.org, and we thank you deeply for your support. If you are not yet a member, please join us by enrolling [here](#).

In solidarity,

The AAUP-UD Bargaining Team

**The previous administration agreed to establish the Benefits Advisory Committee in the wake of moving our health insurance away from the state plan. The committee contains representatives from all campus unions, the staff, and Human Resources and is charged with reviewing requests for new insurance proposals and the proposals themselves, including those related to health, vision, dental, and long-term care insurance. This committee then makes recommendations to the administration, which has ultimate decision-making power when it comes to plan selection. However, the administration's decisions must conform to any related stipulations in the Collective Bargaining Agreement.*