

Bargaining Update



There ain't no answer. There ain't gonna be any answer. There never has been an answer. That's the answer.

(Gertrude Stein)

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Okay. So we know it's been pretty quiet. We know that there's been very little communication with you over the last month and a half. Some of this has to do with the Winter Break. Some of this has to do with the amount of space IPRM has taken up in all of our lives. A lot of this has to do with the complexion of this particular round of negotiations.

That fact is that almost all of the non-"big ticket" items have been dealt with at our table – smoothly, amicably, respectfully. And that's nice. Well, nice in the same way that putting your sweat pants on after work is nice. It's been warm. It's been comfy. But it's not really newsworthy. It's simply what you do after you finish a long day of work. It's predictable...

But that's where our current problems begin – because all of the predictable, comfortable, easy bits and pieces have been solved in predictable, comfortable, easy ways. Nice.

Unfortunately, however, those bargaining issues that aren't so easy – and, not inconsequentially, those issues that have the greatest importance to our Membership – are still sitting out in the cold. Left unanswered. Deferred. Shelved.

While your negotiating team has diligently attempted to address almost every proposal placed on the table by the Administration, the same cannot be said to be true of our opposing team. Our proposals to protect Members from the possible effects of multi-campus expansion have remained unanswered since their presentation in the first week of October. Our comprehensive proposals that address fair and equitable treatment and compensation for chairs, area heads and program co-ordinators have been languishing since September. Proposals that protect our Members' rights to their intellectual property in online course development have been met with silence. Language that would help to clarify the original intent of our Professional Teaching Positions is being lost in a sea of semantics. Preservation of our faculty complement numbers remains the invisible elephant in our room...

And herein lies the real problem. With the exception of a few issues, WLUF has negotiated out almost every Administrative proposal except for matters related to compensation – which, in the normal course of negotiations, are issues that are generally taken into the conciliation process. With the teams agreeing to file jointly for conciliation in the very near future, your team is extremely concerned that so many rights issues continue to remain sitting on the table.

WLUF is ready to complete this negotiations process. We've been ready, in fact, for quite some time. But it is difficult to move productively into conciliation if the Administration will not complete the negotiations of those proposals (above) that we know, through our Member survey, are so important to you.

Your team is ready and willing to bring these negotiations to their conclusion — but we can't do it without first getting some long-overdue answers from the Administration.

Perhaps it's time to stop being nice.