GTFF Bargaining Presentation

November 22nd, 2013
Presentation Overview

I: Working Conditions
II: Hiring and Job Security
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I: Working Conditions
Working Conditions

Clean Workspaces

Article 10

What?
• Insert “clean” alongside “professional”
• Ensure regular cleaning of offices and workspaces
• Clarify whose duty it is to keep workspaces clean

Why?
• A clean office is a professional office
• Accrual of trash and recycling detracts from the respectability of GTFs as university employees
Kitchen Facilities

Article 10

What?
• Provide basic appliances (fridge, microwave, and coffee maker) in each employing unit
• Allow the use of other kitchen areas in the unit if GTF-specific areas are unavailable
• Prohibit the removal of kitchen appliances where they currently exist

Why?
• GTFs cannot afford not to pack a lunch
• Kitchen facilities are standard features of a professional workspace
• Certain medical needs require temperature control
Working Conditions

Wireless Internet Access

Article 10

What?
• Full wireless access in all workspaces used by GTFs for duties requiring internet access

Why?
• Enable GTF use of key resources (Blackboard, Dropbox, etc.)
• Facilitate teaching excellence
• The case of the music department: 43 signature petition (63% of GTFs in department) calling for increased wireless internet access
• UO Benchmark Goal: “Liberal Education for the 21st Century - Technology”
Working Conditions

Parental Leave

Articles 27/28, 21

What?
• Provide paid leave for new parents
• Enable maintenance of healthcare coverage

Why?
• Diversifying academia and allowing access for all
• Providing adequate care for new children
• Parity with professors
• Delayed life planning is unreasonable
• Maintaining health care for mothers and children
• Enables excellence in hiring
• UO Benchmark Goals: “Academics on a Human Scale”, “Equity and Diversity”, “Graduate Student Recruitment, Retention and Success”
Working Conditions

Paid Leave
Articles 27/28, 21

What?
• Introduce basic policies for paid leave
• Set up protocol for those filling in for absent workers

Why?
• Fair and standard practices for all
• UO Benchmark Goal: “Retention and Success”
• UO Benchmark Goal: “Academics on a Human Scale”
Working Conditions

Nondiscrimination

Article 8

What?
• Introduce nondiscrimination protection for the following categories absent in the current CBA: color, familial status, parental status, pregnancy status, sex, height, weight, citizenship status, veteran status, HIV antibody status, political belief, and membership in any social or political organization

Why?
• Members have expressed concern regarding the protection of GTFs belonging to many status-groups not yet reflected in CBA, including parents, veterans, and others
• Nondiscrimination language should be kept up to date
• UO Benchmark Goal: “Academics on a Human Scale”
II: Hiring and Job Security
Hiring and Job Security

Make Signed Contracts Binding
Articles 17 and 20

What?

• Guarantee appointments for all GTFs who have signed a contract that match the terms of that contract
• Eliminate GTF layoffs

Why?

• Stability in finances and health care
• The 2009 University Academic Plan calls explicitly for “increasing the level of financial support available to graduate students” (page 12)
• Honoring the terms of signed contracts is a show of respect on behalf of the University for GTF employees
• The University should be held accountable to the agreements it makes with its employees.
• The University can better bear the burden of fluctuating enrollments--the University should accept the institutional risk
Hiring and Job Security

Clarify GTF duties

Article 9

What?

• Creation of a campus-wide Fraction Calculation Form that is used to clarify and lay out the expected duties as well as estimated time spent on each of those tasks to be agreed upon by the GTF and his/her supervisor

• GTF and supervisor required to meet to discuss and sign form

• Forms will be kept on file for review

Why?

• Unclear job duties can lead to frustration for both GTF and his/her supervisor

• Having duties outlined in writing protects the GTF, their supervisors, the employing unit and the University.

• 22% of GTFs report being asked to work more hours by their supervisor than their FTE requires and nearly the same number of GTFs report having unclear job duties for their position

• Many GTFs report prep-time for courses often cause them to exceed the FTE-time they are paid for.

• Multiple GTFs report openly hostile supervisors when they question the amount of work they are being asked to do.

• Many GTFs note that overworking results in declines in the quality of their performance.
Hiring and Job Security

Make “payday” payday

Appendix J

What?

- Ensure paychecks arrive on time every month and extend protections against late pay to all months
- Financial redress for GTFs if paychecks fail to arrive as expected

Why?

- Late paychecks are financially burdensome, especially with monthly pay coinciding with monthly rent, utilities, bills, etc.
- 20% of GTFs surveyed have received late pay, with 60% of those reporting that the late pay was financially burdensome to them
- In addition to the (insufficient) Jesse M. Bell Graduate Student Loan, multiple GTFs report borrowing money from family and even being offered a loan from their advisor to cover receiving late pay
- Many GTFs report putting bills or rent on credit cards after not getting paid on time, incurring interest they would not otherwise have
- Many report late pay in the summer and one GTF even reports being paid late all 4 Septembers they have been at UO
Hiring and Job Security

Binding Length of Contracts

Article 17

What?

- Make binding total number of years offered to GTF in initial funding package

Why?

- Responsible financial and life planning requires accurate knowledge of funding sources.
- Financial support is an important consideration students take into account when choosing a graduate school - more than 75% of reporting GTFs state the number of years offered funding was a deciding factor in attending the U of O.
- Contributes to UO Benchmark Goal “Retention and Success”
- The University can better bear fluctuating funding than GTFs
III: Health Care
Health Care

Vision and Dental Care

Article 23

Increase annual vision coverage cap from $200 to $400

• 57% of surveyed GTFs report utilizing vision benefits

• Of these, 62% report that coverage is inadequate to cover routine exams, glasses, and contact lenses

• Many members report alternating exams and glasses, as it is nearly impossible to afford both in any one benefit year

• Doubling the modest vision benefit will allow members to fully utilize benefits annually, as originally intended (costs have increased since the $200 figure was set over ten years ago)

• GTF Work often necessitates switching between glasses and contacts
Add Class III dental coverage at 70%, and raise annual cap from $1,000 to $2,000

- Lack of dental coverage leads to deferment of needed procedures (national problem)

- Untreated problems get worse, leading to more deferment, until emergency procedures damage health and cause severe financial strain
Health Care

Vision and Dental Care

Article 23

Add Class III dental coverage at 70%, and raise annual cap from $1,000 to $2,000

• In our surveys, 30% of our members report putting off dental procedures because they are not covered and are too expensive

• Another 11% paid out of pocket for uncovered expenses, frequently accruing debt in order to do so

• These are almost exclusively crowns and reconstructive surgeries that seriously impact quality of life, not elective or cosmetic procedures
Comparison with Comparator Institutions

**Major Dental Coverage For Grad Employees:**
- Oregon State University
- Indiana University at Bloomington
- University of California, Santa Barbara
- University of Iowa
- University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- University of Washington

**Optional Plans with Major Dental:**
- University of Colorado, Boulder

**No Major Dental:**
- University of Michigan
- University of Virginia

Full-time SEIU and UA employees at UO also have Major Dental coverage, and part-time SEIU and UA employees receive partial Major coverage.
Estimated costs

- Dental: raising the dental annual maximum benefit up to $2,000 per year with 70% of major dental covered could increase healthcare premiums approximately 6% (an increase of approximately $500k per year)

- This increase would represent approximately 0.082% of the UO’s annual operating budget of $705,666,000, or 0.57% of the current unrestricted surplus assets of $101,815,000
Health Care

Vision and Dental Care

Article 23

Conclusion

• Major dental is covered at most of the UO’s comparator institutions and is available to SEIU and UA employees

• Adding major dental will raise health insurance rates an affordable amount

• Adding major dental will help the UO maintain its well-deserved reputation of providing excellent healthcare to its graduate employees, and further the UO Benchmark Goal of “Academics on a Human Scale”

• Many grads choose the UO precisely for its health benefits
Conclusion

• Proper vision and major dental coverage is crucial for the health of UO graduate student employees, who deserve adequate and affordable care.

• As lower-salary workers, graduate teaching fellows simply cannot afford these high out of pocket costs.

• In the majority of cases, GTFs can ONLY access care that is covered by the GTFF health plan; this makes a comprehensive health, vision, and dental plan vital to GTF quality of life and ability to work.

• GTFs are calling for major dental with full awareness that each GTF will share the burden of the premium increase.
IV: Economics
Economics

GTFs in Absentia
Article 21

What?
• Establish a standard hourly wage for covering others' work
• Hourly rate determined by a GTF level 1 for each employing unit listed in GDRS
• Establish rules dealing with emergency situations

Why?
• Fair
• Avoids informal and non-standard forms of compensation
• Having standardized procedures helps ensure that GTF work will be covered in each instance
Elimination of Fees
Article 22

What?
• University shall pay remaining $61 incidental fee currently paid by GTFs

Why?
• GTFs are university employees and it is unreasonable for GTFs to pay back part of their salary to the University every month
• In order to promote Benchmark Goal: “Retention and Success,” GTFs should pay no out of pocket fees
Summer Tuition/fee Wavers
Article 18

What?
• Full summer tuition and fee waivers with any fall, winter, or spring appointment (min. 1 term)

Why?
• People graduating in Summer
• Specific program requirements
• GTFs deserve access to campus facilities over the summer
What?
• A 6.1% raise to GTF minimum wage rolled out over each of the next 2 Years

Why?
• Bridge gap between minimum salary and University's established basic cost of living for graduate students in Eugene (if 6.1% provided for 3 years)
• UO financial aid office estimate: $1620.44/month
• Take home pay for GTF earning minimum salary: $960.00/month
• GTFs are up to $660 short of covering their basic costs every month by the University’s own estimation
Why continued...

• GTFs take on increasing levels of debt simply to cover their basic expenses
• Of GTFs surveyed, 36% report taking out federal student loans to cover basic costs
• Of GTFs surveyed, 46% report borrowing money from parents or friends to cover basic costs
• The University receives tuition revenue each year from courses taught by GTFs. GTFs teach around 1/3 of all courses.
• GTF salaries must cover at least the basic costs of living as a graduate student in Eugene in order to keep UO grad programs competitive
Economics Summary

The Real Cost of Being a GTF at the University of Oregon

• GTFs are $660 short *every month* on basic cost of living expenses
• Lost work hours covering for sick colleagues
• $61 fee every term, and $280 fee in summer
• Large costs of non-covered vision and dental expenses
• Academic and professional development self-funded by GTFs
• Lost tuition waivers and health coverage for parents
• Purchasing meals with lack of kitchen
• ALL OF THIS COSTS MEMBERS A GREAT DEAL
V: General Summary
• The GTFF looks forward to partnering with the administration to negotiate a fair, respectful, and mutually beneficial agreement

• We are excited to continue to promote recruitment, increase retention, and contribute to the professional success of all graduate employees at the University of Oregon

• Fair Wage! Access for All! Security! Respect!