

TAUP's Adjunct Organizing Campaign

Dear TAUP faculty and staff,

This week, we all received a mass email from the administration about TAUP's adjunct organizing drive. TAUP members have already received the TAUP Executive Committee's response, and have been invited to take part in our internal discussions, but we would like to give everyone, including nonmembers, a brief summary of the facts and our perspective.

TAUP has indeed submitted a petition to the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board with the signatures of adjuncts calling for an election to add them into our group. Combined units of full and part-time faculty at universities are common, for instance at Rutgers University, CUNY, SUNY, and Pennsylvania's 14 state-owned universities, among others.

We are committed to this campaign not just to help out this poorly paid, exploited group but because **unionizing the adjuncts advances the interests of the full-time faculty.**

The faculty's working conditions are our students' learning conditions. Our students deserve faculty who aren't distracted by poor working conditions – no offices, inadequate salaries, no benefits, no academic freedom – and by insecure jobs. **As long as it is cheap and easy to replace full-time faculty with adjuncts, our status is in jeopardy. Full-time faculty will benefit** because adjuncts' wages and working conditions won't be undercutting tenured and tenure-track positions.

Over the past 10 years, the full-time faculty in TAUP schools grew from 1,030 to 1,330, i.e., 29%. But all the growth came from hiring NTT's, expanding their ranks from 198 in 2001 to 523 in 2011, i.e., 164%. The tenured and tenure-track faculty have declined from 832 to 808, or from 81% of all full-timers to 61%. We don't have access to data about the growth of adjunct positions. However, there is no question that tenure is being eroded by the hiring practices of the administration.

What kinds of jobs are we training our own doctoral students for? The job market is glutted with PhDs seeking a diminishing number of tenure-track jobs because of the trend toward short-term, insecure, contingent faculty positions.

The real issue is that **both full-time and adjunct faculty want the resources of Temple University to be devoted to its core missions of education, research and health care**, not to bigger and bigger administrative bureaucracies. TAUP is quite capable of balancing interests. We do it all the time between the interests of various faculty – tenured, NTT, men, women, sciences, arts, young, old, etc. – as well as the librarians and academic professionals. We do an excellent job of representing the faculty and staff as a whole. The issue is **not this group of faculty versus that group of faculty for shares of supposedly diminishing resources but an increased share of the actually growing resources for all faculty and the work we do.**

We question the propriety of the Vice Provost for Faculty, who is supposed to be an advocate for the entire faculty, seeming to pit one group of faculty against another. The administration doesn't want adjuncts to be part of any bargaining unit. They want full control. Don't fall for the administration's divide-and-conquer strategy, one that they used unsuccessfully in our contract negotiations in 2008-2009.

TAUP is a democratic organization, unlike the Temple administration. We invite nonmembers to join, so that you can participate in making the decisions that affect all of us.

Thank you for your attention. I hope this helps to clarify the issues. If you have questions, please contact me at ahochner@gmail.com or the TAUP office at taupaft@aol.com. If you are a TAUP member, use the TAUP FORUM to participate in discussion on this and other issues.

I hope you are having a great summer!

Art Hochner
TAUP President

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