

TEMPLE ASSOCIATION OF
T A U P
UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONALS

e-Bulletin20151001

PLRB Decision is a Victory for Unity

Dear Colleagues,

The Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board (PLRB) ruled this week that adjunct and full-time faculty, librarians and academic professionals in TAUP schools and colleges “**clearly share an identifiable community of interest.**” They ordered that an election be held among adjuncts on whether they want to be included in the existing bargaining unit. The PLRB further ordered that Temple administration “shall within ten (10) days from the date hereof [September 29] submit to the Board a current alphabetized list of the names and addresses of the employees [sic] eligible for inclusion in the unit.” At this time, the schedule for the election has not been specified.

This is a great day for our union, and I am excited that adjuncts will finally be able to vote after many months of delay. Adjuncts deserve a voice and a seat at the table. Not only do we have a *legal* community of interest, but we also have many common interests: our students’ education, the advancement of knowledge, Temple’s historic mission, and our material well-being.

The PLRB rejected **every one** of Temple administration’s arguments. You may [read the decision itself here](#). They cited many reasons for their finding of a community of interest: “identical teaching responsibilities,” working “on the same campuses and in the same classrooms,” teaching “the same courses,” and having “nearly the same educational requirements.” Both groups are “typically expected to have a terminal degree in their field.” Adjuncts “have offices in the same areas as full-time faculty members, and sometimes even share offices with” them. “If that were not enough, adjunct faculty members interact with full-time faculty members on a regular basis.” Further, “Temple’s argument that there is an alleged conflict of interest between the adjunct and full-time faculty, which destroys any community of interest, is untenable.” Other issues raised by Temple were similarly dismissed.

Yesterday, you may have received an e-mail from Provost Dai announcing the decision with disapproval and a divisive message. Much as they did in Harrisburg in the PLRB hearings from March to August, the Administration continues to try to pit full-time and part-time faculty against each other in the hopes of discouraging us from supporting our adjunct colleagues in their effort to be represented by our union. I have heard that some Deans are telling tenure-track and NTT faculty that any gains adjuncts make in contract negotiations will come at the full-time faculty’s expense.

But this is not a zero-sum game; that is clear from the gains in recent contracts for **both** tenure-track **and** NTT faculty as well as librarians and academic professionals. What’s more, Temple is prospering. Its overall resources are growing. The University broke its fundraising record for the fifth straight year, and recently received the largest single donation in its history. At the same time, more and more administrative positions continue to be created. We are committed to the proposition that the people responsible for teaching and advising students and for generating new knowledge must also share in the prosperity they are crucial to engendering.

What I’ve learned in my 37 years at Temple is that everyone does better when we bargain together. Our union includes full-time tenured and nontenured faculty, librarians, and academic professionals. There is plenty of room for adjuncts as well. Once they vote to join TAUP, our union will have a united faculty, working to balance the interests of all, and will be even stronger than before.

TAUP is currently working to draft amendments to our Constitution & Bylaws to bring adjuncts into our union, presuming they vote in favor of inclusion. Current TAUP members will vote on these amendments when they are ready, and a two-thirds vote in favor is required for any changes.

I signed a pledge to support our adjunct colleagues as they [vote union yes](#), and I encourage you to do the same. TAUP will continue to send updates as we learn more details about the upcoming election, and we look forward to seeing adjuncts join us soon.

In solidarity,
Art Hochner
TAUP President

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