

News Item from State APSCUF

March 9, 2010

President's Message

Kutztown President Notifies KU APSCUF that the University is Retrenching



It is with sadness that I convey to you this news: yesterday morning Kutztown University's APSCUF leadership reported to their membership that they have been officially alerted that KU is retrenching. The official notification came in a letter from President Cevallos to APSCUF President Paul Quinn late Friday afternoon.

Yesterday afternoon there was a special meet & discuss where management revealed their current plans, naming the six departments with programs that are under review (advisement, athletics, speech & theatre, philosophy, electronic media, and nursing). The provost, Dr. Vargas, indicated that these might not be the only programs, depending on what discussions with those six rendered. He also

provided another copy of a powerpoint presentation on the university's finances, which was supposed to stand for a financial explanation of what was happening. Our team asked for many more documents, with specific information, as indicated in Article 29.A.

Retrenchment is never a good thing for a faculty or a university; it seems particularly heinous at a university running record enrollments, with the lowest faculty cost in the system, with the only large classroom building in the state system, and with the largest state appropriation in history (including stimulus money). We never received any kind of answer to the question, "Why Kutztown" (and not one of the 13 others running the same financial model)?

State APSCUF will do all it can to support KU in these difficult times. There is much to be done legally to make sure KU administration handles this in both a contractually valid and humanly sensitive way. Ken Mash (state M&D chair), Julie Reese (contract implementation staff person), and I sat in on the meeting yesterday, to show support, collect information and to provide any expertise we could.

In that vein, on Friday the Personnel Committee recommended to Exec Council the hiring of two people to help with the retrenchment work ahead. Exec Council approved. We are extending the current temporary contract of Sara Craft, who has worked in the contract department, first as an intern last fall, and since late December as a temporary.

We have asked Mary Jo Campbell to return to work for us and she has agreed. Her current contract will run until the end of the year. Mary Jo retired last spring from the faculty at Edinboro, where she was vice president and grievance chair. She has a Masters in Labor





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Relations from IUP and helped out in the office in the transition period in December and January. Mary Jo will be the front person for retrenchment, going to local M&D's and making sure we have a coherent vision of the process and management's obligations, as well as timely and powerful responses.

Sara will provide research support (there are reportedly more than forty arbitrations involving re-

trenchment that are apropos to the current situation).

As an organization, we have been through retrenchment before, in the late seventies and early eighties. We were able to make sure Article 29 was applied (it has since been strengthened) and we survived and have even thrived as an organization in the aftermath.

The past is often prelude to the future: we will defend again and we will survive and thrive and grow.

But the present situation gives little reason for hope or happiness; let us be thankful to our forbearers for the power of the CBA's protection.

In solidarity,



APSCUF

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