May 11, 2020

Good Morning, Colleagues,

As we approach the end of the semester, I'm confident all of you are working longer hours and feeling the stress of the recent transition to distance education. The goal of this email is to provide updates regarding: 

1. The temporary COVID-19 Summer and Fall MOUs   
2. Ongoing salary and benefits negotiations

Based on the data that was collected from the COVID-19 Impact Survey, our faculty are anxious to get answers and clarification regarding a wide variety of working conditions such as compensation, online training, evaluations (tenure and tenure-track), workload, and a lot more. Unfortunately, as I'm typing up this email, the District has only added to this stress by failing to provide us with a date to meet. Our bargaining team has already sent two Demands To Bargain; the first was sent on 4/17/2020 and the latter on 4/27/2020. We are eager to negotiate our necessary Temporary Summer and Fall MOUs. However, all we have received so far are mere acknowledgments of receipt and a promise to schedule a time to meet. As you can imagine, this has been very frustrating, but we will continue pressing the District to meet as soon as possible.

As for the ongoing salary and benefits negotiations for 18/19 and 19/20, we are still waiting on PERB to provide us with a date for the Fact Finding session. And as we anxiously await the Governor's release of the state budget's May adjustment, many experts anticipate budget cuts in higher education. While this is undoubtedly worrisome for future negotiations, I must stress that our union is still negotiating pre-pandemic years, which is funding that the District already received from the state.

This distinction is important since the District might employ gloomy financial predictions to place the burden on faculty and evade their fiduciary duties. Over the last couple of years, our District gave themselves on-schedule raises and continued with the previous practices of hiring more managers; all while faculty didn't even receive COLA. As a matter of fact, the district moved forward with reclassifications that involved significant raises just a couple of weeks ago. Our faculty will no longer bear any proclaimed financial burdens while we have CEOs making well over quarter-million dollar salaries.

As always, we will continue sending updates on a regular basis. Meanwhile, I wish you and your families health and safety.

In Solidarity,

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*"Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will"* - Frederick Douglass