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Best Practices to Support

**CONTINGENT
UNION MEMBERS
AND LEADERS**

Through Union Bylaws

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Our Mission

The **AFT** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

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Best Practices to Support Contingent Union Members and Leaders Through Union Bylaws

The AFT is the largest higher education union in the United States, representing faculty of all types for more than 50 years. As the academy has become more reliant on contingent and part-time faculty, their numbers have grown, affecting union governance. Contingent faculty are underpaid, undervalued by the employer and often shut out of shared governance, and they may be juggling multiple jobs. There are also dozens of job categories of contingent academic staff with similar job security and economic pressures. AFT locals are structured in many different ways: sometimes with all faculty in the same bargaining unit on the same contract, sometimes in the same local with separate contracts, and sometimes in separately organized “sister locals.” Whatever the structure, it is our duty as unionists to make sure the disparate treatment of contingent faculty by the employer doesn’t repeat itself within our union structures.

Below is a non-exhaustive list of examples where AFT affiliates have taken special care to ensure all workers are represented in their union governance, as well as examples of progressive dues structures and stipend compensation.

Do you know of another example that should be added to this document? Please contact highereddept@aft.org.

Representation

Affiliates can adopt policies that require that contingent faculty and staff—known by different job titles in different collective bargaining agreements—be represented in union decisions and discussions, on committees, and in the bargaining and grievance processes, to ensure their issues are considered and included in union proceedings.

Opportunities to increase participation include creating new committees or new roles on existing committees, such as:

- Membership Officer/Committee
- Working Conditions Committee
- Negotiations Officer/Committee
- Bylaws/Constitution Committee
- Grievance Officer/Committee
- Political Action Committee
- Solidarity or Engagement Officer/Committee
- Communications Officer/Committee
- Data Coordinator
- Adjunct/Contingent Faculty Standing Committee

Example: Highline College Education Association (Des Moines, Wash.)

HCEA bylaws: Article III, Section 5

Article III - Duties of Officers

Sec. 5. The duties of the Adjunct Representative shall be:

- a. To conduct Association outreach to adjunct and contingent faculty teaching at the college;
- b. To chair the Adjunct and Contingent Faculty standing committee;
- c. To serve as a liaison with regional and statewide groups working to improve the compensation and working conditions for adjunct and contingent faculty;
- d. To be a member of the Executive Board and Executive Board Advisory Committee.

Example: AFT Seattle Community Colleges, Local 1789

AFT Seattle Community Colleges bylaws: Article VI, Section 3

Article VI. Duties of Officers

Section 3. AFT Seattle District President for Part-Time Faculty

The duties of the AFT Seattle District President for Part-time Faculty will be to organize the part-time faculty, and to promote interests of part-time faculty within the organization.

The District President for Part-Time Faculty will call and chair meetings of the part-time faculty and shall report the results of the meetings to the AFT Seattle Executive Board.

The District President for Part-time Faculty shall serve on the AFT Seattle Executive Board.

The District President for Part-time Faculty shall serve as a delegate to the AFT Washington convention and shall represent AFT Seattle as needed on AFT Washington councils and committees.

Example: United College Employees of the Fashion Institute of Technology (New York)

UCE of FIT bylaws: Article V, Section 3a

Article V: Committees

Section 3. Executive Committee

- a. Membership: The members of the Executive Committee shall include all officers ... of the Local. In addition, the Executive Committee shall include one representative for each 27 members (or major portion thereof) of faculty and staff respectively. At least two of the faculty representatives shall be chosen from classroom faculty, at least two from non-classroom faculty, and at least four from part-time faculty. At least one of the staff representatives shall be chosen from part-time staff.

Example: United Academics of the University of Oregon (Eugene, Ore.)

UA constitution and bylaws: Article VIII, Sections 4 and 8

Article VIII Election of Representative Assembly Members

Section 4. Prior to the call for nominations of Officers, Chairs, and Representatives (usually in early March of odd years), the Elections Committee shall conduct a census of members in order to determine the proper apportionment of seats by academic work unit and employment classification in the Representative Assembly. The Elections Committee shall proportionately allocate seats to each employment class of each academic work unit based on the numbers of actual members.

Section 8. Based on membership at the time of the member census on odd years (usually Winter Term), the Elections Committee shall apportion the number of seats for each employment classification of each academic work unit using these criteria:

- a. The Representative Assembly shall consist of no more than fifty (50) representatives.
- b. Representatives will be elected from these three (3) employment classifications:
 - i. Tenured and tenure track faculty

- ii. Non-tenure track instructional faculty
- iii. Non-tenure track research faculty

Example: Bellevue College Association of Higher Education (Bellevue, Wash.)

BCAHE bylaws: Article IV, Sections III and V

BCAHE's bylaws ensure adjunct representation on the bargaining team (Section III) and on the grievance and professional rights committee (Section V).

Article IV. Committees, Task Forces and Teams

Section III Bargaining Team

A. Members. The Bargaining Team shall be composed of the President, Lead Negotiator, Adjunct Affairs Officer, and Vice President and other members appointed by the President with concurrence of the Executive Council. The President shall serve as chairperson and shall delegate the chairperson functions as appropriate. The Executive Council may, by a two-thirds vote of its membership, dissolve the Bargaining Team and appoint a new one at any time, providing the President, a Lead Negotiator, Adjunct Affairs Officer and Vice President, if any, are always included.

Section V Grievance and Professional Rights Committee

A. Members. Members shall be the President, Lead Negotiator, Adjunct Affairs Officer, and UniServ/AHE/WEA consultants as requested by the President.

Example: Skagit Valley College Federation of Teachers, Local 4985 (Mount Vernon, Wash.)

SVCFT bylaws: Article V, Section 5

Article V

Section 5

Every effort shall be made by the SVCFT Executive Council to encourage participation and representation of all constituencies (e.g., full- and part-time, Academic, Professional/Technical Counseling, and Library faculty, SVCFT and non-SVCFT faculty throughout the district).

Example: Temple Association of University Professionals (Philadelphia)

TAUP constitution and bylaws: Article X 1-3, 6

Article X: Constituency Councils

1. There shall be five (5) Constituency Councils, elected by TAUP dues-paying members, each with its own Chair. The three faculty CCs shall elect a Vice Chair.
2. The Constituency Councils are:
 - a. Tenured/Tenure-track Faculty
 - b. Practice, Instructional, Research, Clinical Non-tenure track faculty
 - c. Adjunct Faculty
 - d. Librarians
 - e. Academic Professionals
3. For the three faculty constituencies, the Council membership shall be determined by electing the number of representatives equal to 1 member per 100 bargaining unit members in that constituency, to the nearest hundred. For Librarians and Academic Professionals, all active members shall comprise the Council.

- a. The number of CBU members in each faculty constituency for purposes of Constituency Council representation shall be determined by counting any individual who was on Temple payroll in a TAUP-represented faculty position at any point in the previous fiscal year.
 - b. Each faculty Constituency Council shall consist of no fewer than six (6) representatives, regardless of the number of CBU members calculated under Article X.3.a above.
6. Duties of Constituency Councils
- a. Their principal functions are:
 - i. To organize active members and potential members around issues and concerns related to their jobs at Temple University, and higher education as a whole.
 - ii. To communicate issues from the particular constituency council to the EC.
 - iii. To communicate TAUP-wide issues from the EC to constituents.
 - iv. To be a forum for fielding, discussing, and working on issues of concern, potential grievances, etc. from members of the specific constituency.
 - v. To work on issues impacting the specific constituency across the University.
 - vi. To take an active role in representing / working on areas of need, coordinating with TAUP staff as needed.
 - vii. To develop and lead programs, training, workshops, information, organizing, etc. for the specific constituency.
 - viii. To work with TAUP staff to introduce new University hires within the specific constituency to the Union; get training on organizing conversations; help recruit and retain membership.
 - ix. To identify issues and solutions around possible contract violations, reporting them to the Executive Officers and grievance handlers.
 - x. To create and foster an engaged and mobilized membership that will ensure the growth and furthering of the goals of TAUP.
 - xi. To recruit and engage new members of TAUP.
 - xii. All Constituency Council members shall be, by office, delegates to the convention of the American Federation of Teachers and meetings or conventions of its affiliated bodies.

Example: Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York

PSC constitution: Article III, Sections 5e and 5f

The PSC constitution ensures that members can hold union office after a break in service. Locals that require employment for a specific period before running for union office or delegate should consider how to insulate contingent members from the effects of job instability on their ability to participate in the union.

Article III: Membership

Section 5.

- e. Notwithstanding Article III Section 5 (a-d) above, a member of the part-time instructional staff who has been a member in good standing for at least two years and who goes off payroll for one semester for any reason other than retirement shall be permitted to run for office upon returning to payroll provided he or she is otherwise eligible and has paid dues equal to dues paid during the previous semester while off payroll. Such person who runs for office shall also be eligible to vote.
- f. Notwithstanding Article III Section 5 (a-d) above, a member who is an incumbent Chapter or General Officer, Delegate or Alternate Delegate to the Delegate Assembly or to affiliates who is separated from employment with a

PSC-represented bargaining unit employer for any reason except retirement (in which case Article III, Section 2.b.iv applies) or through a contractual disciplinary proceeding, may continuously retain such office and all membership rights in their previous chapter through the six-month period, either September 1 to the end of February or March 1 through August 31, following their separation. A member may continue to hold office through the aforementioned six-month period provided dues equal to one-half the annual amount of dues paid during the final year on payroll.

Dues

Affiliates can adopt progressive dues structures so that lower-wage earners pay a smaller percentage of their salaries in union dues, to encourage contingent faculty and staff to join their locals. These differences vary across locals.

Example: Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York

[PSC website](#): “Membership” page

Rates - Dues

Full-Time Dues

Members – 1.05% of total gross earnings

Part-Time Dues

Members – 1% of total gross earnings

Retiree Dues

Annual Dues (Sept.-Aug.)

As of Sept. 1, 2019, \$85.00 for retirees from full-time positions, \$40.00 for retirees from part-time positions

Example: AFT Seattle Community Colleges, Local 1789

AFT Seattle Community Colleges bylaws: Article IV, Section 2

Article IV. Dues and Investment Policy

Section 2. Calculation of dues

For full time tenured, non-tenurable, and tenure track faculty, affiliate and local dues will be calculated as 1.52% of annual income, effective April 1, 2019. ...

For part-time faculty, dues will be calculated as 1.29 % of the quarterly salary, effective April 1, 2019.

Example: United University Professions, State University of New York

[UUP website](#): “Membership Applications” page and Contingent Membership Application form

Regular Membership

- General Membership Application - ... The deduction for dues (as of the 10/23/24 paycheck) for membership is .9 percent of the adjusted bi-weekly gross of base annual salary if the base annual salary is \$38,087 or less. ... The deduction is 1.0 percent of the adjusted bi-weekly gross of base annual salary if the base annual salary is \$38,088 or more. ...
- Maintenance of Membership Application - Contingent Academics or Contingent Professionals who are temporarily off payroll due to breaks in service may bridge their UUP membership during the membership year.

Contingent Membership Application form

Maintaining membership assures continuation of all UUP membership rights and benefits and access to NYSUT,

AFT and NEA member-purchased benefits. ...

UUP membership dues for members who are temporarily off payroll are \$47 dollars for one year. Shorter periods may be prorated.

Example: San Francisco Community College District Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 2121

Local 2121 constitution: Article V, Section 3

Local 2121's constitution provides summer dues relief for part-time faculty.

Article V Dues

Section 3. Members not currently deducted for union dues may pay special dues of \$5.00 per month to be considered members in good standing. Part-time faculty will only be required to pay these special dues during the academic year.

Compensation

Affiliates can adopt policies to compensate contingent faculty for performing union work or, if the position/work is already compensated, increase the stipend if the work is performed by a contingent faculty member. This is necessary to acknowledge that pay parity does not exist for adjuncts at any AFT locals, to help mitigate adjunct compensation inequities, and to encourage participation and representation of contingent faculty.

Example: Pierce College Federation of Teachers, Local 4821 (Puyallup, Wash.)

PCFT bylaws: Article X, Section 4

The Federation President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall each receive an annual stipend of \$750. In addition, the President shall receive a stipend of \$2000 for Summer Quarter.

Adjunct faculty serving as officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary, or Treasurer) shall receive a \$1000 stipend.

The Communications Coordinator, the Member Data Coordinator, and each Engagement Coordinator shall receive a \$750 annual stipend if they are full-time faculty, and a \$1000 annual stipend if they are adjunct faculty.

Adjunct representatives to the Negotiating Team shall receive \$1000 per year for negotiation on the full contract.

All adjunct faculty holding non-officer positions on the Board shall receive a \$500 annual stipend.

Example: Temple Association of University Professionals (Philadelphia)

Temple-TAUP collective bargaining agreement: "Union Business" side letter

A side letter to the collective bargaining agreement grants officers up to 15 credit hours of release time for certain union activities.

Union Business: Temple and TAUP hereby agree that Temple shall provide no more than fifteen (15) contact (semester) hours of release time each semester for members of the TAUP bargaining unit for such TAUP activities as the processing of grievances and the implementation of the Temple-TAUP contract. One contact hour for a faculty member shall normally be one semester hour course credit; its equivalent for librarian or an academic professional shall be two hours per week for six months.

According to TAUP President Jeff Doshna, the first preference is for officers to use the 15 total credit hours contained in the side letter. However, the TAUP Executive Committee determined that officers unable to use the release time (adjuncts, those unable to get out of teaching obligations, etc.) will use the same six hours per week, multiplied by 52 weeks per year, times the minimum hourly rate in the TAUP staff collective bargaining agreement. Currently, the rate is \$25 per hour. This equates to \$7,800 per year (\$3,900 per semester).

Example: Bellevue College Association of Higher Education (Bellevue, Wash.)

BCAHE bylaws: Article VI, Sections II and III

Section II Bargaining Team.

The Association shall provide a stipend to each member of the bargaining team, with a maximum of 6 members per team.

6. Full contract. Each member of the bargaining team shall receive a stipend in the amount of \$1000.00.
7. Partial contract/reopeners. Each member of the bargaining team shall receive a stipend in the amount of \$500.00.

Section III Part-time (adjunct) representatives on Executive Council. Part-time representatives shall receive a stipend equal to the Category A rate of pay for each meeting attended.

Sister Locals

At some institutions of higher education, multiple locals represent different groups of faculty and staff. Wherever possible, these locals should work together for the greater interest of all workers on the campus. Most of that work will not be formalized, but locals should consider opportunities to mutually strengthen contract language and governance.

Example: Henry Ford College (Dearborn, Mich.)

Henry Ford College has two faculty locals that work closely on many issues, and they have recently focused on improving governance. Henry Ford Community College Federation of Teachers, Local 1650, represents the full-time faculty, and Henry Ford Community College Adjunct Faculty Organization, Local 337, represents the part-time faculty. In 2015, Local 1650 negotiated with the college to add adjunct faculty to the Henry Ford College Faculty Senate and all faculty and search committees. Local 1650 can grieve any violations, an important demonstration of its willingness to hold the employer accountable if its Local 337 colleagues are sidelined.

Special thanks to AFT Washington for providing the model for this report. Its leadership at the state level was the inspiration for this piece.



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