

Graduate Assistants United

February 2018 Member Meeting
February 13, 2018, 5 p.m.

Visit from Jamaica, Kelly from SEIU

1. Ballots go out next week to all in-unit adjuncts, so USF is trying to intimidate people.
 - a. Arguing with USF about who's eligible to vote...
 - i. Health adjuncts are excluded, among others?!
 - ii. PERC decided that adjuncts who taught any semester during 2017 are eligible.
 - b. Scare tactics from USF: "People are going to go to your home!", et cetera.
 - c. About 960 people can vote in next week's election.
 - d. First anti-union speaker showed up at St. Pete's first "listening session" today, which was mostly attended by pro-union adjuncts, two supportive undergrads.
 - i. SEIU has an FOIA to find out how much the anti-union speaker is being paid by USF to fly down to Tampa.
 - e. More sessions - tomorrow, in Tampa, from 1 - 3:15 p.m. in 2305 BSN, and in St. Pete, 5-6 p.m.; Thursday in St. Pete, Sarasota.
 - i. Show up! Ask questions. Mention how powerful collective bargaining is, other good points of unionization.
 - ii. The Sarasota meeting will have pro-union attendees.
 - f. SEIU sent out letter pointing out that the consultant isn't neutral, so the consultant claimed to be "intimidated."
2. Adjuncts have never had a union election before this.
 - a. Confusion about who's eligible to vote...
 - b. USF turns GAs into adjuncts over the summer - lower pay, no tuition waiver, but health insurance continues because the spring and annual insurance plans automatically cover the summer months.
 - c. We need to explain to GAs that, yes, of course, an adjunct union helps GAs as well, whether or not we become adjuncts but especially if we do.
 - i. As Marcy says: "Plenty to go around." No, USF is not too poor to pay all of us properly.
 - d. Need to win the union's existence *and* build its membership.
 - e. People can be members of several unions simultaneously, such as both GAU and SEIU.
 - i. Clarify for people - adjuncts in SEIU would only pay dues while teaching as adjuncts.
 - f. Some reluctance/fear from international students about joining a union.
 - i. Point out that if you publicly support the union, any retaliation is more

- obvious as such...
- ii. Also, the vote is anonymous.
- iii. Reassure people that the union(s) will keep their information confidential, protected.
- g. Jamaica can check people's eligibility to vote, as can Kelly.

Brief GAU Introduction (for those who have never attended)

1. We are the GA union on campus; we bargain with the administration for GA rights.
2. For example, we have obtained health insurance, increased minimum stipends, won fee deferment, etc.
3. We also provide legal representation in any employment dispute, **but only if you are a member at the time of the incident.**
 - a. Yes, this can be an important benefit.
4. Senators attend the twice-annual UFF meeting, which is composed of GAs from other Florida colleges and Florida faculty; there, we motion and vote for policies that UFF will advocate for in the Florida Legislature.
5. Also, of course, the more people who sign up as members, the more pull we actually have during bargaining sessions.

Governance

1. Legislative update on union-busting bill in Legislature (SB 1036)
 - a. Still in Commerce and Tourism Committee, so if you live in Tampa, call Dana Young!
 - b. This bill recurs. If it dies this year, it will probably crawl from the grave again next year.
 - c. Every membership counts!
 - d. Erin was on the radio, WMNF, and wrote an article for *The Nation!* (YAY!)
2. Senate meeting Feb. 24-25 in Tampa
 - a. Priorities/issues/discussion for bargaining council
 - i. Support the Voter Restoration Amendment - which is Amendment 4 on the November ballot - through the diversity and leadership committee! Ask for a UFF letter of support, specifically.
3. New officer elections
 - a. All executive members plus possible backup Senators up for election - for September 1, 2018 through August 31, 2019.
 - b. Ad hoc roles: head steward, international student chair, legislative/political liaison.
 - c. 2/20: Call for nominations -- two weeks for nominations.
 - i. Candidates must be in-unit current members and run for office of their own free will, whether or not they self-nominate - essentially, please don't nominate anyone without letting them know...
 - d. 3/20: Election at March member meeting -- two weeks to vote electronically before that.
 - e. 4/15: Election results due to UFF.

Organizing

Density Report

1. 2,175 in unit - at 16.5% as of February 6th - 7% increase in 2 weeks!! (YASSSS)
2. Depts. to target: Education, Chemistry, Art, Cellular and Molecular Biology, Computer Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Physics.
3. Are you in a STEM department? We need you! (We also need you if you're in a non-STEM department! It's just that over 50% of our unit is STEM, so if we want to fortify GAU against union-busting bills, we seriously need STEM membership.)
4. Organizing follow-up meeting next week - who wants to come????????????????????
Help us do outreach!
 - a. Probably the follow-up will be next Wednesday, but more details on that tomorrow...

Communications

1. 2/19: GAU Social @ 6 PM @ The Local

Miscellaneous

1. Assorted literature to distribute - "Member Rights" pamphlet!
2. Are there any concerns you have for your department? How can GAU serve you?