

Digest of CBA Extension for 2020-2021

United Faculty of Central

Background

The public health crisis caused by COVID-19 has had a dramatic impact on the operations of Central Washington University. In late February and early March, Governor Jay Inslee issued a series of declarations that have resulted in a move to remote learning, the cancellation of many University events and programs, and some uncertainty regarding the University's budget.

The current collective bargaining agreement will expire on August 31, 2020. Prior to the onset of the pandemic, the UFC Bargaining Team and the CWU Administration were in final preparations to bargain a full successor agreement. The current situation, however, makes this impractical, and budget uncertainty makes both short- and long-term planning difficult.

Given these extraordinary circumstances, the UFC Bargaining Team is pleased to announce that we have reached a tentative agreement with CWU to extend the current collective bargaining agreement (CBA) for one year. The UFC Bargaining Team has been in contact with the Bargaining Team at Western Washington University, where they were also bargaining, and the UFC/CWU proposed agreement is very similar to the agreement reached at Western.

The UFC Bargaining Team recommends a ‘YES’ vote on this tentative agreement by the UFC membership.

The UFC Bargaining Team is: Matt Altman (Philosophy & Religious Studies, CAH; Bargaining Team Chair), Nancy Gruber Pigeon (Management, CB), Dominic Klyve (Math, COTS), Dan Lipori (Music, CAH), Sathy Rajendran (ETSC, CEPS), and Gary McNeil (WEA; Chief Negotiator).

Summary of UFC/CWU CBA Extension

The tentative agreement:

1. extends the current CBA for one year (until August 31, 2021); and
2. requires bargaining in Fall 2020 over potential compensation increases for academic year 2020-2021.

1. CBA Extension

The tentative agreement extends all sections of the current CBA with no changes (with the exception of Section 16 – Compensation and Benefits) until August 31, 2021. This means that all conditions, terms, and protections of the current agreement will continue for an additional year. The plan is that a full successor agreement will be bargained in the 2020-2021 academic year.

With regard to Section 16 (Compensation and Benefits), the tentative agreement guarantees some increases to compensation described in that section. The goal of this part of the agreement is to make sure that increases that have been earned and scheduled under the current CBA will continue uninterrupted.

Salary increases detailed in Section 16 will proceed as planned in 2020-2021. They include:

- 16.5 Merit Salary Increases for Full Professors and Chairs: Full professors (16.5.1-2) and chairs (16.5.3) will continue to be eligible for merit salary increases as described in the current contract.
- 16.6 Merit Salary Increases for Those Holding Senior Status: Non-tenure-track faculty and coaches holding Senior status may apply for merit-based increases as described in the current contract.
- 16.7 Salary upon Promotion: Raises for tenured and tenure-track faculty who are promoted to a higher rank (16.7.1) and raises for non-tenure-track faculty and coaches who are promoted to Senior status (16.7.2) will continue as described in the current contract.

2. Further bargaining in Fall 2020 on potential compensation increases

The tentative agreement provides a mechanism for UFC and CWU to meet in October 2020 in order to consider possible compensation increases for the 2020-2021 academic year. This gives both parties time to understand the financial impact of the pandemic on university finances.

Both parties agree that any other compensation amounts that are indexed to across-the-board increases will be implemented once the amount of the increase is determined during bargaining in October 2020.

With regard to base salary changes, there are three important points to note in the agreement:

- a. Compensation rates will stay at 2019-2020 levels unless increased during the bargaining in October. That is, there will be no cuts/reductions to faculty salaries (see Paragraph 2 of the Agreement).
- b. Compensation increases are limited to a maximum of 3% and may be made retroactive from the time of bargaining in October back to the start of the academic year (see Paragraph 5 of the Agreement). The Washington State Legislature allocated 3% for salary increases for all state employees (including faculty) for the 2021 Fiscal Year, but that may change and, even if it does not, those increases are still subject to the collective bargaining process. That is, the Legislature does not mandate how the allocated money will be spent on faculty.
- c. Both parties agree to meet in October to bargain the amount of the increase (between 0-3%) and will review the University's entire financial condition (state appropriations, tuition revenue, any COVID-19 related relief funds, various funding disruptions to CWU as a result of the pandemic, etc.) to inform this discussion (see Paragraph 3 of the Agreement).

Conclusion

The guiding principle in negotiating this agreement is UFC's continued commitment to serving and representing all faculty with regard to wages, benefits, and working conditions. UFC is committed to protecting and rewarding faculty work, including competitive compensation that supports faculty as they further the mission and purpose of the University. There is no question that faculty have been asked to do an enormous amount of work in transitioning to remote learning to continue to serve our students and keep the University functioning in difficult circumstances.

In summary, the tentative agreement extends the current CBA for one year and guarantees that faculty compensation for the 2020-2021 academic year will not decrease and may increase up to 3%.

The UFC Bargaining Team recommends that the UFC membership ratify this tentative agreement with a ‘YES’ vote.

If you have questions about the tentative agreement, please contact Bargaining Team Chair Matt Altman (philosopher.altman@gmail.com).