

WCCFT Membership Meeting

April 3, 2013

Minutes

1. Approval of minutes of March 6 meeting
 - a. The minutes of the March 6th meeting were unanimously accepted.
2. Approval of agenda
 - a. The agenda for April 3rd was accepted.
3. President's report
 1. Report from AFT Conference (written)
A copy of the AFT report is attached.
 2. March 20 NYSUT forum at WCC
NYSUT had an event on March 20th at the ABB and four WCCFT members attended. The topics of discussion were mainly dealing with k thru 12 testing standards and teacher evaluations.
 3. Student Sidewalk Rally
Students are having a rally to get WCC to build sidewalks on the WCC campus. The rally starts at 12pm and there are going to be speakers including a rep from WCCFT's Health and Safety committee.
 4. Announcements of upcoming events
 - a. May 1st or 8th we are planning to have Ken Jenkins speak to the membership at a luncheon. We have to confirm the date and invite the Legislators and members have to RSVP.
 - b. NYSUT is having a racing event in May at FDR Park in Yorktown. Our Team Captain is Professor Hernandez. Please sign up.
 - c. The last weekend in May the NYSUT local 39 will have their meeting in Westchester. Two EB members are working out the arrangements.
 - d. Scholarship deadline is April 5th at 4pm. Please remind students.
 - e. We are planning an EB retreat with the new WCCFT EB for May 21st and 22nd.
5. Political Action Report – Rosemarie Serrano
The co-chair of the PAC committee reported that she was able to attend the lobby day in Albany, NY and attend a fund raiser for Ken Jenkins. She met his wife and some of his staff and brought back information. She also reported that she is in the process of working with WCC students who are interested in political action. She just needs to find out what are the rules of engagement.
6. Other Committee reports

Negotiation Committee: Set up several meetings in the month of April to finalize the proposal to the administration.

Health and Safety Committee: Working on getting permission to join the Fire and Safety Committee.
7. Election Statements by candidates

The candidates made their 3 minute speech to the membership. The candidates also provide a statement for the website. The deadline for ballots is April 24th. Two candidates withdrew from the elections during the week.

8. Member issues and questions

The issue that came up was low attendance at the meeting and hopefully we can work on getting more members to attend.

9. New Business

No new business introduced.

10. Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned 12:35pm.

Highlights of the 2013 AFT Conference on Issues in Higher Education

Four WCCFT members – Mel Bienenfeld, Robin Graff, Rowan Lindley and Rafael Rodriguez – attended this year’s conference in San Diego. Below are some very brief highlights of the sessions we attended. If you are interested in further details, please contact us.

Alternatives to austerity – funding higher education

Various individuals and groups have been developing proposals for how to radically increase government funding for higher education. One such group is the Campaign for the Future of Higher Education – www.futureofhighered.org – in which the AAUP, AFT, NEA, and New Faculty Majority are all involved. Proposals are on their website. The group holds meetings around the country and in 2014 will probably be on east coast.

Presentation by AFT VP Francine Lawrence

The “new normal” is that college is seen as just a producer of skilled workers and should be made more “efficient”. That is why some policy makers see the for-profits as an attractive model.

Strategies for contingent faculty

Nationally there is an extremely wide range of conditions for adjuncts and other contingent faculty members. There are many interesting examples of how to achieve job security for adjuncts, as well as examples where existing job security rights are under attack.

Plenary on state disinvestment

There has been a major transition from funding education as a public good to treating it as part of students’ private consumption. Enrollments are up but government funding per FTE has decreased by 26% in the last 20 years. Proposals for ending the “debt for diploma” system and strategies for achieving it were presented. An alliance has developed between the US Student Association and the AFT that is active nationally and in various states.

Contingent faculty forum

The Delphi project (founded 2011) researches possible solutions to having college teaching done by contingent labor. In 1969 17.5% of classes were taught by part timers; in 2009 the figure was 47.7%. One focus is developing a more complete hiring process for part-timers. The issues are laid out at www.thechangingfaculty.org and the group provides various resources on the subject. The AFT has resources on best practices.

Resources for negotiations

Information on how to find these was presented.

Federal legislation, the Dream Act, and educational budget issues

Information and updates are available.

(over)

The Affordable Care Act

Implications for uninsured and part-time faculty members, in particular, are available.

Lessons Learned from Chicago: Organizing Community Outreach and Communications

The Chicago Teachers Union strike in September 2012 was notable not only for the militancy of the CTU's members, but also for the breadth and depth of support for the teachers among community members in Chicago. The key to their victory was that they were able to create a community board of parents, community organizations, and the union and not just fight for wages and health issue but social justice issues.

Best Practices for Keeping Track of and Communicating with Your Members

This workshop spoke about having a good list of your members, how to contact them and what their issues are. This session also taught us the types of membership data we should be collecting, why this data is important, and best practices for making sure this data is up-to-date and ready to use.

Legal Update

This workshop provided information including recent developments related to the National Labor Relations Board, copyright law, contracting out with massive open online courses, research funding restrictions and academic freedom.

Building a Sustainable Student, Faculty and Staff Coalition on Campus

Report on Rutgers One Coalition and how they are developing strong and sustained relationships among faculty, staff, and student organizations. Alliances for budget fights; recognition that legislators may listen more to student constituents than faculty or staff members

Professional Staff Career Trajectories in a Constantly Connected World

Dealing with "job creep", managing expectations, assisting members who are targeted

Managing Your Career in Times of Lean Education

Lean Education taken from a business model seeking to eliminate waste and now being applied to education. Good and bad goals. Help members deal with changes.

Confronting the Completion Agenda- Possibilities and Pitfalls

Pushing the idea of increased student completion can come with problems

- Pathways- CUNY 30 credit gen ed- reduces quality of student education- downscaling, institutionally racist
- State articulation agreements, transfer and persistence agendas

Preparing For the Unexpected- Emergency Preparedness and Union Involvement

Should Emergency planning be a Union Issue? Commitment and support of Union are critical to the plan's success. Contract language should articulate that a Union rep must be involved in the planning of emergency procedures. Phases of emergency planning include mitigation and prevention, preparedness, recovery, and response.

