

CANDIDATE STATEMENT FOR WCCFT VICE PRESIDENT: JIM WERNER

I want to thank my friend and colleague Richard Courage for nominating me to run for the position of WCCFT Vice President, and thank the Union leadership and membership for this opportunity to discuss my qualifications as a candidate.

I have been pleased and proud to serve on the Union's Executive Board over the past two years, and to play a significant role as Chair of the Grievance Committee in fighting for the rights of Union members. In that capacity, I've worked to ensure that due process is followed when allegations are made against instructors; fought to reinstate faculty who were wrongfully terminated or removed from the classroom; helped clarify the College's policy on senior adjunct status; reinforced the MOU regarding student advisement; and investigated conditions and health concerns in the Library.

I've also greatly enjoyed attending and participating in a number of Union activities, including the last two NYSUT Community College Conferences, and the NYSUT Community College Luncheon; next month I'll be attending NYSUT's Higher Education Policy Council Meeting. During the previous round of contract negotiations here at WCC, I was among those faculty and staff who presented to Dr. Miles a first-hand account of the difficulties we were experiencing without a contract for seven years. I was proud to be among the WCCFT representatives voicing concerns about the College administration with our County legislators—to be one of those demonstrating in front of the County Executive's Office in solidarity with our CSEA colleagues—to be cold-calling on the phone bank to oppose the NYS Constitutional Convention—and to be engaging in protest at meetings of the WCC Board of Trustees. More recently, I was part of the WCCFT team that met with the College administration's representatives to discuss the problems our members are experiencing with our new healthcare provider, UMR. I am also currently serving on the Union's Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

Before joining the Union's E-board, I established a record of effective leadership in a variety of roles in and out of my department. I've served as Chair of the English faculty for the past five years; prior to that, I held the positions of Co-Director of the Honors Program, Acting Assistant Chair of English, and Acting Curriculum Chair for Liberal Arts and Humanities. I've also chaired various English committees, including Search and Screens, the Departmental Committee, and the Research and Issues Committee. I was founder and coordinator of the Student Teaching Experience (STEP) program and of the Integral Teacher professional development discussion group.

In all of these roles, my goal has been to lead by example, and to call forth the enthusiasm and engagement of all involved. I see the Union Vice President position as an opportunity to do service on behalf of my colleagues, to help transform our institution, and to optimize our collective work experience. I bring a willingness to work hard, a keen sense of fairness, clear

thinking, organizational skills, accessibility, and a deep and abiding respect for you, my fellow WCCFT members. If elected as Vice President, I will utilize those strengths to advocate for all Union members, represent our needs and concerns forcefully to the College administration, and help our Union grow and prosper as we meet the challenges of a new era. Thank you.