

Associated Faculty of Montana State University (AFMSU)

The Organizing Committee of the AFMSU is a group of MSU faculty who support a union for MSU faculty and are actively working toward that end. This list of principles and positions expresses our rationale and our hopes for a faculty union. We welcome other faculty members to join us and to suggest other areas of concern.

Principles

EDUCATIONAL MISSION

We affirm and celebrate the long MSU tradition of excellence in teaching, research and creative activity and commit ourselves to providing quality educational experiences to all MSU students. As befits the faculty of a land-grant university, we are deeply committed to providing “liberal and practical education” to a broad and diverse student body. We are concerned that inadequate funding from state government constricts educational opportunities for students, and we support initiatives to increase funding from state revenues. We believe that establishment of a faculty union and the process of collective bargaining will strengthen our ability to engage students in the classroom through scholarly and creative endeavors.

PROTECTION OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM

We support academic freedom for all faculty and believe that a faculty union will strengthen protections of such freedoms.

DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION

We will represent the MSU faculty across colleges and departments. We affirm the diverse needs of the faculty across colleges and will work to provide faculty with the resources necessary for teaching, research and creative activity. We are currently working toward establishing union representation. We commit to building a participatory democratic local union. Faculty from all colleges and departments are encouraged to join the Organizing Committee to participate in setting policies and priorities. All officers will stand for election by union members. Membership will be voluntary, and the members will vote to ratify all contracts. Finances will be open and reported and all business matters will be conducted with transparency.

FACULTY GOVERNANCE

We will honor the role of the Faculty Senate to decide academic and curricular matters. We believe that the voice of the Senate will be strengthened through collective bargaining. We believe that an effective negotiating voice requires the time, money and informational resources that we do not have and that a union can provide. We will work with faculty senators and with the administration to lobby the Regents, the Governor, and the Legislature to increase support for higher education.

ASSOCIATED FACULTY of MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

Positions

1. Negotiations: A union certified by a vote of the faculty would sit at the negotiating table with the MSU administration and the Board of Regents. Faculty from across campus will assist in setting bargaining priorities. We commit to negotiating with the administration as equals in a fair and respectful atmosphere. Initially, numerous policies will be on the table and we would examine other faculty contracts to learn from other institutions. Decisions such as those listed below which have been made solely by the administration in the past would be made through negotiation and would be transparent.

2. Working Conditions: We commit to bargaining for

- Clarity in tenure and promotion policies based on expectations and standards of each department.
- Consistent and equitable workload assignments which respect departmental distinctions.
- Resources and conditions necessary to support research, scholarship, and creativity such as lab and studio space and equipment.
- A faculty voice in decisions affecting higher education and research.

3. Salaries, Wages and Benefits: We commit to bargaining for

- Cost of living adjustments which take into account inflation.
- Equitable annual raises.
- Equitable solutions to cases of salary inversion and compression.
- Clearly defined merit pay policy based on departmental standards.
- Competitive and equitable contributions to the retirement plan.
- Healthcare benefits.
- Family leave and sabbatical leave benefits.
- Retirement benefits.

Through affiliation with MEA-MFT, NEA, and AFT, we would research other institutions' policies and salaries and work to bring MSU salaries and benefits up to the level of other research universities. We will insist on clear and transparent budgetary reviews.

4. Grievance and Arbitration Procedures: Grievance procedures would be written into the collective bargaining agreement and would provide faculty members access to resources and support from MEA-MFT. Typically the final resort is binding arbitration by a neutral third party.

We believe that by working with faculty from other Montana institutions, we will all have a stronger voice in Helena. As a collective bargaining unit we would be at the table setting policies instead of accepting those set by the administration and the Board of Regents.

Kirk Branch, English

Maurice Burke, Mathematical Sciences

Robert Campbell, History & Philosophy

John Christopher, Health & Human Development

Suzanne Christopher, Health & Human Development

Alex Dimitrov, Cell Biology & Neuroscience

Sandy Gagnon, Animal & Range Sciences

Jon Harney, Music

Patrick Hatfield, Animal & Range Sciences

Joyce Herbeck, Education

Barbara Hudson, Microbiology

Kristen Intemann, History & Philosophy

Ralph Johnson, Architecture

Steve Kirchhoff, English

Peter Kommers, Architecture

Todd Larkin, Art

Karen Leech, Music

Bethany Letiecq, Health & Human Development

Sherry Linnerooth, Music

William Locke, Earth Sciences

Anneke Metz, Cell Biology & Neuroscience

Marcie McClure, Microbiology

Mary Murphy, Women's Studies

Sandra Osborne, Health & Human Development

Chris Pinet, Modern Languages & Literatures

Beth Quinn, Sociology & Anthropology

Aleks Rebane, Physics

Jim Robison-Cox, Mathematical Sciences

Bob Rydell, History & Philosophy

Leah Schmalzbauer, Sociology & Anthropology

Christina Sieloff, Nursing

Bok Sowell, Animal & Range Sciences

Ronald Tobias, Media & Theatre Arts

Franke Wilmer, Political Science

Rich Wojtowicz, Libraries

Bill Wyckoff, Earth Sciences

MEA-MFT