

An Open Letter to UC Chief Negotiator Gayle Cieszkiewicz

June 6, 2002

Gayle Cieszkiewicz
Executive Director, Labor Relations
University of California
Office of the President
300 Lakeside Drive 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-3550

Dear Gayle:

I have recently received a copy of the administration's update on bargaining, which your office has distributed to members of the legislature and to the campus community (through departmental email). As you know, this update is deeply misleading in many respects. UC-AFT believes in full and open discussion with both non-senate faculty and other members of the campus community about the progress of negotiations, but we also believe that circulating half-truths and outright misrepresentations does not serve the cause of a free and open dialogue.

In the past, we have requested the opportunity to respond to previous "updates" that you distributed through departments. Your office has refused our request, while at the same time denying us access to a complete email list of Unit 18 members. Such a refusal suggests that the administration is more interested in presenting its "spin" on negotiations than on discussing the actual differences between the parties.

On behalf of UC-AFT, I would like to make you the following offer. We would like to create a forum for a public discussion of our outstanding differences. To this end, we propose to give you complete access to our members via our distribution list (which, unfortunately, because of your refusal to provide a complete email list, is incomplete) and our website, in order to discuss the administration's positions on the contract negotiations. We will distribute your message in completely unedited form. Of course, we will respond, but for each response of ours, we will give you an absolutely equal right to respond in turn. In this way, we can create an open dialogue about the outstanding issues.

Of course, if the administration is genuinely concerned about creating an open dialogue, it will agree as well to distribute our responses, in unedited form, to campus administrators and members of the Academic Senate. As you know, we have been concerned about the administration's on-going misrepresentation of our positions to the campus community, and this would be an opportunity to have a forthright and honest discussion of our differences. However, our offer to distribute your message directly to our members is unqualified and not contingent on your agreement to do likewise.

In order to begin the dialogue, I am attaching a copy of two of our own updates: an update that was sent to our list on June 5 and a response to your update that was sent to our list on June 6. We would welcome your comments on any aspect of our reports, or any other issues related to the substance of our contract negotiations. However, I certainly would hope that you would address the central issues that now divide the parties: protections against post-six year avoidance, peer involvement, conditions of continuing appointments, layoff for continuing appointees, salary, workload, professional development, and arbitration.

I, and our members, look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeremy Elkins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Jeremy Elkins
President, UC-AFT