**FAQ**

***Negotiations /Contract***

**Q: What would $1 million a year pay for?**

A: There are a number of options in how to split the money.

Here are just a few examples:

* FT faculty could get a 2% raise, and PT faculty a 1.8% raise, with no new FT positions.
* FT faculty alone could get a 4% raise. Or 3.4% + 20 new FT
* PT faculty alone could get a 3.5% raise. Or 1.5% + 20 new FT

**Q: What other major goals are missing from the offer?**

A: Progress on workload equity for faculty teaching lab/lecture mixes, ABE, ESL, and IEP. This is one of the four pillars and an issue that has been coming up for many years without resolution.

**Q: What can we hope to gain in this contract?**

A: We have already agreed to new committees on Shared Governance, Instructional Innovation, and Diversity and Inclusion. We agree in principle on increasing the number of full-time faculty, having multi-quarter contracts for part-time faculty, making sure that all work is paid and that non-instructional responsibilities are spelled out ahead of time, establishing one development day (in-service/collaboration) per quarter which is paid, having one personal day in Summer quarter, and a list of smaller points.

**Q: When will bargaining end?**

A: It depends. If the faculty tell us they are willing to strike, we might fight longer for a better offer. If not, we should wrap this up.

**Q: How will faculty learn about the new tentative contract?**

A: The negotiating team will do presentations on each campus and make information available through other means so that faculty can evaluate the proposal.

**Q: Is there a deadline for finishing negotiations?**

A: Yes. There is a deadline of June 30 to bargain local funds for increments. That means we need to wrap up bargaining, present all of the proposed changes to the faculty across the district, and take a ratification vote by the end of Spring quarter, which is June 16.

**Q: What are the start and ends dates of the new contract, if it is ratified by the faculty?**

A: The new contract would start on July 1, 2017. The negotiating teams have talked about a 3-year contract, but that would also have to be agreed to at the bargaining table.

**Q: What if we miss the deadline?**

A: We could lose the offer of increment money to increase salaries. And with most faculty gone for the summer, we would have to wait until Fall to take the ratification vote on the new contract.

**Q: What if we finish bargaining on time but the faculty vote down the new contract?**

A: We would continue to work under the conditions in the old contract. AFT Seattle would have to regroup and form a new bargaining committee that would start all over again. We wouldn’t know which provisions in the rejected contract people were voting against. It could be another year before we completed bargaining.

***Strike Authorization and Striking***

**A few things to consider before you vote:**

* A strike is powerful when the membership is fully committed and has a clear goal in mind.
* A strike is a tool used only as a last, best option.
* Willingness to strike sends a clear message to management that the current situation is no longer tolerable.
* A strike can have lasting impacts on individuals, organizations, and our relationship with management. It’s impossible to predict whether the impacts will be positive or negative.

**Q: What is a strike authorization vote?**

A: It is a vote of the members of AFT Seattle asking if you agree to give authority to the executive board to call a strike.

**Q: What is the purpose of a strike authorization vote?**

A: The results of the strike authorization vote will show union leadership how many union members are willing to go on strike.

**Q: If the vote is yes, do we go on strike?**

A: No, not at that point. The AFT Seattle executive board would decide whether to strike?

**Q: Why are we talking about strike authorization?**

A: We have been bargaining a new contract for more than a year. We have a chance to bargain local funds for giving increments to faculty. The only offer we have received is $1 million per year for 3 years. We have made progress on a lot of things that don’t cost much, if anything. But faculty salaries are unacceptable. The offer is low.

**Q: What does a strike look like?**

A: A strike is all or nothing. All work ceases for the duration of the strike. A strike requires not only walking off the job, but standing on the picket line, all day, every day of the strike.

**Q: Isn’t it illegal for us to strike?**

A: Yes, mostly. We don’t have a legal right to strike. If we feel that we have grounds for an unfair labor practice charge against the District based on the administration bargaining in bad faith, we are in a better position to justify a strike. The executive board is working with our attorney to file a ULP charge.

**Q: If we went out on strike, how long would it last?**

A: AFT Seattle wants to hear from you what would be reasonable.

**Q: Would all faculty strike, or just some?**

A: There is an expectation that all faculty would strike, or at least honor the picket line. A strike would affect all District employees, venders who serve the District, and students.

**Q: What happens to my classes?**

A: Classes would be cancelled, and class time would be lost.

**Q: What if some people hold class during the strike?**

A: The union cannot compel faculty to participate in the strike. We would hope for full participation. If the strike closed the colleges down, it would be unlikely that people would still teach.

**Q: Are there consequences for participating in a strike?**

A: The administration can decide to discipline participants according to our contract.

**Q: Are there consequences for not participating in a strike?**

A: No. No one can be forced to strike. People may choose to cross the picket line.

**Q: I’m part-time faculty. I can’t afford to lose pay, and I don’t want to lose my job. Can I lose my job? What protections do I have?**

A: If you have no job security (Priority Hire status), you could lose your job. Your pay can be deducted for the time that you don’t work.

**Q: I’m in a full-time tenure-track position. Should I participate in union activities or in a strike?**

A: Your chances for being granted tenure could be harmed by your participation in a strike or other kinds of union activities.

**Q: Can we use personal days or sick leave during a strike?**

A: The most powerful message in a strike is stopping work and giving up the pay that you would have earned. That said, the use of personal leave is up to the individual. Sick leave is NOT appropriate for a strike. It is to be used only for legitimate purposes—sickness, bereavement, medical appointments, caring for a sick family member.