

CAC Summary Report, Spring 2019

For spring 2019, the CAC fielded about 75 cases, including both new inquiries and ongoing cases from prior semesters. As is typical, our work consisted of frequent email communication and phone consultations, both internally and to faculty bringing questions or concerns, regular committee meetings, and meetings with Labor Relations.

Below, we summarize our recent work across the major categories that CAC typically addresses. Because the Bargaining Team for the next round of contract negotiations is now set, the CAC is now coordinating with members of the BTeam whenever inquiries to the CAC have contract language or bargaining implications.

Any questions or concerns about this report can be addressed to contract@unitedacademics.org.

FORMAL GRIEVANCES:

UA worked on two ongoing grievances and filed one new grievance this spring. Ongoing grievances: (1) our grievance relating to the AY 2017-2018 increase in Professional Development Funds (PDFs) remains at the Vermont Labor Relations Board awaiting a decision by the board on briefs filed from each side. (2) A grievance related to annual evaluation guidelines and RPT review guidelines resulted in changes made to the process within CNHS (department votes on guidelines were solicited) for this current year; we have flagged this topic for further review and clarification during next negotiations. (3) We filed a grievance against CAS administration for the manner in which course size increases were implemented for the coming academic year. Following discussion, CAS admin has reaffirmed the importance of chair-faculty discussions on changing pedagogy for increased class sizes, and has committed to those discussions taking place prior to June 1, 2019 (the deadline for final workload forms).

DISCIPLINE / AAEO-RELATED:

There were few instances in this category this semester. We assisted faculty members with the following situations: reporting discriminatory behavior of an administrator to AAEO, a complaint made by a student about a faculty member to AAEO, and hostile communication from a student to a faculty member. No hearings or faculty discipline resulted from these cases.

WORKLOAD:

Workload queries were diverse and made up the largest major category of inquiries this semester. We finalized an MOU with the administration specifying parameters for the new course release for non-tenure-track faculty who teach 8+ courses for two academic years (see prior email and UA webpage for details), and answered several questions about this new benefit. We worked with faculty in CESS to ensure that a new service requirement (review of student portfolios, previously compensated in other ways) was implemented in a manner consistent with the CBA. We fielded questions and concerns about workload related to course size increases, which resulted in the CAS grievance noted above. We discussed the particulars of course assignments with multiple faculty who contacted us with concerns around their specific courses, and answered questions related to course equivalency policies for large-enrollment courses.

RPT AND ANNUAL EVALUATIONS:

We answered questions related to the timing of formal evaluations and the process of evaluations (e.g., what materials should or should not be included in various stages of the RPT process). We are also in the process of assisting with the reconsideration of a negative RPT decision.

BENEFITS AND SABBATICALS*:

We fielded several, mostly routine, questions about benefit eligibility, benefit details, and sabbatical reports. We also have instituted a process for reaching out to any faculty who have received a notice of non-reappointment, to ensure that they are granted full benefits, including recall rights, that may be due to them under the CBA during any transition out of UVM employment. We reviewed concerns (posted also to UA-Discuss) related to UVM's potential change of record-keeper for retirement benefits. However, while CBA language mandates that UVM make a retirement contribution on behalf of faculty who make the required minimum contribution, it does not inform on how the record-keeper of such funds is selected.

*Please note that the next deadline is September 1, 2019 for planned sabbaticals for Fall 2020, **Spring 2021**, and for AY 2020-2021.

MOUs:

We facilitated and signed off on several non-precedential exceptions to the CBA related to incentives for planned retirements as well as faculty-initiated reductions in FTEs.

OTHER INQUIRIES:

As is the case each semester, we worked on several issues that do not easily fit into the categories above. Among other things, these included questions on whether proposed changes to the academic calendar had any CBA implications (they did not); course prep and other work during sabbatical; issues with Payroll / HR; departmental policies around summer teaching; part-time Lecturer course assignments; logistics related to student course evaluations for online courses; and various inquiries from outside groups or individuals related to UA and our contract.

May 20, 2019

Submitted by Grievance Officer Keith Burt on behalf of the Contract Administration Committee
(contract@unitedacademics.org)

Spring 2019 CAC members:

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John Forbes (Theatre)

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