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Rutgers Adjuncts Approve New Three-Year Contract

The Rutgers AAUP-AFT faculty union’s adjunct chapter voted to ratify a new contract with raises, increases in professional development funds and creation of guidelines for career advancement. The Part-Time Lecturer Faculty Chapter (PTLFC-AAUP-AFT) represents 2,000 adjunct faculty members (PTLs) who teach more than thirty percent of classes throughout the university. “These highly qualified and dedicated faculty are an integral part of the instructional programs at Rutgers, but we are sometimes treated as if we are expendable,” said Teresa Politano, a journalism PTL and president of the chapter.

The new contract recognizes adjuncts with twelve semesters of teaching experience at Rutgers with a five percent salary increase, in addition to regular increases in the other two years ranging from 2 – 2.5%. Over half of the faculty meet, or will meet, the longevity criteria during the contract period, according to Politano. The lowest paid PTLs will receive increases averaging 2.6% each year.

According to Politano, 97 percent of members voted to approve the contract, which covers the period from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2018. She said goals for the next contract remain salary equity with full-time teaching faculty, full tuition remission for Rutgers PTLs and their children, healthcare benefits, defined career paths and longer term contracts.

David Chapman, a PTL in the Music Department and a union negotiator, helped bargain for a joint committee of management and union representatives who will formulate recommendations for evaluations and career advancement. “This committee is needed because adjuncts are professionals with advanced degrees who mentor students, write recommendation letters and develop new courses, but we are not paid for any of this extra work outside of the classroom. Our goal recognize all of these contributions in a fair compensation and career program.”

[RUTGERS AAUP-AFT represents more than 7,000 faculty, including full-time faculty who are tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure track (state and grant funded), graduate students who work as Teaching Assistants and Graduate Assistants, Part-Time Lecturers, Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Counselors, Postdocs, and Winter Session & Summer Session Instructors.]

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