

TEMPLE ASSOCIATION OF
T A U P
UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONALS

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Negotiations Update 5/5

The TAUP negotiating team brought a new salary proposal to the table on Friday when we met with the administration, and the administration put forth a two-page comprehensive proposal that repeated their positions on the various issues under discussion, with some minor changes.

The majority of the session was spent discussing our differences as each side re-articulated our respective overarching frameworks and guiding principles.

The administration's commitment is explicitly to market principles. They say that they have no trouble recruiting and retaining faculty, and they believe that this shows that their working conditions are competitive in the Philadelphia region. They see no need to "fix higher education's failings." They feel that they have made significant strides in treating adjuncts well and expressed that there is little need to change the way things are currently done.

TAUP has a different view. We believe that the market must not be the only determinant because it so often leaves workers at the mercy of management. Workers have formed labor unions for the last century precisely to fight back against the power imbalance that market fundamentalism brings. It's why adjunct faculty organized at Temple, just as full-time faculty, librarians, and academic professionals did so in the 1970s.

The administration has for decades participated in moving sharply away from tenure-track hiring—often hiring its own former graduate students to serve in these contingent roles. The administration cannot act as if the market is some force completely outside its own decisions, past and present. Adjunct faculty are exploited by a bottom-line approach that distorts Temple's real financial situation—which is quite healthy. Rather than directing resources toward the faculty, the administration [hoards them](#) and [funnels them](#) toward purposes tangential to the fundamental mission of the university.

Universities are not merely businesses. Academic values are what inform our specific proposals. Chief among those currently in dispute:

- **Insuring that all faculty have academic freedom and the ability to grieve** the outcome of an internal investigation if the individual and the union identify problems in the process or decision. In our discussion last Friday, the administration again threatened **to remove academic freedom from the contract for all faculty** if we did not adopt their view that alleged violations should not be grievable.

- **Obtaining a significant adjustment in salaries:** Temple adjunct faculty wages should be on par with other state schools in our area that are unionized. In this first contract, significant gains are needed to make up for decades of neglect and exploitation.
- **Creating a well-deserved degree of job security for adjunct faculty** through processes that offer chairs flexibility in hiring and recognize that experience in teaching at Temple has great value to students and the institution
- **Creating paths to promotion** through fair and transparent discipline-specific processes
- **Installing automatic dues deduction**, just as the administration does for every other union at Temple, to make it easy for members to maintain their membership, and to allow the union to focus on the important work of serving the faculty, librarians and academic professionals at Temple

We are eager for a new contract, but we are far apart on these and other concerns. The administration either refuses to discuss these issues, or takes positions that would be clearly unacceptable to our members.

The administration has stated that the longer the process takes, the more adjuncts lose out on the raises they deserve; but after a year of bargaining, the highest raise they've offered has amounted to less than \$7 per week per class. In addition, it would only apply to those who are making the minimum salary (\$1300/cr). *That means that half of the adjuncts at Temple would receive no increase.*

But more is at stake here than pay. We think that adjunct faculty who have taught for more than 6 semesters and who are qualified to teach a course available for adjunct faculty should be offered that course first. The administration says this isn't fair. The administration also doesn't believe that it's necessary to establish guidelines for promotion.

We are committed to continue discussing these matters, but only as long as we see signs that these discussions will be fruitful. We are eager to hear from members about these issues.

Please share your thoughts with us at taupaft@gmail.com.

If you are not a member and support our work on behalf of all of the members of the bargaining unit, you can join [here](#), or contact Abbey Bricker abbeybricker@gmail.com.

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TAUP
 Temple Association of University Professionals
 1301 Cecil B. Moore Ave. (004-15)
 Ritter Hall Annex 721
 Philadelphia PA 19122-6091
 Phone: 215.763.2287
taupaft@gmail.com
www.taup.org

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