

ADJ

WHY ADJUNCT FACULTY SHOULD JOIN THE PSC

OR

THE ONLY WAY TO BEAT THEM IS TO JOIN THEM

The Adjunct Faculty Association (AFA) is not known for its excessive love of the faculty union, the Professional Staff Congress (PSC). Last year we seriously investigated forming a separate union for part-time faculty, and filed suit against the PSC for bargaining in "bad faith" for its part-time personnel. Our efforts to form a new union or obtain dramatic legal redress for adjunct grievances have failed, at least for the foreseeable future. We have concluded that under the circumstances it would be folly for part-time faculty to remain outside of the PSC. Here's why:

ADJUNCT VOTING STRENGTH. There are approximately 6000 part-time faculty at the City University as compared to 11,000 full-time faculty. But only 600 out of more than 6000 union members are part-timers. Because union politics are delicately balanced between several factions, our 600 members (double the number of eighteen months ago) are already a force of some importance. If we had even 1000-2000 union members, we could determine the outcome of PSC elections.

GROWING PSC RESPONSIVENESS TO ADJUNCT NEEDS. The past failure of the union to support the needs of adjuncts is partially the fault of adjuncts themselves. Until two years ago part-timers at CUNY were virtually unorganized. At that time, part-timers took the first step towards organizing themselves by forming the Adjunct Faculty Association. Although the AFA was formed too late to influence the last contract, we have already met with some successes. We have obtained a representative elected by part-time union members on the Executive Council of the union. We have elected at least one adjunct to the Delegate Assembly of the union. The union has prevented the mass firings of adjuncts on several campuses. We have obtained a slight dues reduction for the part-time faculty to \$50 per year. We have been fairly successful in obtaining a hearing for adjunct problems in the union newspaper, the Clarion. We have obtained somewhat greater representation for adjuncts on union committees. These and other successes, although not spectacular, are significant. Much more could be obtained if large numbers of adjuncts belonged to the union.

CROSS-CAMPUS UNIT. Part-timers are at present drastically under-represented in the Delegate Assembly of the PSC (the governing body of the union). This underrepresentation could be partially remedied if adjuncts were to obtain a so-called "cross-campus unit," as have registrars and other minority groups in the union. Such a unit would guarantee to part-timers one member in the PSC Delegate Assembly for every 100 union members. This proposal is opposed by the majority of union leaders, but has considerable rank and file support. We believe that it could be passed by a membership referendum. Only union members can vote in such a referendum. The more adjuncts who take part in this referendum, the better its chances of passage.

HEALTH INSURANCE. The PSC is instituting a group-plan health insurance program for its part-time faculty. For adjuncts who buy health insurance on an individual basis, the savings in this plan will be in many cases sufficient to offset the cost of union dues.

CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS. The part-time faculty was badly hurt in the last PSC contract. Negotiations for the next contract are already beginning. Adjuncts must join the union now if they are to exert their potential strength on union negotiators in the next round of contract negotiations.

DUES. The \$50 per year dues for adjunct faculty are admittedly very high. The AFA advocates a reduction to \$20-30 per year. However, these dues should be compared to the \$180 dues for full-time faculty. Last year dues for adjuncts were reduced slightly, while those of the full-time faculty were increased. One reason why part-time dues were not reduced further is that the union is obligated to send \$44 of the dues which it receives from each part-timer to its state and national affiliates. Union dues should be looked upon as an investment. If large numbers of adjuncts join the union, the next contract will more than recoup the cost of dues. Dues can be automatically deducted from your paycheck in relatively painless installments.

Further information about union membership and a dues checkoff card may be obtained from your local union representative or by calling or writing to the Professional Staff Congress at 25 West 43rd St., Suite 620, N.Y., N.Y. 10036. (Cards may also be obtained from the AFA.)

While you are joining organizations, why not join the Adjunct Faculty Association? Such progress as has been made for part-time faculty is largely a result of our efforts. We put out the only newsletter which freely publishes all news and opinion relevant to part-time faculty. Only we have taken legal action against the PSC. Only we are in a position to make recommendations on such matters as the election of union officers. For these reasons the AFA deserves the membership and support of all part-time faculty.

Adjunct Faculty Association
Box 176
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I enclose \$3.00 or more for one year's membership (Make checks payable to "Adjunct Faculty Association"--your canceled check is your receipt.)

Name _____ College _____
Address _____ Dept. _____
Home phone _____

Check one or more of the following if you would be willing to:

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