

## City U.'s Merged Union Set To Act for 15,000 on Staff

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By M. A. FARBER

The two rival faculty unions at the City University merged last week, increasing the prospect for tough negotiations this summer on the university's second contract with more than 15,000 professors and staff members.

If the new organization is certified as the bargaining agent for the 15,000 employees as expected, it will represent more persons than any other campus union in the country.

The organization, a still unnamed amalgam of the Legislative Conference and the United Federation of College Teachers, said it would embark on "a new course of professional militancy" to gain salary and other benefits and to raise educational standards at the university.

Among its contract demands will be the elimination of "inequities" in wages, tightening of the faculty grievance procedure, limitations on work loads and "mandatory standards" for overcrowded offices and other physical facilities.

Officials of the new union said the conference and the federation had been competing — "needlessly dissipating our human and fiscal resources" — for too long. Merger, they said in interviews, will give the faculty greater strength vis-à-vis the university administration and "added political clout" with the Legislature.

### Rising Problems

"We were fighting each other while the total faculty was faced with budget cuts, enlarged enrollments that were far from adequately financed and threats to tenure, sabbaticals and reasonable work loads and conditions," said Dr. Belle Zeller, president of the new union.

Dr. David Newton, the university's vice chancellor for faculty and staff relations, declined to comment on the merger. "While we support the right of the faculty to bargain, the merger is purely faculty business," he said.

About 8,000 professors at the university are full-time; about 4,500 part-time. Another group, known as "professional support service people," includes 2,500 librarians, counselors, registrars, laboratory assistants and other employees. The university has an enrollment of 218,000 students.

As a result of a recent movement toward unionization of professors, about 10 to 15 per cent of the half-million teaching faculty members in the United States are subject to collective agreements beyond their individual contracts, or will soon be.

Approximately half the total

faculty members covered by bargaining are employees of the two New York public systems—the City University and the State University, where 14,000 faculty and staff members are represented.

The first major faculty contract—actually two contracts—was signed at the City University in 1969 and is to expire next Aug. 31.

Prior to that agreement, the Legislative Conference was voted the agent for the university's full-time instructional staff and "support" employees, with the exception of lecturers. The federation was designated the agent for the part-time instructional staff and "support" employees, as well as lecturers.

Last Friday, the merger of the two City University unions was approved by the unions' members by a margin of 10 to 1, with more than half the unions' combined membership of 5,500 voting. Dr. Zeller, who was chairman of the conference, was named president of the new organization. Dr. Israel Kugler, president of the federation, was chosen deputy president.

### 3 Units Sought

Another impetus for the merger was the federation's formal challenge of the conference as the agent for the full-time instructional staff and "support" employees. Both organizations were said to be anxious to avoid legal appeals on representation that could cause a delay in contract talks.

The new union will now seek one bargaining unit of all 15,000 employees at the university, in place of the present two units. The university, which says that it fears uniform salary increases if there is only one unit, wants three units—consisting of full-time faculty members, part-time faculty members and "support" employees.

A hearing on the unit determination has been scheduled for tomorrow by the State Public Employe Relations Board. The board, which will determine the number of units, also has the power to certify the new union as the exclusive bargaining agent—as many units represented in the negotiations, probably after a faculty vote.

In the contract signed three years ago, City University salaries were raised to among the highest for faculty members anywhere — for example, the range for a full professor is currently \$22,500 to \$31,275. Community college professors were placed on the same salary scale as senior college professors and the percentage of professors in various ranks was changed to raise the proportion in the higher categories.