

Doctoral Students' Council, Rms. 201/8
The Graduate School and University Center
of the City University of New York
Graduate Center: 33 West 42 Street, New York, N.Y. 10036

18 August 1982

Dr. Irwin Polishook, President
Professional Staff Congress
25 West 43rd Street
New York City, N.Y. 10036

Dear Dr. Polishook,

I am presently employed as an adjunct lecturer at the C.U.N.Y. Graduate School where I am also a full-time doctoral student in the Philosophy Program and the Chair of the Doctoral Students' Council which is the student government representing the interests of some 2800 graduate students enrolled in the 28 Doctoral and Masters Programs administered at the Graduate School & University Center. Many of the students are, like myself, part-time faculty.

Peter Caws wrote to you this summer about my concern for the economic situation of the CUNY graduate students. In response, you arranged to have Arnold Cantor meet with me while you were away to discuss my concern. Mr. Cantor and I talked about the difference in the salaries paid to the part-time faculty and those paid to the full-time faculty of the City University. No doubt you are aware of the disparity. Nevertheless, to illustrate, consider: a full-time lecturer according to the existing contract earns \$16,434 for an 18-credit workload carried in two semesters, whereas a part-time lecturer earns \$4,800 for a 12-credit workload in the same two semesters, and, in addition, is not covered for medical and dental expenses or any other fringe benefits. The part-time lecturer who performs two-thirds of the full-time workload is unfairly compensated. Two-thirds of \$16,434 is \$10,956, not \$4,800.

It is not easy to understand and it is becoming even less easy to tolerate how the Professional Staff Congress, the Board of Trustees of the City University and its Chancellor, the City of New York, and the State of New York can condone such exploitation. The issue is by no means small. The same inequity is found in the State University and probably in every university across the country. To my mind such policies should have been changed long ago, but especially since the Reagan Administration has cut financial aid to graduate students so drastically, it is imperative that we be paid more fairly now.

President Proshansky has agreed to invite you to the first Cabinet meeting at the Graduate School in September so that we can enlist your help in improving the economic situation of CUNY graduate students. It is my understanding that the PSC is not addressing the inequity mentioned above in its current negotiations with the City and is willing to accept the same percent increase in the full and part-time faculty salaries which determines other support lines to students like the graduate assistant A and B lines. I am afraid that September

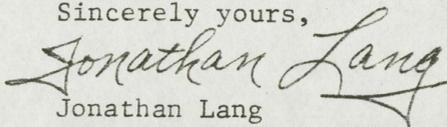
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may be too late.

Perhaps past strategies have been such as to fight primarily for the interests of full-time faculty. Any approach which assumes that the economic pie is only so big and if one group gets a bigger share, it means less remains for dividing among the others, is hopeless. It is not my intention to deprive full-time faculty of anything. I hope we can cooperate and together assert the value of higher education. One way of doing that is to improve the part-time faculty salaries. Mr. Cantor said now is not the time to attempt this. To wait is not acceptable. Waiting only permits the escalation of military and defense spending by the federal government. We must challenge the lack of foresight the Reagan Administration has shown and work to establish education as a priority. Without education we are hopelessly lost. I trust you share the same vision I am alluding to.

I should appreciate meeting with you soon to discuss my concern.

Sincerely yours,


Jonathan Lang
Chair