

United Faculty and Academic Staff (UFAS) is a labor union democratically organized to represent its members—faculty and academic staff at both the UW-Madison and UW-Extension. UFAS is an independent affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, Local #223, AFL-CIO.

Five Ways to Enhance the Effectiveness of HR Design

By Sara Goldrick-Rab,
 Associate Professor of Educational Policy Studies and Sociology

This fall marks my ninth academic year at UW-Madison. During my time here I've experienced our human resources system in many ways—as a new mother seeking a maternity leave (twice), as a temporarily disabled employee in need of a leave, as a frustrated faculty member seeking a raise, and multiple times as the director of a large research project trying to hire and retain qualified classified and academic staff. I know firsthand that the system needs to change in order to realize our campus goals of equity, efficiency, and effectiveness.

That is why I have taken seriously the HR Design team's request for input from shared governance units, spending significant time studying the plan, and commenting on it in multiple venues. I think further adjustments to the current plan are required, because my own knowledge of higher education reform efforts and the scholarly literature on work and organizations suggest that as currently formulated it will have significant unintended

consequences, eroding some of what we value most about our university. Therefore, I am providing five recommendations for revising the plan so that UW-Madison's approach to the management of human resources continues to reflect an ethos that prioritizes egalitarianism over ego, and recognizes that our greatest resource is our communal passion for and commitment to our work, rather than the competitive yet aimless striving for prestige that has overcome many of our peer institutions.

Recommendation 1: Expand the plan's current living wage provisions to include workers at businesses receiving university contracts of \$5,000 or more and student hourly employees.

The current plan calls for the implementation of a living wage policy that omits two groups: student hourly workers and contracted employees. Including contracted employees would bring the policy in line with the City of Madison's living wage provisions. Their exclusion creates an incentive for the university to outsource more functions, which may increase efficiency but will also erode job security. In addition, providing a living wage to contractors and

students helps ensure at least a modicum of equity among all people working in our community.

Recommendation 2: Revise the compensation philosophy guiding the plan to make internal equity and collective performance the primary, rather than secondary, compensation drivers.

The current plan repeatedly emphasizes enhancing "individual potential, opportunity, and achievement," which, while important, overlooks the critical role played by teamwork in providing high-quality learning experiences and producing innovative research. The 21st century research university increasingly requires collaboration across disciplines and units, creating work environments where people trained in different disciplines (and who are thus part of different labor markets) work alongside each other. The plan briefly acknowledges this, but the compensation strategies it outlines focus first on the role of market competitiveness (noting that it will be a factor in establishing compensation) and only secondly (and far less frequently) on internal equity. The roles of these factors should be reversed in each section. After all, the compensation work team (which, as an aside, did not include any non-administrator faculty members) recommended that market value be considered in setting wages but said nothing about de-valuing or de-emphasizing equity (although it appears the committee did not consider alternative, equity-focused models of compensation at all). It is

reasonable that the committee wanted to add market-based pay to the mix of compensation drivers. However, the extent to which this driver should be emphasized, and how to assess cross-departmental collaborations taking into account diverse disciplinary "markets," are very complex questions deserving a more careful work.

Recommendation 3: Require mandatory training for all managers tasked with setting employee compensation and/or benefits.

Given the highly decentralized nature of the plan, managers will almost always be faculty members, and yet most would acknowledge that they are not trained for or comfortable with performing human resources functions. The compensation work group noted this among its concerns, stating, "Another concern is that not all faculty and staff supervisors will assume responsibility to fairly, objectively and consistently implement formal performance evaluation processes." This is too important a role to be left to the untrained, but the efficacy of this plan relies exclusively on their responsible participation in the training. It is especially important to give managers guidance about how to conduct and utilize market analyses in departments and units where scholars from different disciplines work side by side (thus creating much potential for internal inequity), and also to train them in assessing the comparable worth of similar yet unequal tasks. The current plan

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Where We Stand: A Message From UFAS Co-President

Why UFAS Is Important

Hello fellow members of the UW-Madison and UW-Extension academic staff and faculty. My name is Aaron Crandall and I was elected co-president of the United Faculty and Academic Staff (UFAS, AFT Local 223), along with Robin Stubbs, back in May 2012.

I come from a brief, but exciting history of union activism as a union steward with another AFT local, the Wisconsin Professional Employees Council (WPEC, AFT Local 4848). I was the lead steward for WPEC here on the UW-Madison campus and was more or less responsible for representing the interests of approximately 800 classified salaried professionals. The BIG difference between WPEC and UFAS was that WPEC had a contract and was able to collectively bargain, at least before Act 10 came along in the spring of 2011.

By being involved in WPEC, as a union member and a steward, I gained a true appreciation of the value of a union in the workplace. More often than not, the union was con-

sidered a valuable resource by both the employees and management, and, when needed, it served as a good mechanism of communication and structural change. Management/administration would often consult with us, union representatives, about proposed changes to policies and procedures that would affect our members. Shared governance of the faculty and academic staff may work similarly, but a strong, member-organized union would help these governance bodies to advocate more effectively for the best interests of all their members.

Act 10 stripped WPEC and other union locals on campus of most of our ability to bargain in good faith, and most locals chose not to recertify, so now we all, faculty, academic and classified staffs, are in the same boat more or less—with no union representation. I changed appointments here on campus from classified staff to academic staff in February 2012, so am still fairly new to the academic staff but learning quickly the culture, policies, and procedures of the academic staff on campus. I feel we can adapt to the changes

happening on campus, from the HR Design to the Administrative Excellence, but could do so much better if we could influence these changes with our collective voice, as academic staff allied with the faculty.

UFAS could become a great asset on campus and act as that collective voice we need, in collaboration with those representing us in campus governance. My experience has been that the university administration would be willing to sit down with UFAS and, at a minimum, confer on matters that we believe are important for our members. We're stronger together than as individuals, and during my time at WPEC I saw the power behind a collective voice. Therefore, I ask that you consider joining UFAS, or, if you are already a UFAS member, that you get involved and become active even if you're only able to help a little.

Many changes have been happening in Wisconsin and here on campus, and many more are yet to come. One of the changes that will come in the near future is the redesign of the campus personnel system. There is still time to

influence the shape of the new system—and two items in this issue of the newsletter show in what directions we might want to take this project. When the new system is implemented, some classified staff, formerly represented by other AFT locals, may become academic staff. While UFAS does not advocate this change, we would certainly welcome these new members of the academic staff into our ranks. We will work to ensure that the new campus personnel system does not diminish the number of staff with union representation but is instead an opportunity for us all to come together, organize effectively, and provide a crucial, independent voice on behalf of faculty and staff alike.

—Aaron Crandall
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UFAS is on FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/UFAS.AFT>

For additional information, please visit the UFAS website at <http://wi.aft.org/ufas/>

For additional information on higher education organizing, visit <http://www.aftwhighered.org>

UFAS Gets Help from AFT National to Organize Academic Staff, Faculty

By Anna Paretskaya,
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During the spring 2011 protests against Act 10, Governor Scott Walker's so-called budget repair bill that eviscerated public employees' collective bargaining rights, membership of UFAS almost doubled: UW-Madison and UW-Extension academic staff and faculty found out for the first time that there was a union for them on campus or decided to join as a gesture of support for other public workers' unions. UFAS, like all other unions on campus, lost members later that year when the university stopped the payroll dues deduction, as mandated by Act 10 and the 2011-2013 budget bill. However, UFAS has grown again by about sixty percent since the beginning of this year. And this growth has been in no small part due to American Federation of Teachers organizer Charles Peterson. Charles was hired in February 2012 to help rebuild AFT locals on the Madison campus. AFT is so committed to organizing higher education instructional and research staff here at UW that in September it brought on board a second organizer, Joe Richard. Charles and Joe spend a lot of time on campus talking to prospective members. If you haven't met them yet, you might well expect one of them to knock on your door in the near future.

Recently, UFAS sat with Charles Peterson for a chat. Here is what we found out.

UFAS: How did you become a labor organizer? What made you come to Madison to work on organizing folks in higher education at the time when Wisconsin, like many other states, keeps cutting funding for education?

CP: Working for AFT is my first job in the labor movement—my first real job after college in fact: I graduated from University of Massachusetts with a BA in Classics in the spring of 2011. I came to Wisconsin with my partner, who started grad school at UW-Madison last fall (incidentally, she's now a proud AFT-TAA member). She was deciding on schools just as the Capitol occupation was happening, and I said, "That is where we need to be."

I had been an activist for years: I was involved in building student anti-war groups, fighting the budget cuts at UMass Amherst, and organizing actions in solidarity with the Egyptian Revolution and the Wisconsin uprising. And if I hadn't already been an activist, getting my first student loan bill definitely would have turned me into one. Our society's priorities with regards to higher education are completely backward.

A couple months after we moved here, I heard that AFT was hiring. Since I came to Wisconsin to participate in the labor movement however I could, I was quite thrilled to get the job. Fighting for funding for public education is a historic, nationwide struggle, and I am proud to be part of it. One of my professors always said, "My working conditions are my students' learning conditions." Educators' unions play a vital role as champions for public education, for the students. We need to make this explicit to silence the myths about the "greedy public worker" and the "lazy overpaid professor."

UFAS: What does a project organizer like you do?

CP: I do quite a bit. But my immediate task is rebuilding and

increasing membership of the AFT campus locals in the less union-friendly post-Act 10 environment, and making UFAS and its sister locals more visible on campus. This is why we've participated in the recent 2012 UW-Madison Employee Benefits and Resource Fair and are planning several campus-wide union events this academic year.

On a day-to-day basis, I spend a lot of time having conversations with potential members about joining and getting more involved with their union. Recently I also have been pairing up with current members for office visits with their colleagues, talking to faculty and academic staff about the labor movement, collecting their perceptions of higher education unions, trying to understand their needs, and recruiting new members. We have had a lot of success lately.

UFAS: AFT-Wisconsin has already organized faculty and academic staff on some other UW campuses (UFAS News covered this in previous issues). What can we learn about organizing higher education workers from those campaigns and, on the other hand, in what ways is the Madison campus different? What role, in your opinion, can faculty and academic staff unions play if collective bargaining is not, at least for now, an option?

CP: The first thing to learn is that it can be done! AFT won a number of elections with very high percentages of "yes" votes. To me, this indicates that faculty and staff on campuses across the state recognize that they need an organization that fights for their interests as workers. Obviously, Madison is somewhat different: it's the flagship campus and a "Public Ivy." But

surely the working conditions of the academic staff here are more similar to their UW System colleagues' than outstate peers'. I also think all faculty have an interest in increasing the number of tenure-track appointments, improving conditions for their graduate and teaching assistants, and ending abuse of contingent labor (adjuncts).

As far as collective bargaining goes: AFT hasn't given up on this, despite the setbacks under the current state administration. We will fight to regain faculty and staff's right to collectively bargain because we believe that all workers should be allowed to form a union and negotiate with the boss. Whatever the outcome of the upcoming elections to the state legislature, we should be prepared to demand a change in the law.

On the other hand, there is a lot a union can do to advocate for members whether a collective bargaining agreement is in place or not. I am certain that the more we talk to the campus community, the more grievances we will find, and as our membership and clout grows, we will bring these grievances to the administration.

Additionally, UFAS can be an advocate for a model of the university that is different from the administration's neoliberal, low-wage, corporate vision (which, to a large extent, is embedded in the new personnel system that is being designed now—what is known as the HR Design Project). UFAS does not need a contract to champion the Wisconsin Idea, nor does it need a contract to demand that the legislature fund the university in the manner befitting a truly great public institution.

From UFAS Newswire

- UFAS is sending delegates to the AFT-Wisconsin Annual Convention. Co-presidents Robin Stubbs and Aaron Crandall will represent UFAS at the 81st annual meeting of the AFT-W. The convention will take place on October 26-27 at the Holiday Inn in Manitowoc, WI. While registration of delegates with voting rights is now closed, interested UFAS members are welcome to attend as guests. In addition to hearing the AFT-W President's State of the Union address, political and legal updates, and analysis of the status the Wisconsin Retirement System, the delegates will attend sessions of AFT-W's councils (the Graduate Employees Council, Higher Education Council, or PK-12 Teachers Council), and discuss and vote on proposed amendments to the AFT-W Bylaws.

- Many union members came from Chicago to Madison in 2011 to support Wisconsin public employees as we fought to defend our collective bargaining rights.

UFAS members returned the gesture by joining several busloads of Wisconsin union members—including AFT-Wisconsin president Bryan Kennedy—who traveled to Chicago on September 15 to stand with the Chicago Teachers Union in the city's first teacher strike in 25 years. UFAS members took part in a massive "Wisconsin-style" rally at the city's Union Park and marched with thousands of teachers and supporters to defend public education and workers' rights. CTU delegates subsequently agreed to a deal reached by negotiators, which union members ratified in early October.

- UFAS's sister union, the TAA (Teaching Assistants Association, AFT Local 3220, comprised of UW-Madison graduate employees) has received the AFT's Norman G. Swenson Militancy Award. The TAA was honored for its leadership role during the February-March 2011 protests against Governor Scott Walker's so-called budget repair bill that stripped public employees of bargaining rights. As we all remember, members of the TAA spearheaded the fight against

the bill for weeks from within the State Capitol building. TAA's Matthew Reiter and Kaja Rebane accepted the award at the Higher Education Breakfast during the American Federation of Teachers Annual Convention, which took place in July 2012 in Detroit.

- Another University of Wisconsin local—UW-SPARC, AFT Local 6505, representing faculty and staff at UW-Stevens Point—won the AFT's 2012 "Pride of the

Union" award, an honor given to locals whose membership increases significantly in a single year. UW-SPARC is the newest chartered local of AFT Wisconsin. It was formed in the spring of 2011 and, despite the anti-union provisions of Act 10, has achieved majority membership. UW-Stevens Point Academic Representation Council (SPARC) is one of eight locals of faculty and academic staff in the University of Wisconsin System.

HR Design

Continued from page 1

notes that a lack of training for managers was named as a problem in the listening sessions and mentions the training of hiring managers, but says nothing about rigorously training those who set compensation.

Recommendation 4: Alter the recommendation in the plan associated with shared governance to focus on joint decision making rather than advice and input.

The recommendations on shared governance, particularly with respect to development of the compensation pay plan and changes in benefits (leave, insurances, etc.), stress that the shared governance institutions, specifically that of the newly created University Staff, provide advice and input to the administration *after* the plan is developed. This is not indicative of a collaborative or shared governance model. While at many institutions shared governance merely requires the involvement of faculty, staff, and students as listeners and occasional speakers, this is not the historic practice at Madison, and shared decision-making responsibilities should not be eroded through changes to language in specific plans like these.

Recommendation 5: Require mandatory performance reporting and accountability metrics for the new HR System.

At minimum, the plan should explain which reports should be produced and what consequences will be associated with performance. For example, public annual reports should assess changes in internal equity (between faculty and staff, among groups with regard to gender and race), faculty and staff turnover, and the absolute and relative number of positions that are university employees versus contractors. These reports should be presented to both the Faculty Senate and the Academic Staff Assembly (and the shared governance body of the University Staff), and the senior leadership council should describe what responses to the plan will take place should inequity, turnover, outsourcing, or other negative unintended consequences of the new HR design emerge or worsen.

(The original was posted on Goldrick-Rab's blog: <http://eduooptimists.blogspot.com/>.)



UFAS members Karen Tuerk and Chad Goldberg with AFT-W President Bryan Kennedy in Chicago.

UFAS Raises Concerns About HR Design

By Chad Alan Goldberg,
Vice President of UFAS

The elected leadership of United Faculty & Academic Staff sent an open letter on October 1 to the members of the UW-Madison Faculty Senate and Academic Staff Assembly expressing strong concerns about the university's Human Resources Design Project (HRDP). The full text of the letter can be read on our website <http://wi.aft.org/ufas/> under "Recent News."

The impetus for the HRDP was Act 32, the 2011-2013 state biennial budget, which gave the university the authority to develop a new personnel system. Currently, the university manages human resources under two main sets of personnel policies: the classified personnel system, for jobs that the university has in common with other state agencies, and the unclassified personnel system for jobs that are unique to the university. The latter system includes faculty and academic staff.

The formal leadership of the HRDP is Acting Chancellor David Ward, Provost Paul DeLuca, and Vice Chancellor for Administration Darrell Bazzell. The university previously convened work teams with representatives from administration and employee groups to make recommendations; those recommendations formed the basis of the "Strategic Plan" released on September 21. Human Resources was heavily represented on the work teams. While some teams included individual union members, there was minimal effort to ensure the input and participation of campus unions as organizations. The administration is now collecting "input" from governance groups and "stakeholder groups" in order to refine the Strategic Plan and make final adjustments. The Board of Re-

gents is expected to take action on the plan when it meets on December 7, and the final plan will be recommended to the legislature's Joint Committee on Employment Relations in Spring 2013. The university expects to have the new personnel system in place by July 1, 2013.

The UFAS letter questioned whether the proposed HR personnel system in its current form adequately protects employee rights, benefits, and job security, and it raised concerns that the HRDP will be used to further undermine the labor movement on campus in conjunction with Act 10, the so-called budget repair bill that stripped faculty, academic staff, and graduate employees of collective bargaining rights and severely curtailed those rights for classified staff. The letter then urged the Faculty Senate and the Academic Staff Assembly to endorse the following principles and reject any proposal that does not adequately incorporate them.

- 1) Employees should have access to union representation.
- 2) The university should foster an environment of labor-management cooperation—whether through traditional collective bargaining or through an informal "meet and confer" process for the faculty, academic staff, and graduate employees who are no longer legally recognized bargaining agents.
- 3) Faculty and academic staff governance rights should not be diminished as a result of this process.
- 4) Faculty tenure should not be diminished as a result of this process.
- 5) Academic

freedom—especially for academic staff researchers and instructors—should not be diminished as a result of this process.

6) The university should use this process to increase job security for all categories of academic staff and for the new category of university staff.

7) No employee group should see benefits diminished as a result of this process. In fact, this process should be used to expand vacation and other leave benefits for academic and university staff.

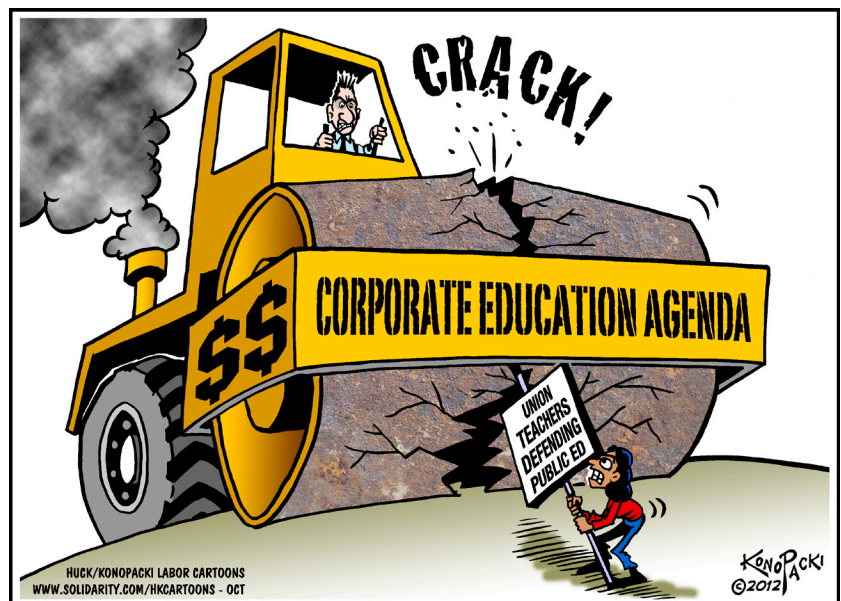
8) In a spirit of transparency, any changes to existing legislation should be shared with the appropriate governance bodies and the staff and faculty unions for their review and comment.

9) Any new employment system should extend real due process and just cause, to include the seven tests of just cause, to all faculty and staff in the UW System and at UW-Madison.

10) Any new employment system should extend full civil service protections—as applicable—to all faculty and academic staff.

While proponents of the

Strategic Plan argue that it already embodies most of these principles, careful reading suggests that it still falls short in important respects. For instance, some 1,400 classified staff positions will eventually be made into academic staff positions, depriving their occupants of even the weakened collective bargaining rights that remain under Act 10. Shared governance is being reduced in practice to giving "input" and "feedback" on a plan that is presented largely as a *fait accompli*. The Strategic Plan jeopardizes employee rights and job security (particularly for classified staff) in a variety of ways in the name of "flexibility" for management. And the plan proposes important changes to leave programs, which HR director Bob Lavigna has acknowledged will produce "losers and winners," yet it postpones the determination of those changes until after the plan is approved. More examples could be adduced, but the point is clear: The HRDP needs further scrutiny and improvement, neither of which is likely without far more robust influence from governance groups and campus unions.





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<http://wi.aft.org/ufas>



If you support UFAS's fight to protect higher education and restore the collective bargaining rights of faculty and academic staff, please remember: all of this happens because of the commitment of dues-paying members. So take a step in support of our work and join today by completing our online application at <http://wi.aft.org/ufas>.



If you have questions about UFAS membership, please contact UFAS co-presidents Aaron Crandall (aaron.crandall@yahoo.com) and Robin Stubbs (rfstubbs@gmail.com), or Charles T. Peterson, AFT-W Organizer for Wisconsin Higher Education Project (charlespeterson.aft@gmail.com).