



Long, Hot Summer

Protecting your rights and preparing for the future

ASPRO Leadership has been busy this summer representing your interests before UW System Administration and your ultimate employer – the State of Wisconsin.

In the last [newsletter](#), we shared ASPRO's letter to President Kevin Reilly on the issue of "unit clarification". We are happy to report that ASPRO President Dave Carlson, Past-President Bill Steffenhagen, Board Member Heather Daniels, and Lobbyist Kathi Kilgore met with Reilly and representatives from the System offices of General Counsel and Human Resources. Unit clarification was discussed including System's position and how ASPRO can work cooperatively with UW System Administration to address the unions' efforts to avoid organizing academic staff members by folding them into existing State employee unions.

As you know from media reports and communications from your Chancellor, UW System Administration has clashed with unions, particularly with AFT President Bryan Kennedy, about union efforts to interview academic staff on the Madison campus.

Your Rights

ASPRO supported AB 75's granting of collective bargaining rights for faculty and academic staff, but opposes "unit clarification" because it circumvents the democratic rights of individuals to vote whether to be represented by a union and which union would best represent their interests.

If you are approached by union representatives to discuss your position, job responsibilities, and job duties, **you do not have to cooperate**. And UW System has determined that using time on the job for such activities is inappropriate.

Other Meetings

In the past month, ASPRO Leadership also met with Regent John Drew in West Allis. Dave Carlson, Bill Steffenhagen, and Kathi Kilgore expressed the concerns of academic staff regarding unit clarification – especially denying them the right to vote, and diluting the power of the largest category of employees in the UW System by dispersing them to a wide variety of State employee unions.

Dave, Bill, and Kathi also met with Peter Davis of the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission (WERC) to learn more about processes related to unit clarification, union organizing efforts, and voting for union representation. ASPRO wants to be fully informed about these processes in order to protect the interests of academic staff.

Changing Climate

ASPRO is adjusting to a new climate and new terrain as academic staff now have collective bargaining rights. ASPRO is working to assure that academic staff maintain, and even enhance, the statutory powers they have been granted in shared governance and, with the advent of unionization, that academic staff will not be divided into smaller groups with reduced powers.

The ASPRO Board will be holding its annual Strategic Planning Session later this week. If you have thoughts or suggestions about how ASPRO can best meet your needs, please let us know by emailing us at aspro@aspro.net.