

Annual General Meeting 16 May 2022

Minutes

1. Approval of minutes 13 January 2022 meeting

Approved unanimously

2. Ratification of Elected Branch Committee Officers

Chair: SUE PELL

Secretary: SAM BRACEY

Treasurer: EMMANUEL OKYERE

Membership Secretary: IVAN COHEN

Equality Officer: SHUNA NEILSON

Staff Officer: Vacant

RIASA Officer: LUCIA MORAWSKA

Adjunct Officer: CATHERINE DILLE

Health and Safety Officer: KANDIDA PURNELL

Green Officer: Vacant

Member's Officer: MARTIN BROWN

Committee Members: Vacant

Ratified and approved. Member congratulated the team and all their work

3. Open nominations for Green Officer

Chair called for nominations. SN asked for ideas from membership. Chair we will keep this role open.

4. Campaigns 2021-2022:

- Workplace Stress Survey and Campaign

Secretary reported on the progress concerning stress and workload. Progress is slow, however, awareness of stress and mechanisms needed, work is ongoing. Recommend completing workload survey. Adjunct Officer noted adjuncts excluded from workload and opportunities to speak about workplace stress.

- Adjunct Contracts

Adjunct Officer reported on successful campaign, 200 signatures. Contract is moving towards addressing issues raised by members. Chair agreed has been progress on secure contracts and real improvements for adjunct faculty: Real achievement for the Branch. Moving to guaranteed courses, great to see the support for this issue among students and faculty.

Will be a joint communication and member feedback will be important.

- Pay Claim

Chair reports on pay claim campaign. Last pay claim 1% 2018, major financial crisis at the University. Real devaluation of faculty pay for faculty 12% up to 2021 since the last pay increase. Members supported an 11.99% pay increase took to senior management and met to discuss. Have received a pay officer, we have two more meetings, but we are not permitted to share details with membership at this time. We have asked for and received financial information for us to scrutinise. Still awaiting faculty composition information. Chair questions what we are willing to do in terms of actions to pressure senior management over pay. Equalities Officer asked re progressive timeline? Chair clarified a progressive timeline is not part of the offer, we would support this. Member asked re will all faculty get an increase. Chair replied we asked for universal pay uplift, in general the current offer is inclusive however, those at lower benefit more. Sense is that the pay scale adjustments are being prioritised. Discussion of staff salaries and faculty salaries and inequities at the University and if this will be addressed.

Regional Officer suggests higher paid offer is poor. Stage we have got to is a tribute to efforts to the Branch Officers, so well done for getting us there. Could try to ask for a multi-year pay offer to build in triggers based on financial projections. Not had this conversation with senior management. Suspect we will get to a best case that is not great for members but if we can look to future improvements in pay.

There have been rumours of senior management pay increases which we will be raising. Chair states we are a strong Branch.

Membership Secretary suggests the financial information is historic and will not be useful in terms of rigour we need current cash flow. Chair affirmed we have asked for this information was raised and agreed at JNCC, but not forthcoming yet. We will push for these details.

Member noted that budget had to be agreed by Trustees (around end of May (25th and 26th)), which may explain the delays in providing financial information. No knowledge of executive pay rise but the hiring of consultants is expensive. University recognises salaries need to increase to attract and retain staff).

Chair suggests we need to use this as an opportunity to recruit staff to our Branch, they need representation. We will report back from the meeting once we can share the offer soon. This will be an active issue which we will seek member support for.

5. Move to Chiswick

We had the Town Hall, is this an issue? Are there any concerns? We will be monitoring the health and safety of the working environment. Equalities Officer reports on advice provided by UCU has helped a staff member resolve a potential H & S issue. In addition, green issues need to be brought to fore in the move.

Member reports they are a champion, but has had no contact re the move.

(Regional Officer left the meeting at 10:56)

6. Workload and Progression Committee Discussion

Concern regarding the workload model and the trial not representing our actual workloads, also does not represent what was agreed in the FPPW in terms of execution. Member suggests that we should refuse based on our points, agreed with other members. Positive outcome is ability to say no. Member notes not yet had the meeting with HoD, points not available to cover all activities we do, does not list all activities, scandal re research points capped. September to May is impossible, the fact that it is prospective rather than retrospective. Does not cover the actual work that we do! Adjuncts paid to do work beyond contracts when faculty have met points. Consensus from the membership that the model is hugely problematic.

ACTION: Secretary to share workload survey and members to encourage completion

7. New Contracts Discussion

Chair reports on the new contracts. First heard about new contracts through faculty senate, at some departmental meetings. Senior management suggested new contract changes were minimal. Branch executive provided contracts end of April and met May 9th so little to no time to scrutinise. We have met with Staff Reps to discuss common changes and provide solidarity. What had been in Employee Handbook is being moved into contracts. We have raised issue of loss of meals benefit, wish to account for this in the contracts. Intellectual Property (IP) is contentious, we will address this as we have problems with this. We will emphasize that we should not be in an imbalanced position regarding working for free in the summer. Question from the members re IP. Chair suggests general information and University owns everything, we are pushing back on this. Meeting on May 9th with staff, faculty and Executive Team, we have since sent a tracked document raising concerns.

Adjunct Officer states IP rights are largely unenforceable. Notes a point on monitoring of electronic communication be removed from Adjunct Contracts.

Member asks re expertise available for us at Regional or Head Office to seek advise?

Chair states short notice has been detrimental, we will be seeking advice and support. Secretary stressed the need to gain legal advice but we will consult the membership. We will only recommend signing if we are happy. No-one has to sign

Chair – we will consult and shared communication will be clear how UCU stand on contracts (and pay). We will advocate on members behalf. Contracts will be sent out for information and consultation. We will then be able to have more meaningful discussions with members.

Equalities Officer suggests we include advice for faculty to contact the Branch with concerns.

Member suggests open surgery or meeting to discuss concerns. Most faculty will have pre 2019 contracts. Email the membership to ask

Chair agrees we will have a meeting and solicit feedback from members.

Question re whether everyone will get a new contract. We have been given two Adjunct Contracts (Fixed hours contract and guaranteed courses contract).

Chair notes this is an opportunity to be progressive and push for the wording to be inclusive and contracts to be more balanced in terms of power (as opposed to the University reserves the right to do ...).

8. Setting Branch Priorities and Campaigns 2022-2023

Chair is asking for any priorities for the members?

Member notes the current priorities are going to be ongoing and the focus on pay, contracts, stress at work and adjunct faculty is enough!

Chair agrees!

Membership Officer notes under our stress consideration We need to survey early and regularly to obtain feedback about how people are reacting to the move.

Chair agrees and stresses that we appreciate communication from members so please continue to email and speak to us.

9. Report from Branch Committee Officers

Chair reports that we work on campaigns collegiately forming working groups.

Equalities Officer reports they have been working on adjuncts. Mentioned that gender pay gap is good, President is proud of this, and would like to work on racial equality too.

Chair notes we have not had full disclosure on breakdown of gender faculty in grades.

10. AOB

Chair reports that the Branch Officers are undergoing training, we have a delegate at the UCU Congress this year. We are going to have a full-time equivalent (FTE) written into the Recognition Agreement including two course relief for Chair and Secretary.

Outgoing Green Officer thanks the Committee

Chair thanks the members and is looking forward to the year ahead.

Secretary thanked Murray for his efforts and wished him well

Membership Officer reports that we have 48 members but need to expand into staff. Announces retirement and that will be staying on continuing to work for the Branch and the members.

Chair thanks all the committee members for their work and continued service

RIASA Officer reports that not received clarification on annual leave for Adjuncts?

Chair asked for AOB – Nothing further was raised

Chair closed meeting at 11:46