

# AoS Meeting

Date: September 16th, 5 p.m.

Place: Silver Grad Student Lounge

Facilitator: Ella

Note keeper: Seana

Present head stewards: Chris, Nathan, Anne, Jessica, Ziad, Rani, Sean, Ella, Seana, Claudia (6pm on)

Members present: Victor Li

## Agenda

### 1. Announcements -- Victor Li

March Against Displacement to Protect Chinatown/LES: September 25th at 4pm, starts at 247 Cherry to City Hall

They are building a luxury tower in a public housing neighborhood. Can GSOC promote this march?

We will promote through social media (the week before, a few days before and day of) and Nathan (+ others) distribute flyers in this area.

Jessica: Housing march in Harlem this Sunday, 9/20 at 125th St at 1pm.

### 2. Brief Committee Updates

Seana (Contract Enforcement Committee) : Mostly defunct. Now unit reps have been handling grievances as they come. Anyone wants to join the committee, please let me know. Rani joins CE committee.

Sean (Political Solidarity): Cross-university Day of Action: We Are Workers! Check the FB event. Open to public + private universities, **please invite people to FB event**. PoliSoli will organize probably a rally for the event, details to come.

Anne (Communications): Taking ideas for the Rank + File newsletter issues. The petition needs more signatures, let's get this out there. Right now it's about 200 names. **Stewards should contact their departments to promote the petition.**

Nathan (Organizing): We've been having many department meetings and also developed a collective action plan regarding NYU's contract violations. We are planning more department meetings in the next week or two. Let Organizing know if you need help with these meetings.

Ella: We can move on to one-on-ones and walk-throughs if most of the departments have been hit.

Anne: I'm about halfway through my meetings, should be done by the end of the month.

Nathan: The more department meetings, the better. Even if they happen late. We can combine walkthroughs with department meetings also.

Ella: We are starting to table at Poly and prep for elections. What tends to work at Poly is getting them to take a quick action right there (signing petition, card, etc) as they walk by. We are going to bring a computer for the petition and cards to sign, get people to stop by, then see if anyone we meet might want to run for steward.

Chris: I'm going Friday, Ben is going both Thursday + Friday. If anyone can join.

### **3. Confirm new semester scheduling availabilities and running for JC rep positions**

Anne: I want to advocate we have a recurring day of the week/time of month to make it easier for people to plan. **Let's share the Excel spreadsheet I made earlier to find a day of the week within a month.**

Chris: Maybe it makes more sense to start that in the spring because we should at least wait until after elections.

### **4. Department Meeting Updates and Report Backs**

#### **- FAQs and confusions**

- Anne: There are lots of questions about healthcare (we will have a primer later in the meeting).
- Chris: One student paid for health care when that person was covered and should not have paid, and the answer right now is that the refund should come in at the end of the semester. We might have to grieve this.
- Chris: Poly workers like to sign cards, but GSAS are more hesitant. They have reservations in signing on the spot because they are concerned about the dues. Many GSAS people just need to think it over for a bit.
- Patrick: That's the response I was getting at Poly actually, in a surprising way. A few people were concerned about signing since they would only be at NYU for a short time, and they don't want to pay for that risk. I've heard that at Washington Square as well.
- Anne: Some people from Europe think that there are many unions from which to choose to affiliate.

#### **- Reported complaints**

#### **- Successes in getting card signers/organizers**

- Anne: At IFA, I set up an envelope to drop off cards in the lounge, I ended up getting a large number of cards that way.

#### **- Suggestions for non-contract campaign issues**

- Ella: I've noticed a lot of excitement about a possible childcare center.
- Nathan: I didn't get very much feedback on this.
- Anne: We are losing access to professional development funds in our department, and this feels like a punishment. Maybe we should advocate to implement this type of assistance, especially in Steinhardt.

### **5. Healthcare Primer (presented by Anne and Chris)**

Anne: There's a primer on the website that people can always be referred to, but let's put out the current state of knowledge.

Chris: We want to educate stewards to prevent as much confusion as possible, because we in Communications receive a ridiculous number of e-mails.

Anne: The website doesn't know anything about you, and it is your responsibility to enroll yourself in health insurance. You can do this until September 30th. You will get an incorrect bill for the full amount. We have a contact at the Bursar's office who can override late fees, just in case. We may need this because of the delays in NYU's disbursement. Regarding dependent health care, there is no real enforcement about who is a dependent. Dependent health care is a flat fee, and costs are the same for students and for dependents except we get 90% off Basic and dependents get up to 75% off dependents. Application is forthcoming, and we are going to bring this up in the meeting with Barbara tomorrow. Dependents must also be enrolled in the same plan as the worker.

Seana: How to buy fall vs. spring?

Anne: There's the 'two-installment' plan to separate fall and spring payments, and we encourage people to sign up for this to defer spring payments.

Chris: Stu-Dent is year-long, so if you sign up in fall, you get it for the full year no matter what. NYU doesn't comprehend how to deal with spring, so students will get only spring & summer if they are working then.

Ella: What about people that paid for Stu-Dent and then get hired?

Chris: No hard answer, but they should be reimbursed. NYU is slow on this. Also it appears that students showing up for service who have been turned away, but many have not.

Barbara has assured us that this has been cleared up. The dental office should not turn you away, but they don't have the lists of eligible workers yet.

Ziad: What should I tell someone who went for services already? When will this be resolved?

Chris: We won't get lists until October.

## **6. Proposal for end of month rally (Chris & Organizing Committee)**

Chris: The plan for Poly is to get the petition out and use it to organize around. We want 1000 total signatures, 300 from Poly. We want to use the general meetings next week to build on this momentum, and especially at Poly we want support for a public action at 15 MetroTech outside the Dean's office. We needed the support of GSC at Poly, so we contacted them multiple times and got no response. Then e-mailed the president directly and that worked! So we will hear back from them soon, so they can help us organize next week. I'm going to try to meet him one-on-one at Poly on Friday. If we get GSC, that may be the key to organizing at Poly. We need supporters that talk to people at Poly to spread the word. We want GSC to co-sponsor our meeting. Patrick, we need 'za forreal.

Patrick: We can get pizza for the rally itself, already talked to Maida. And yeah, for the general meeting we can get a bunch of pizza too.

Seana: Can we get beer too?

Patrick: That's not the best idea ever when you're trying to get people to come join your organization, sign cards, etc. It's also hard to have a bunch of pizza around when you're rallying outside.

Nathan: Are there any GSOC-friendly faculty that could help?

Patrick: We did not get a Poly faculty member on the support letter from Feb/March. I think we need to try getting general support, not direct support by faculty of employees.

Patrick: We are trying to get cards to NYU and get dues set up this week. We've got about 70 working this fall out of about 200 cards logged, let me know if there are any problems if

you see someone missing who should be on there. The Local wants to ask the International if we can continue the initiation fee waiver past October 1st. We want to waive retro-dues for this semester. We are asking the International and expect them to say yes to this, but it's not a done deal. Hopefully the new deadline will be January 1st.

Claudia: I'm concerned about people who've signed up during the past month, will have to pay dues before those who wait until January?

Patrick: We have to start taking out dues on a rolling basis, there isn't another way to do it.

Chris: Let's strategically not tell people about the new deadline just yet.

## **7. Bylaws presentation and initial discussion**

Nathan: How do we feel about 2 year terms?

Chris: The IUAW says 3 and 2. How do we feel about the residency requirement?

Sean: I feel like it should be largely open and flexible.

Chris: Our bylaws also propose using consensus first in discussions.

Sean: In our draft of the original Articles of Representation, we had a long conversation about consensus and we were against it. We were very clear about a simple majority.

Chris: But in our bylaws a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote can shift to a simple majority vote.

Claudia: I don't want our meetings to disenfranchise our membership.

Sean: The bylaws can't get people involved, it doesn't do that. Consensus has many negatives, I've seen this first-person in many Occupy Wall Street meetings. It was used to keep people from voting by making meetings extremely long, so only people who could stay for 5 hours could vote. Also one person can stay and negate the opinions of dozens of other people. We need to be able to prevent situations like this.

Chris: Our clause says in any meeting a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote can shift from consensus to simple majority. Do you think we will always abandon it?

Sean: I think it is the de facto default anyway, the point of the discussions we have are to get everyone on board.

Ella: Our meetings at the Local with the bargaining committee, we found an advantage in trying to achieve consensus but be able to bring it to a vote, because the Local often used the tactic that Sean mentioned. I can see both arguments but my experience on bargaining, I really enjoyed that after a certain amount of time, everyone gets to vote.

Chris: I still don't get the actual objection, of what the issue with the inclusion.

Ella: I feel like that's how voting generally works anyway, so I think it should just be the de facto anyway.

Claudia: This goes back to the big question, how much do we want in writing vs not in writing? What's an alternative way of writing this?

Ziad: The difference is that writing about consensus this way, for in this meeting, if I want to say let's vote on it, let's vote on whether or not to vote. That's an extra step.

Sean: Right, if first you need to get  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote first to change to prevent an ongoing discussion, the better way is just to have the majority vote as the way to go. I haven't seen majority vote being abused although it probably does happen. To me the consensus can be immediately abused.

Ella: I would be more in favor of an informal statement, consensus should be attempted first but not enforced.

Seana: I want to flag the quorum and interim voting as related to this issue.

Anne: We could have a time limit after which we must vote on whether to keep going or not. It's not about consensus above all else.

Claudia: Maybe some way to deal with it is, use the allotted time to build a consensus, then put it to a vote. We can vote to close the discussion or vote to continue the discussion another time.

Ziad: If we have an item on the agenda that needs a vote, we can take the stack beforehand and stick to it for the most part. So discussion won't go on and on and on forever.

Jess: I like this genuine and creative discussion for things that really need to be talked about. Not everything needs to be an issue that people have already decided on.

Chris: We will work on implementing people's feedback over the next couple of days. We got feedback from Shannon, Nathan, and Jacob, and are working on making some minor changes on notes from Shannon and Nathan.

Anne: The tone and content of Jacob's feedback was personally insulting. I won't continue to condone it, and if necessary, will bring a motion of censure in the future.

Chris: I propose we put up the version we have for public review now, and we can include these comments in the public review.