

November AoS Notes

Friday November 20th, 5 p.m. at Graduate Student Lounge, Silver Center

Facilitating: Ziad Dallal

Notetaking: Seana Lymer

Timekeeping:

Present: Chris Nickell, Maida Rosenstein, Patrick Gallagher, Jacob Denz, Tori Dahl (applied Psychology), Rani Yeung, Parth Singh, Darach Miller, Abinav Swaminathan, Nathan Pensler, Sean Larson, Ella Wind, Shafeka Hashash, Michelle O'Brien, Anne Pasek, Jessica Feldman

The Agenda

Introductions

Maida and Patrick talking about the local (15 minutes: 5:25)

Interim Steward confirmation vote (Shafeka Hashash, Tori Dahl, Parth Singh, Abhinav Swaminathan) - 5 minutes

Standing Committee Reports

- **Bylaws**
- **CommComm**
- **PoliSoli**
- **Organizing Committee**
- **Grievance Committee**

Discussion about regular AoS stewards time and general membership meetings

Ella: Perhaps every other Friday 4-6 p.m., alternating AoS and general membership?

Discussion of Organizational Chart

STEM funding campaign (Seana) - 10 minutes

Steinhardt Plan (Anne)

Walk of Shame (Anne)

Unit Rep Nomination Announcements

Announcements

The Action

Maida: I'm the President of Local 2110, we are an amalgamated local that includes units at Barnard, Columbia, Teachers College, we are organizing grad employees at Columbia. We also just won an election at Barnard for contingent faculty. In addition to higher ed we also have museums and some public sector units, and some non-profits. Really varied local. Almost everyone is an office or professional worker, with some maintenance workers and tech workers as well. We have a long history. At NYU we helped organize during the first contract back in late 90s/early 200s. The structure of our Local, we are part of UAW International. In NY we have other Locals including National Writers, legal aids, manufacturing, car dealership. The whole UAW membership in NY is highly varied. Within the Local is a 9-member Executive Board as well as a Joint Council with representatives from each unit. We are having a Local-wide membership meeting and holiday party on December 17th at Barnard.

Chris: We will be sending out an invite to that to our members.

Ella: I was wondering when we will have JC delegates?

Maida: You could start electing delegates now based on the people working in the unit who have signed membership cards. I suggest holding off until spring to build your membership because your number of delegates is based on 1 per 50 dues-paying members of the Local. If you wait til spring you could have more delegates, but you could schedule the elections based on the current dues-paying membership. Our bylaws have 3-year delegate terms. Workplaces can set their own 3-year cycle so not every unit has their elections at the same time. I definitely suggest having them this academic year for sure.

[redacted]

Ziad: So now we can move to hold a vote for interim stewards.

[Maida and Patrick leave]

Ziad: Our interim stewards to vote for Shafeka Hashash, Tori Dahl, Parth Singh, and Abhinav Swaminathan.

Jacob: Can interim stewards vote?

Chris: Yes, they can vote.

Jacob: So they are like regular stewards just not elected at the normal election cycle?

Chris: Yes.

Michelle: How many vacancies do we have?

Chris: We have an essentially empty Poly district. There are 8 seats open in Steinhardt, 2 filled. So Shafeka works in Steinhardt so it makes sense to vote her in Steinhardt.

Ziad: Any objections? Should we move to vote?

Chris: Do you guys want to make a statement?

Tori: I want to be involved in social justice. Corianna sent out an e-mail about the Steinhardt 1-credit issue and I want to be involved in anything that tries to fix that. When I heard you were looking for interim stewards I thought I would jump in.

Parth: I met Chris a while ago, we had a good conversation. I knew about the union somewhat but we weren't directly involved in any actions going on. My job was pretty secure, but there were a lot of job cuts and Poly needed somebody to speak up. We had 2 stewards and I didn't even know who they were so I knew we needed someone.

Abinav: I had a pretty similar story. I was at a lot of meetings at Poly with you guys. People were experiencing job and hour cuts, and I knew somebody had to stand up and that's why I'm here.

Shafeka: I was a BA/MA, and got confirmed as a master's student last year. I was involved in undergrad organizing before, then started going to meetings and working with people.

Ziad: So let's vote. Are there any objections?

Darach: What are we not objecting to?

Ziad: If there are any objections to our interim stewards, let it be said. All in favor of voting for our interim stewards?

Unanimous yay

Chris: Welcome!

Ziad: Next up is standing committee reports. Comms?

Anne: We just published Vol. 3 of Rank & File, [redacted]

Anne: That's the big news.

Chris: So Anne and I are co-Chairs for communications committee. Jess and Claudia are co-chairs of bylaws. Ella and Nathan are co-chairs of organizing. Sean and Ziad are kind of co-chairs of Political Solidarity?

Sean: Sure.

Chris: And Seana and Darach are co-chairs of contract enforcement?

Seana: Right Darach?

Darach: Sure, why not.

Ziad: Bylaws?

Jacob: Can I ask about the Facebook page?

Anne: Yeah, I've looked at the analytics, it's been pretty steady since September. It's not a bad position but it could be better. One of our comms members (Sarah) has previous experience with social media management and she is slowly taking over FB and Twitter.

Chris: Bylaws -- Bylaws went into effect October 16th. Unit Reps are awaiting notice from Local Executive Board regarding their thoughts, but we haven't heard anything from them yet. We fully anticipate they will reject key provisions including membership and financial committee. We intend to go up the line with these things, we stand by them. We also want to review the organizational chart. Basically the bylaws require more effort to change but the organizational chart is easier to change, and that chart is what lays out responsibilities of our committees. All we need to do is vote as an Assembly to change that chart, so we are going to discuss that.

Ziad: CE?

Seana: Contract Enforcement is working on researching for Poly problems. Collective action upcoming, formal grievance process as well. [redacted] Childcare application looks like it will be approved.

December 1 seems like possible go-live date. Attended Joint Council meeting yesterday. Getting new Unit Reps soon!

Sean: Is there a way to reduce the amount of time that Communications spends responding to emails?

Chris: It's not easily separated by department or district, maybe we can loop in our new Poly folks but I don't want to burden them.

Anne: There's also a lot of data management. One UR question -- dependent healthcare reimbursements?

Chris: No payments until at least January, but the application is done. It's just not online.

Ella: With Organizing, we have 3 campaigns -- 1 is the membership drive, we are looking at successfully hitting our goal of 1000 members. From what I can tell our departments have been hit. We are hitting them again with our other campaigns as well. The membership drive itself should be wrapping up soon, and we will continue gaining membership with these other campaigns.

Nathan: Before we were collecting a lot of information but we've also moved to the letter we wrote to try to get more people involved, getting signatures. The letter is not just for Poly but job cut issues across the university. [redacted].

Ziad: Political solidarity?

Sean: We've been helping our allies, we spoke at some rallies with SLAM our undergrad allies for \$15 minimum wage for undergraduate workers. We were at Black Lives Matter events. We are continuing our BDS campaign, collecting signatures for our petition. We started an educational campaign but we've shifted to talking to departments to get signatures to maybe get a referendum next semester. Our bylaws allow for that procedure. We have about 180 signatures right now calling for a referendum. To have people call for this they need to be card-signing members so that's helping with membership as well. We are having an event Dec 1.

Chris: The night before our Walk of Shame.

Jacob: What do we think the size of our membership is, given our definition? In principle there are 24k grad students, what signatures count?

Nathan: The people who have signed cards.

Jacob: And that's everything in the bylaws mentioning % of members?

Chris: Right. Card signers who are eligible to work.

Ziad: So let's move to our discussion regarding schedule AoS meetings.

Ella: So I'm thinking of having regularly scheduled AoS and general membership meetings. Like every 2 weeks you have one of those meetings.

Chris: Who would be attending these?

Ella: If we have a scheduled time, people who are wondering when membership meetings are can just show up.

Michelle: I'm just wondering about the purpose of the general membership meetings.

Chris: I think this is related to our organization chart in some way. Our bylaws allow stewards not to be the governing unit of our membership. So I think this is contingent to the discussion of the organizational chart. So the motion would be to discuss a regular meeting time for AoS next semester and get that on the books.

Ziad: All in favor?

unanimous yay

Chris: Let's set for December now.

Michelle: How do we decide those slots?

Ella: We should do it now between us.

Anne: My concern is I don't know what my academic schedule is next semester.

Nathan: Fridays at this time are pretty open.

Ziad: Tentatively let's say this time?

Michelle: I don't really like this time.

Darach: Can we schedule a December date the way we have, then hit spring at the Dec meeting? Can I make a proposal we push spring scheduling back into December?

unanimous yay

Darach: Who will send out the poll for that?

Ella: I will.

Chris: Anyone leaving before the 19th?

[lots of people say yes]

Chris: So we should schedule it before the 14th or so.

Darach: So our poll can be about general times in the month, then we can discuss it in more detail.

Ziad: So let's close this until December. Next is our organizational chart discussion.

Chris: So one thing to flag is Unit Reps liaising with NYU and with Local 2110. "To make strategic decisions... when time does not allow..."

Jessica: So I was making that point because we were thinking about how to represent ourselves at the JC meeting. I don't have a problem with this language, but rather the interpretation of "time does not allow" part. The bigger problem here is how are we going to make decisions as a group. "When times does not allow" indicates an emergency type situation, not something within the next week or so. I do think it's a logistical or structural problem.

Darach: So that would be some sort of e-mail proposal. Would you want a timeline, is that what you're searching for?

Jess: I don't know, that might be it. I'm just asking we talk about it.

Anne: There are some online platforms that are designed for collaborative resolution building. There are always constraints on who is by their computer, but it's something. I could volunteer to look into that platform, contact people about its features.

Ella: I often find that when we are deciding things by email. I don't feel the same after reading an email vs. talking to people face-to-face, and talking to people I usually feel like I end up with better conclusions. I feel that's part of my desire to have more face-to-face meetings as well.

Darach: Can we have a procedure where email contact is at minimum, then you have something like 2 days to schedule a meeting (not mandatory attendance) but at least holds a space for the discussion to be had. So everybody who couldn't attend the meeting could do so virtually with that platform for example.

Ella: So the balance of getting everyone a vote while also getting face-to-face time.

Jess: So if we have regular union meetings and AoS that's a meeting every 2 weeks. So if there's an issue that's less than 2 weeks but more than a day, we could try to schedule something that way.

Michelle: I want to caution against setting this up super precisely and in a bureaucratic way. If there was a more adversarial relationship it might need to be super bureaucratic.

Chris: I'm willing to try it out.

Ziad: How many times has this situation arisen?

Chris: I see it being less of an issue in the future, hopefully fewer things will surprise us. If NYU doesn't get better at implementing the contract, we will get better organizing direct action. Maybe 4 or 5 times this semester?

Ella: So is the guideline that in the case of a medium-length timeline, to set a date for a meeting for people to show up and discuss it in person, plus online platform that allows people who want to participate but who can't be there in person.

Parth: I feel the idea of having an in-person meeting with the Google Hangout is good, that works to give everyone a voice.

Chris: In CommComms we have 4 members now, can we adjust the authorities where it says 'up to 3 members', can we make that 4?

Ziad: All in favor?

unanimous yay

Sean: I added to PoliSoli to Responsibilities: "Spearhead political campaigns among the membership to foster membership engagement and participation."

Darach: I would step back from specifically naming the campaign (BDS) in priorities.

Sean: Yeah, but priorities for other committees are very specific, like the Unit Reps.

Michelle: You're concerned about it being public?

Darach: I wanted to clarify if it was representing our AoS or our membership or both?

Ziad: All in favor of approving the organizational chart?

unanimous yay

Seana: Columbia spearheading national campaign to get US Presidential candidates to support STEM funding expressly in their campaigns. I support this, obviously, but I think it could also be useful in our organizing, both in straggling STM departments like Chemistry but also in the "E" in STEM that often gets forgotten: Poly. Could help us get lots of Poly people get excited.

Ziad: Let's move to Unit Rep nominations, we will vote at December AoS.

Chris: Anybody want to nominate anyone?

Michelle: I nominate Ziad! He is awesome and does a great job with Political Solidarity, with warmth and methodical intensity. He and Sean have done phenomenal work.

Ziad: I accept the nomination.

Chris: I nominate Ella again, she's done a bang-up job Organizing and we need a great organizer in that position. Do you accept?

Ella: Yes.

Ziad: I would like to nominate Nate. He's a great communicator, I'd like to have him calm and composed and around.

Nathan: I accept.

Parth: I nominate Nathan and Chris.

Chris: I really have to decline that. I have so much going on next semester. I'm flattered but I have to focus on my work next semester.

Anne: Abinav and Parth, I know it's a big time commitment but you can learn on the job and it would be great to have you guys.

Abinav: I accept.

Parth: I accept.

Chris: We will allow nominations up to a certain date, we will e-mail a date out.

Ella: We will send something out so you can make a statement for people to read.

Ziad: Walk of Shame?

Chris: December 2nd, we are centering at Coles, then going up to Bobst to heckle some admins and support the library staff who are fighting for a better contract. Then we will end up at Steinhardt, fight for fee campaign, other fuckery at Steinhardt. We are not doing anything at Poly but we do have a letter of protest. The Letter of Protest is specifically about job losses, especially at Poly.

Anne: We are trying to produce a postcard with an NYU map, with sites around WSQ, Poly, and Abu Dhabi -- we can circulate these and spread the shame continuously.

Nathan: I also think when we deliver our petitions that we deliver them at Poly.

Abinav: The STEM funding petition could get people excited, maybe we can use that to open discourse about the union.

Anne: If this interests you, we welcome your participation. Right now there's a bottom liner at each location. If you want to dress up as Sexton...

Seana: Me!

Ziad: Announcements? You all have a copy of the pamphlet from FASP about why NYU should delay closing Coles. All the teams will be cramming into Palladium. None of the alternatives have the space of Coles. The plan of action is to e-mail AH and WB (on pamphlet) expressing your displeasure. We will distribute this outside of Coles, if you want to help let me know. Anything else?

Parth: Me and Nathan were discussing the idea of buttons for the fights for Steinhardt and for Poly.

Chris: Awesome.

Michelle: One, there is an AWDU reading group for anyone who is interested. Two, we have cool AWDU hoodies available, \$40 each, they are in my office, I have 9 unsold left. If you want one, come to my office. We have all S-M-L sizes left.

TL;DR

- New interim stewards! Shafeka Hashash, Tori Dahl, Parth Singh, Abhinav Swaminathan
- Spring Unit Rep nominees: Nathan, Ziad, Ella, Abinav, Parth (elections next AoS in December)