

August AoS / Member Meeting agenda

Tuesday August 23rd, 4:30pm at Silver 220

Facilitating: Seana Lymer

Notetaking: Alex Campolo

Timekeeping:

Present: Seana Lymer, Alex Campolo, Ben Fogel, Jessica Feldman, Ben Mendelsohn, Maya Wind, Tim Neff, Claudia Carrera, Jimenez, Jacob Denz, Ziad Dalal, Colette Perold

Executive summary:

Introductions, agenda review, & announcements (5 min)

Overview & approval of July minutes (5 min)

- Unanimous approval

Committee Reports (25 min)

- Unit Rep
 - Seana: We had a member healthcare meeting in late July where we heard concerns from unit members. Also had a meeting with NYU representatives to discuss problems with implementation of the healthcare-related aspect of the contract. Dialogue with the NYU administration will be ongoing on this subject.
 - We have a few grievances moving to arbitration
- Bylaws
 - Chris: Bylaws has been busy working on revisions over the summer based on our own revisions and feedback from the local in advance of a meeting Friday.
 - After this meeting we hope to produce a list of recommendations in roughly 3 weeks to consider steward and member feedback for the September meeting.
 - Proposed amendments
 - Getting rid of the organizational chart
 - A more detailed guidelines for referenda informed by discussions on the BDS resolution.
 - An article on appeals procedures proposals
 - BLC will also work to create a guide for the upcoming changes.
- PoliSoli
 - Claudia: We have been making a push for organizing on the movement for Black Lives goals including supporting the occupation in City Hall Park. Some of our members are working to create a Labor for Black Lives coalition across NYC campuses. Nantina and Michael have been spearheading this initiative and would welcome more involvement on our behalf.
- Communications
 - Chris: Unit rep comms email system has been working better over the summer.
 - Comms had a productive meeting with the local to discuss list-keeping to better manage and classify email messages.

- Claudia: Comms will be updating handouts for orientations and department meetings, so organizers should look out for these resources.
- Claudia: We also have a lot of needs for involvement in the comms committee. We have needs for answering emails with healthcare inquiries and writing emails to different groups early in the fall semester.
- Organizing
- CGEU delegates
 - Jess: Gave a plenary on collective action and attended panels on social justice unionism and collective engagement, focusing on issues rather than representatives. Everyone involved with a UAW local got together and created some structures for moving forward.
 - Claudia: Learned a lot from Canadian unions even though the terrain that they operate on is very different.
 - There were 8 resolutions passed during the business meeting: (text available on the CGEU website)
 - In favor of joining the trade unions for energy democracy, which GSOC already endorses.
 - Resolution to establish a grad workers day—look out for more news on that. March 4?
 - Resolution for the CGEU to join the BDS movement. This had some abstentions and “no” votes, but overall vast majority support.
 - Resolution for an engagement with CoCal, an adjunct union group.
 - Resolution to establish regional CGEU meetups, especially in areas where there hasn’t been organizing.
 - Resolution to address treatment of international graduate workers in the US.
 - Resolution in taking an anti-racist stance in our union and support in movement of Black Lives
 - CGEU membership definition resolution - supports an initiative for defining workers as anyone who has a stake in the contracts being negotiated.
 - Will send a link to resolutions when they are online.

Local 2110 Update (10 min)

- Maida: We had great news from the NLRB, overturning Brown that reads like a really decisive victory.
 - The decision comes in response from a Columbia petition from both teaching *and* research assistants. Therefore the Columbia unit will include graduate students, undergraduate students, terminal masters students, and the medical school
 - The next step is to win an election at Columbia, which the administration is fighting even more vigorously than they did at NYU.
 - The election will be held quickly, perhaps as soon as September.
 - NYU will be a focus because are now the only private university

- The impact at NYU is that we are established under the NLRB and are now in a good position to appeal to this body. It also opens the door now for organizing research assistants, including those working on external grants. Potentially this means 2,000 RAs. We would still need to organize, but the legal threshold has been cleared.
- Local 2110 is also still involved in negotiation with contingent faculty at Barnard University, and the University has been taking really regressive petitions during negotiations. They may have to organize for a strike deadline there, but there are lots of challenges with regards to contingent faculty status.
- There is a joint council meeting Thursday with arbitration and political action reports.

NYU issue updates

- Seana: NYU has failed to recognize summer workers as being eligible for healthcare reimbursement. We are pushing that any worker under the contract should get the benefits of the contract. The same way that a spring worker gets a 90% discount for spring and summer. NYU's proposal is that they will prorate the summer insurance and that summer only workers will get 90% of the pro-rated summer cost. This would include dependent care.
 - Related, NYU is not recognizing anyone hired after 8 weeks
 - Ben: There are problems with the new pro-rated NYU summer insurance project. This would be a significant reduction in the benefit from about \$1,200 for the combined spring-summer and about \$510 for summer only. This seems like the very bare minimum of what NYU could offer under our contract.
 - Claudia: Meeting tomorrow with NYU from 2:30-4:00pm at local 2110. We are looking for more volunteers to attend this meeting.
 - Chris: Are there advantages to not taking NYU's offer and demanding that they pay summer workers the full spring-summer amount and carrying it into our larger fall healthcare campaign.

Ben's response is to accept the offer and then go back and say that we will continue to fight for the full amount. Colette's response: Our immediate response to NYU needs to be part of a larger strategic vision for the healthcare campaign.

Maida: We should also be thinking about organizing around the large increase in healthcare premiums.

Ben: the larger vision seems that we want the full amount.

- Claudia: The key questions are not just if this could be resolved in arbitration but also how we could put pressure on NYU to meet their contractual obligations. Proposal to make this healthcare implementation issue a messaging point while we have attention with the recent NLRB decision.
 - Maida's response: We don't want to disparage our own victory in current fights with our employer. Emphasize how much we have accomplished with healthcare and how the union empowers us to make sure that we get the rights guaranteed under the contract. We don't want to say things that will play into the hands of the anti-union campaign at Columbia.

- Seana: Accepting this position could also create new bureaucratic problems. Also look for emails for the next healthcare meeting.
- Seana: NYU has been putting the full healthcare charges on bills and not adjusting them to account for workers under the contract until later into the semester. This creates situations where workers are overpaying for healthcare or conversely situations where people are getting late fees or locked out of services. NYU has proposed to put language on the bursar site that tells people when to expect the discount will be applied and when workers should pay the bursar bill.

Appeals proposal from Bylaws (25 min)

- Chris, proposal: Three circumstances under which we could have an appeal
 - Any member who is feeling aggrieved by any decision or nondecision taken by a subordinate body at the unit level. We propose a 30 day time limit and the appeals committee will be constituted of the unit reps, unless they are the subjects of the appeal in which case the AoS would create a body.
 - Members could have a procedural objection to a member decision, which would need to be filed within 7 days, according to the UAW
 - Members could appeal the substance of a member decision. Since the membership are the highest power of our union, these appeals would be sent upward to the local.
- Question from Jacob: Would a unit-level appeal be required before an appeal directly to the local? Chris: Per the constitution, appeals would normally start at the lowest level possible. Jacob: It seems possible that there might be jurisdictional conflicts. There is also a question about the ongoing BDS appeal.
- We would be approving this arrangement until it can be approved as part of a larger bylaws ratification.
- Voting: 9 for, 1 abstention

Bylaws question on votes recording/transparency

- Certain members have asked that votes in AoS meeting be made public and your name would be attached to the vote in the meeting minutes.
- Claudia: possible method of doing a secret ballot if we wanted to and to do open records in
- Colette: Would be interesting in having more information on the issue. We will have more time to discuss with membership in advance of bylaws ratification vote.

Orientation events/ call for volunteers!! (10 min)

- We need at least one more person for new teacher training on **8/24, 8.30am - 1.30pm**
- There are other orientation events where tabling might be more difficult.
 - 8/29 and 8/30 are big orientation days. Seana has time and places for some of these events. Look out for emails from Seana about signing up for times to do this work.
- Seana: Proposal for a GSOC orientation happy hour

Squad organizing and dept meetings (20 min)

- Colette: Want to start organizing from the very start of the semester, working on bread and butter issues and getting departments organized. Creating squad and department structures.
- Introductory meetings should be *more* than informational with the goal of getting people both activated and motivated to getting organized. Learning *and* activation.
- We passed around a worksheet where we could sign up for departments and will follow up on email.
- Seana: We need to think about departmental holes and will check back in when folks are back.
- We will schedule a GSOC happy hour the first week of school on September 8.

Vote for fall Unit Rep replacement (10 min)

Jess is stepping down from fall unit rep position. Seana was nominated for Fall unit rep position.

Vote: Unanimous 10 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions

Vote for interim stewards (5 min)

Maya Wind to replace Sam Zerin, who stepped down. Maya was elected through GSOC voting but not local acclamation.

Vote: Unanimous: 10 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions

Resolutions

No resolutions