

January AoS Agenda

Friday January 22nd, 4 p.m. at Graduate Student Lounge, Silver Center

Present: Sean, Michelle, Ziad, Nathan, Abhinav, Ella, Patrick, Rani, Chris, Sarah, Shafeka, Seana

Facilitating: Michelle

Notetaking: Sean

Timekeeping: Chris

Present:

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Standing Committee Reports (Big picture spring semester plans?)

- **Bylaws 10**
- **CommComm 10**
- **PoliSoli 10**
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- **Contract Enforcement Committee 10**

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Intros -

Standing Committee Reports:

PoliSoli (Nathan): over break some of us met for planning continuing BDS organizing. First meeting on Monday at 11am to reach out to departments. There might be a boycott of Brod Kitchen.

CommComm: (Chris) Have continued to receive emails over break, so commcomm will be moving toward distributing emails to relevant stewards. Will work with Contract Enforcement and Organizing to make sure all stewards have the resources they need to answer people's questions. GSOC has a new youtube channel, new video will be released early next week. Please send any ideas for video content (anything from end of contract campaign or other videos) to Chris or Anne.

We have requested formally that the Local or the International restore our access to the GSOC website so that we can update it as we need to. We have asked Scott to give us back the highest level of administrative control. This has been frustrating.

Nathan: are new card-signees being added to our email list?

Patrick: yes to our database

Ella: let's add a column for School to our database.

Michelle: Question about 2110 list. I receive emails from 2110 at three different email addresses, how do I fix that? (Patrick: just email unsubscribe). Ok, other question: I got a

poll from 2110 about presidential preferences, but many people did not get that email. Is there a way to make sure that all our card-signers get those emails?

Patrick: will see about that.

Organizing (Nathan): We're now at about 1070 card signers, and this should go up a lot more now that Patrick has emailed all the departments. We need to cook up a plan to fill in all the gaps that NYU will inevitably miss. We don't really have many informal volunteers or a system of leaders across departments, which is necessary to learn about the problems that are occurring and mobilize to events or meetings. That's what Organizing wants to do. So we're going to have a meeting this week with the core organizing people but everyone should come, and we are going to publicize that. We are also going to have an organizing training for new people, we have a new person involved, Colette, who has a lot of experience.

Patrick: we need to be more diligent about contacting departments when cards are ready to pick up instead of waiting for them to contact us, because often they are not

Michelle: would be good to get a breakdown of where cards are coming from, just to help funnel organizers into channels where they would be excited about it (calling departments, door-knocking, BDS petition)

Patrick: maybe this could be done through the squad chart so we know who is doing what, where.

Ella: another idea for the organizing committee was to do a film screening.

Nathan: no that's AWDU screening "Finally Got the News"

Contract Enforcement/Grievance Committee (Patrick): big news: when you have a grievance that doesn't get resolved in step 3, we can go to arbitration. So that's what we've been doing, we have 5 arbitrations scheduled. Last week we had one arbitration hearing on the lateness of and failure to pay bonuses. We sent them our list of people we believe are still owed money. NYU will get back to us on that by Feb. 15th, then we will have a conference call with NYU and Marty Scheinman. Hopefully this will be resolved in our favor and hopefully we will get interest on the late bonuses. Looking at the lists, it seems underpayment was a bigger issue than non-payment. Stay tuned on that.

On Mar. 9th, we'll have our first meeting on cancelled classes w/ Rory in MCC

April 12th: on one-credit course fee from Steinhart

May 4th: the other cancelled classes from the French dept.

May 17th: 2.5% raise

July 11th: employee meal plan

Our sister union Local 7902 had ten arbitrations in their first year, so that's basically what we should expect.

Patrick: I made a mistake earlier - the presidential poll was sent to dues-paying card-signers.

GSOC Historical Documentation (Sarah): Nathan, Anne, and Sarah have been in discussion with Tamiment to store GSOC documents and make them publicly available. This would be useful for organizers and workers, and help us with institutional memory. Tamiment holds the records from GSOC campaigns from the 1990s and 2000s, and other UAW locals.

Tamiment would be willing to do this in a way that does not jeopardize GSOC's bargaining position - they could put an embargo on some of it. Once we reach an agreement, we would hand over documents.

Three types: publicly available, internal docs (may contain strategy etc.), and internal communications.

- 1) we'd start by handing over all publicly available docs, website, social media, pamphlets, updates sent from GSOC to membership.
- 2) Sensitive things: meeting minutes with organizing info we don't want NYU to see. What are some other things people would want in there? We can put an embargo on what we need to.
- 3) Internal communication: whatever we put in here would be embargoed for probably 5-10 years after the participants have left NYU. This is more of an open question right now.

Patrick: yeah on public documents there isn't really a problem with that. For the rest it would be good if we had a committee, with representatives from the Local too, and it would also be nice to build on what they already have from the UAW

Michelle: looking back: materials on caucuses and stuff - i.e. not GSOC material - should be included in there too. I wouldn't totally count on employees of Tamiment being able to block access to NYU, who are their employers (?). Maybe we should develop a special form of embargo with a third party for a while. Also the obvious duration for an embargo would be until after the next bargaining cycle - so we know how long the contract is, then add two years to that, and then the embargo is released.

Ella: What about list-serv discussions? There is a GSOC members list, an AWDU list, and a GSOC stewards list serve, those would all seem relevant.

Nathan: I think categories where there is personally identifying information for members needs to be subject to further debate.

Michelle: for AWDU, the two AWDU reports, the campaign material, etc. but email list would need to be looked at further.

Nathan: yes and anything relevant by members, like Jacob's blog would be important to have in there, and we could ask any members who write articles or other things to submit to it.

Michelle: there seems to be consensus on public documents. [no objections]

Sarah will continue talking to Tamiment.

Caucus System Proposal (Nathan): So our bylaws already say that anyone can create a caucus. But there is this question of lists, access to membership lists. This proposal is for anyone running for office or any elected official to have access to the lists, which are lists of names with no contact information, but if you have an NYU email you can find that out with some work. It would be made available to caucuses for the purpose of debates on union policy.

The UAW constitution says lists can only be used for "official union business", so the question is how that's interpreted. We want some system where people who aren't in official positions have access to that information.

Patrick: we need to have further discussion about this, because we have already received some angry feedback from people after they had received BDS emails. We told them we didn't think this had resulted from a GSOC list being used improperly, that there was no evidence to support that. But to put people in a situation where they are going to get politically motivated emails without having given their names for that purpose is probably a violation of that clause of the constitution, and will generate complaints. Most people don't like getting emails unless they know how they got on the list. During the bargaining committee election, most of the campaigning took place by people gathering names and emails and phone numbers themselves, and that's kind of how it's expected to run. If you want to be a caucus, you have to put some work into it. We give that information out now to stewards, who have an official, responsible position in the union. So I think it's problematic to say that people would get access to that information for the sole reason that they want to establish a caucus.

Nathan: this wouldn't really help for spamming, as access to the list only tells you which of the people at NYU are in GSOC (whereas you can look up all graduate students anyway). I for example am at an advantage in caucus activity simply by nature of my general GSOC organizing work, I know where the members are.

Michelle: yes but staff have also volunteered their time to campaign for caucuses in contested elections.

Nathan: the list in particular under discussion here is the list of people who have signed cards, a list which doesn't have contact info, just names

Michelle: we should have some kind of ethical guidelines for use of the list, with a clear option for people to opt out. I think people trying to get elected or people trying to get resolutions passed is official union business. People should receive emails that say "You are receiving this email because this is a caucus of GSOC, and if you no longer want to receive emails from this caucus you can opt out here."

Ella: yes I would like there to be an easy way for people to unsubscribe from caucus lists. What about having an official spot on mass communication emails for caucuses?

Sarah, Nathan, Michelle: that sounds like a good system.

Patrick: I stand by the opinion that the internal political or competitive communication is *not* official union business. The complaints will go to the union. I have several concerns: one, people might not sign cards if the union develops the reputation for giving out emails for people to spam you. I don't think the different sides in whatever conflict are going to cancel each other out, and instead people will be concerned about how all these people got their email addresses. The Local would be for continuing to have the opportunity for people to come in to the office and look at the list, because then it would be clear who did it - that's the current situation.

Sarah: what about the mass communications emails?

Patrick: technically you are not supposed to use any neutral union channels to promote any one internal side over another. So I'm not sure there is a way to do that without making it appear that you favor one side over another.

Chris: patrick please include that response about the caucuses and elections in the official response to our bylaws, because the bylaws clearly provide for people to be identified by caucus during elections.

Patrick leaves

Michelle: the proposal is that Nathan leads a revisiting of the proposal and we discuss it again later.

Shafeka: I'm kind of uncomfortable with their anti-political stance that it will alienate people. Because the union makes a goddamn presidential endorsement. So I don't really buy that argument.

Seana: general reminder, please turn over your cards in a timely manner.

2865 BDS Solidarity Statement:

Nathan: basically the UAW overturned the democratic decision of our fellow local 2865 in California, which had passed a resolution in favor of BDS. Nantina has written a solidarity statement, not centered around BDS itself, but a condemnation of the International's decision to overturn a democratic decision of a Local on very shaky constitutional grounds.

Sean: sounds awesome, let's do it.

Chris: was at a American Studies conference in Beirut w/ transit workers and other industries also represented by UAW and the 2865 resolution was front and center. This is making a lot of waves.

Vote to have AoS endorse this statement: Unanimous

Organizational Chart:

Chris: we really need to discuss this document. Put it on the next month's AoS with 20-30 minutes. Our current committee structure is not working, we have lopsided responsibilities and we need to fix that so we can run smoothly. Please everyone look over that before next AoS.

Michelle: I think the organizational chart is overly bureaucratic. We should have a discussion based upon the problems posed by our current structure for our organizing, and how the chart can be used to fix them, rather than focusing entirely on the chart and the problems in the chart.

Chris: Good suggestion, we have sort of shackled ourselves to the chart, but if people have suggestions about how to innovate with this they would be welcome. I'll write an email.

Seana: some problems: organizing is understaffed (Nathan: it's basically just me); carrying a grievance out only requires two ppl max and that committee is too big, but we do need more organizers in the field to collect grievances

Ella: I think it makes a lot of sense to have stewards constantly up-to-date on the current grievances going on instead of having CommComm going on

Claudia: for new people coming in it is useful to have a document that covers all the Committee activities

Sean: I feel like the bylaws define what the committees are generally, and then updates from each committee at our general meetings gives an up-to-date picture, so new people would be caught up when they come to meetings

Sarah: Bylaws don't actually cover all the things going on.

Ideas for February:

- Joint Council representation seats

- Unit rep reportback
- Caucus system
- the organizational chart and the problems it is designed to solve

Announcements:

- Michelle: AWDU Book club will have Marvin Surkin come for an event on the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, now that we have finished Detroit I do Mind Dying, and we will also screen Finally Got the News. That is happening on the 26th at 6pm in Silver 2nd floor Music. The actual time may be tweaked but there will be a flyer. Before that we are reading a book by Kim Moody: From Welfare State to Real Estate. Everyone who is not hostile to AWDU is welcome to come and have a conversation about that. It will be on Thursday Feb. 18th at 12pm noon, talk to Michelle for location if you are interested.
- Nathan: a plea for people to join the Organizing committee. *Abhinav, Seana, Shafeka, and Chris joined the Organizing committee*
- Rally on Monday 9am at Brooklyn Supreme Court for Akai Gurley, wear red with no logos. It will be the trial of the police officer who killed Gurley.