

GSOC AoS May Meeting

Tuesday May 17th, 4:30 p.m. at Judson Memorial Church Assembly Hall, 239 Thompson Street

Facilitating: Chris

Notetaking: Seana

Executive Summary: The AoS voted to approve Anne's resolution to participate in Trade Unions for Energy Democracy (see text below). Anne also announced the creation of summer working groups for interested folks to work on important unit-level issues. Jess shared a draft of a statement regarding MCC and health insurance to be hopefully signed by GSOC (link to text in notes). Language should be finalized this week and then AoS will vote on whether or not to sign the letter. Nathan gave an overview of what the Unit Reps have been up to this term, and then the attendees voted for Summer 2016 Unit Reps. There were 4 candidates, and 3 were elected: Nate Preus, Seana Lymer, and Claudia Carrera. Claudia mentioned there is a group of Tisch students working on gender-neutral bathrooms for NYU for anyone who wants to get involved.

Committee Updates:

PoliSoli:

Organizing Committee:

Communications Committee:

Present: John, Nathan, Ben, Colette, Maya, Shelly, Michelle, Sean, Sophia, Josh, Alex, Anne, Sam*, Sergey, Yoav, Tim, Seana, Julie, John, Nic, Nate, Sarah, Lauren, Jacob, Tyler, Ximena, Jessica, Saleed, Iman, Nantina, Michal, Yael, Ziad*, Chris, Patrick (Local 2110), Claudia*

*Skype

Approval of April minutes

9 approved, 0 opposed; **passes**

Introductions

TUED - Anne's proposal

Anne: participation in trade union democracy - TUED (see **text below**)

Anne: Personal story- I'm Canadian, we have had a massive wildfire destroying Ft. McMurray close to my hometown. This is driven by climate change. I'm happy to serve as liaison if we approve this. Questions?

Josh: What did you say about racism?

Anne: These injustices often go hand in hand, a green capitalism that furthers these inequalities.

Yael: Anti-green stuff is also racist. In Canada you hear about anti-green stuff.

Anne: Trying to bring these groups together to be better. No to racism, yes to something that moves us forward together.

Motion seconded by Michelle

Vote passes: current stewards: 9 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions

Chris: If you guys want to get involved, we have a volunteer list you can join.

Statement about MCC and health insurance

Jess: 6th year MCC cohort was promised the department would cover health costs, we are discouraged from taking teaching jobs to focus on dissertation. We just heard they won't be covering health insurance and the union wouldn't want them to. We've been fighting back and forth and it's too late to get union-eligible jobs. Admins keep saying things like 'we don't want to step on union's toes'. Some MCC members are interested in making a statement saying actually we do want health insurance. I wrote a letter and hope stewards will sign off on it.

[Open letter to MCC admins]:

We must make it clear we do not support the department denying health insurance. We recognize academic research as labor. We aim for parity across schools and across years. Steinhardt has fallen short in many ways and the union expects Steinhardt to step up. Steinhardt students charged a minimum of \$7k fees every year starting year 3. We urge you to meet your responsibility to provide health insurance.

Chris: We will distribute the full text and then stewards can have time to look at it. We can set up a vote later, maybe Friday by 5pm? People should make their suggested edits before then.

Colette: Before we send to higher-ups we should see if this is happening in other departments.

Jess: I am not sure either who is best to send this to but we should talk about it.

Unit Rep de-brief

Nathan: One big issue is NYU has failed to implement health insurance properly. They were supposed to give a discount to workers so they would only be paying 10%. Instead they have been issuing reimbursements and a lot of people don't get those reimbursements. This leaves it to us to make sure everyone is getting their reimbursements, it's a lot of work and a lot of people don't even end up getting it. We are trying to think of how to fix this is but it's been tricky. We did have a grievance for June 1 but it's not precisely on this issue. [REDACTED] Another issue is benefits for late hires. At one point an admin told us there were no benefits for late hires, but sometimes they have if you send them the name of a particular person. We are filing a grievance on this. Also an issue with dental - if you are working in spring, NYU says you can't have dental if you signed up in the fall. They won't reimburse you for the payment. We are also still working on the Incubator grievance. Those members should be part of the union and getting those benefits. We have an arbitration for Steinhardt fees.

Patrick: Yes the second is May 23 because the first part we had more witnesses than we had time for. It's possible this will go on throughout the summer.

Nathan: A lot of what we do is work with the Local on grievance work. Our former system was different, I used to do more organizing while Ella was handling grievances. Another big thing we do is make sure the meetings are scheduled. We planned the meetings and town halls.

Shelly: If you just call the dental office and tell them you are entitled to it, they will give it to you. Also for the outgoing unit reps, thank you for your service.

Anne: Plus you get chocolates from me.

Yael: Apparently they are raising health insurance premiums like 24%, what's that about?

Anne: I'm recruiting people to join my summer working groups, one of those is about this issue.

Nathan: We may be able to grieve that under maintenance of benefits but I'm not sure. We could also push back through organizing. The grievance process is slow.

Tim: When they do that with the health insurance, we should ask them to account for what that increase is. Sometimes they are trying to charge us for fees we are not actually responsible. It would help to get them to put on paper what they are charging us for.

Colette: I encourage everyone to talk to as many people as you can. Having conversations is organizing and we don't need to wait, we can do that anytime.

Josh: Shelly, who isn't checking on the StuDent?

Shelly: The office for dental insurance. I called and got the coverage.

Unit rep elections

Chris: Right now for candidates I have Nate Preus, Nathan Pensler, Jacob Denz, Seana Lymer, and Claudia Carrera who is joining us by gchat. That's 5 candidates, is there anybody else who wants to put themselves forward for summer?

Josh: What are the eligibility requirements?

Chris: You must be a card-signing member, in residence, and must be a steward.

Josh: Can I ask people who are eligible but not running to raise their hands?

Chris: Sure. Anyone want to nominate? Given that not everybody here is on the activist list, we should have the candidates make brief statements.

Nate: I am still pretty new, involved since last fall but getting more and more involved. Worked with bylaws and elections, look forward to building on that. I am interested in doing as much on-the-ground work as I can.

Nathan: I'm no longer running since I won't be around that much. I'm rescinding my self-nomination.

Jacob: I'd like to be Unit Rep, I have a lot of experience with GSOC. I think I'm the only candidate with pre- and post-contract GSOC. I have done a lot of organizing, including with the adjuncts at Barnard College. I've tried to follow all aspects of what the union does. I would be a valuable dissenting voice given I have a different perspective about the Local compared to other candidates. The Executive Board was re-elected yesterday and we have to continue working with them. I have had differing opinions about the ways some things have been done, for example the way these elections are being run. I would love to work with any of the people who are running but I am asking that if you vote for me you only vote for me.

Claudia: I'm a 3rd year in Music, I've been involved in GSOC during the contract campaign. I've worked to organize my department and to get a communications structure up and running. I was co-chair of Bylaws. Part of the reason I am drawn to serve is that I have a mind for detail especially contract language. This is a good time of year for me to put these skills to use for GSOC. I have a good sense of how the unit runs which will be useful as things change in the future, such as when we get a Unit Chair.

Seana: statement

Chris: I propose we run through each name as we went through them speaking. We will use the honor system but you should only vote for three people. Has anybody not signed a card?

Nate: 25

Jacob: 10

Claudia: 25

Seana: 25

Announcements

Josh: Was it clear that people on the phone could vote?

Chris: Yes that was settled long ago.

Chris: [announcement of Local 2110 Executive Board Elections]

Shelly: Also congrats to Patrick who just got married!

Claudia: I've heard from Tisch students interested in gender-neutral bathrooms. There's a brainstorming session going on right now about what they might want to demand from the university. If you are interested in these issues then send me an email.

APPENDIX

TUED resolution text:

Resolution to participate in Trade Unions for Energy Democracy:

WHEREAS the privatization of energy infrastructures and the public subsidization of extractive fossil fuel industries produces poor value for the working and vulnerable classes, perpetuates systems of inequity and structural violence, fosters anthropogenic climate change, and endangers the health and safety of global environmental systems, world populations, and GSOC members, and

WHEREAS a transition to new systems of power, infrastructural governance, and transportation are necessary to the maintenance of human and nonhuman life and dignity in the face of these challenges, and

WHEREAS the nature of green infrastructures, their politics, and their economies are open for debate, requiring broad social mobilization and strong voices from labor therefore

BE IT RESOLVED THAT GSOC-UAW-Local 2110 will participate in Trade Unions for Energy Democracy, a consortium of labor organizations working to foster an energy transition that works to promote social justice, unionized jobs, collective governance of the commons, and greater commitments to global solidarity and carbon equity, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT participation will entail appointing a TUED liaison, distributing TUED educational & advocacy materials to our membership when appropriate, contributing financially to TUED in such a time that GSOC has control over its budget, and calling on Local 2110 and the IUAW to do the same.