

## *E-NEWS: URI PART-TIME FACULTY UNITED*

APRIL 2014

### UPDATE ON URI/PTFU & URI/BOE CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

**DID YOU KNOW ---  
THAT URI'S PART-TIME FACULTY HAVE NOT RECEIVED A RAISE IN MORE  
THAN 12 YEARS?**

**DID YOU KNOW--  
THAT COMPENSATION PAID PART-TIME FACULTY IS CONSIDERED TO BE  
“UNDER THE POVERTY LINE”?**

Dear Part-Time Faculty Colleagues:

The URI/PTFU Negotiation Committee will present a detailed report on the status of contract negotiations at our General Membership meeting scheduled for Thursday, May 1, 2014 at 3:30pm. (Announcement and Agenda to follow.)

In the meanwhile, we want to provide you with a summary of contract negotiations with regard to the salary paid to URI's part-time faculty.

Unfortunately, we have not yet reached any agreement at all on a salary increase. Although we remain strong in our commitment to gain a significant increase for URI's PTF we have not, to date, achieved that goal. In fact, the administration remains adamant that there will be no salary increase at all for URI's part-time faculty (PTF) during current contract negotiations even though, as we repeatedly tell the URI/BOE, **URI's part-time faculty have not received a salary increase in more than 12 years and that the current compensation paid to URI's part-time faculty is considered to be under the poverty line.**

Let's briefly review the overall salary situation for URI's teaching faculty which includes tenured and tenure track full-time faculty, lecturers, part-time faculty and graduate teaching assistants (all unionized groups). First, we congratulate our colleagues (full-time faculty, lecturers, and graduate teaching assistants) who recently gained substantial salary increments over the same period of time during which contract negotiations were underway between URI/PTFU and URI/BOE. A comparison of the salary gains of these groups needs to be made so that we may clearly demonstrate an apparent bias on the part of URI/BOE against the University's approximately 450 part-time faculty employees.

URI's *Graduate Assistants United* negotiated a new union contract that was successfully ratified in September 2013. This new contract stipulates the following salary increases: Effective Fall 2011 \$400 added to each pay level; Fall 2012 \$450 added to each pay level; Fall 2012 \$600 added to each pay level; and Fall 2013 \$500 added to each pay level. Each increase is added on to the previous year's gain for a total salary increase of \$1,950 over the course of the Agreement. (Note: Graduate Teaching Assistant salaries in 2013-2014 are: Level I \$15,844; Level II \$16,300; Level III \$16,756. (See full *Agreement* on GAU web site)

And, as with the full-time faculty and lecturers, graduate teaching assistants also receive health benefits and tuition waivers. As you know, the University's part-time faculty do not receive any benefits and they receive no tuition waivers.

During the same negotiation period (2012-2013) the full-time faculty union and the URI/BOG agreed to a three-year contract calling for a three (3) percent across-the-board salary increase in each year of the new contract. Given that the average full-time faculty salary is approximately \$100,000, a 3 percent increment provides a \$3,000 increase in each year of the contract or \$9,000 over the life of the contract. (NOTE: It should be mentioned that the full-time faculty contract, although a ratification vote had already taken place, was rejected by Governor Chafee. The AAUP challenged the Governor's decision (and won), a decision that caused a significant delay in reaching approval and, thus, the AAUP and the URI/BOE remain in negotiations.

Even if the URI/PTFU were to gain a three percent (3%) across the board increase it would still leave the URI part-time faculty at a salary **under the poverty line**. As you know, the base salary for Step Level I in our current contract is \$3,549 per three credit course. Thus, a three percent increase would result in a gain of a mere \$106 per course or a new Level 1 salary figure of \$3,655. Because the salary paid URI's teaching graduate assistants was low their compensation gains took the form of defined dollar amounts rather than a percent increment. This same kind of correction needs to be made for URI PTF in order to raise their compensation above the poverty line. It is commonly known, but nonetheless bears repeating here, that without the services of URI's highly qualified and dedicated part-time faculty, URI would not be able to offer its curriculum to the University's undergraduate students. URI's PTF should earn a salary that recognizes the substantial contribution they make in delivering the University's undergraduate program.

The only way to correct this negative salary situation is to follow the lead of an increasing number of universities and colleges across the country who have moved from a simple percent increase and substituted, in its place, a pro-rata salary schedule. Nationally, part-time faculty unions are increasingly and successfully negotiating pro-rata salary schedules based upon a salary increment proportional to what full-time faculty earn at their respective institutions.

The only fair and equitable way to address this problem at URI is to implement a similar pro-rata salary schedule according to which PTF at URI are paid a pro-rata amount of the average salary paid to URI's full-time faculty.

Several months ago, the URI/PTFU Negotiating Committee submitted its pro-rata salary proposal to the URI/BOE. It is our goal to gain a pro-rata amount, rather than a percent increase, for each year of the contract. To repeat, this is the only way URI PTF will be able to move closer to a salary they are rightfully entitled to be paid--a salary correction that acknowledges that URI's PTF have not received a raise for more than 12 years and a salary amount that is above the poverty line.

**THE URI PART-TIME FACULTY UNITED NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT**

**PLEASE ATTEND THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**May 1, 2014, at 3:30pm, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Warwick, RI  
(Agenda to Follow)**

**P.S. See accompanying "HIGHLIGHTS" for national and regional comments on the conditions of employment of part-time faculty.**

Prepared by: URI Part-Time Faculty United (PTFU) Negotiation Committee,  
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