

## **GTFF POTENTIAL STRIKE FAQ**

### **Q: When would a GTFF strike take place?**

A: There is no indication at this time that a strike will take place. But the Provost's Office is asking academic units to prepare for the eventuality of a strike. Should there eventually be a breakdown in bargaining and the two parties cannot resolve their differences, state law allows the parties to declare impasse. Parties declare impasse by filing paperwork with the state employment relations board (ERB). Once impasse is declared, the parties have seven days to submit their final offers and a cost estimate to the ERB; after that there is a 30-day cooling off period. At the end of the cooling off period, the GTFF could go out on strike sometime during fall term.

### **Q: What is the GTFF potentially striking over?**

A: Currently, the main sticking point in negotiations involves salaries, but there are other issues as well. You can read more about the bargaining efforts to date at the GTFF [website](#). We are concerned that the administration took no action on the salary issue for more than two months and then returned to the table with a totally inadequate offer.

### **Q: Can I ask my GE if they are thinking about going out on strike?**

A: No. When you supervise a GE, you take on a management role. State law forbids managers from asking employees about their strike plans or talking with GEs about their strike plans.

### **Q: Do I have to do the work of a striking GE?**

A: Article 41, Section 2 of our Collective Bargaining Agreement says:

"In the event of a strike by other employees of the university, bargaining unit faculty members, if requested by the University, will consult about how work which was previously performed by a striking employee will be covered. Any work previously performed by a striking employee assigned to a bargaining unit faculty member shall be considered an overload assignment. Bargaining unit faculty members will not unreasonably refuse to perform such work."

What is "not unreasonable" in any given situation depends on the particular circumstances. In the past, the administration has stated that asking faculty to cover for large discussion sections would be unreasonable. Asking faculty to grade a large number of papers would be unreasonable.

### **Q: What are reasonable reasons to refuse to perform the work of striking GEs?**

A: Bargaining unit faculty have the right to refuse to perform the work of striking GEs if it is unreasonable for them to do so. Faculty have the right to declare an assignment unreasonable. The university may disagree and faculty should contact the union office at [info@uauoregon.org](mailto:info@uauoregon.org) if they are being obligated to perform work that they believe is unreasonable.

We know that faculty are already working demanding jobs and living full lives. It is unlikely that most faculty can reasonably be expected to add to their workloads. The following is a list of some of the reasons we believe it would be perfectly reasonable to decline a request to take on additional work.

- It would interfere with other work responsibilities
- It would interfere with family responsibilities

- It would interfere with academic responsibilities, such as preparing a course for the following term
- It would interfere with completing research, a paper, or conference presentation
- It would force a difficult or costly commute to campus
- It would require spending hours acquainting oneself with new course material

**Q: Should I volunteer to cover for a GE if they go out on strike?**

A: No. You have no obligation to volunteer to cover for striking workers.

**Q: Doesn't our professional commitment to undergraduate education require us to volunteer to cover for striking workers?**

A: We believe our professional commitment to undergraduate education requires us not to volunteer. Expecting faculty to step into a classroom situation they have not prepared for to either teach or grade is not pedagogically appropriate. Half measures such as scantron tests, essays unrelated to the classroom material, or assigning grades based on an incomplete term are rarely, if ever, appropriate. Asking faculty to participate in such processes is asking faculty to participate in the miseducation of undergraduates.

**Q: How much should I be paid if I am obligated to perform the work of a striking GE?**

A: Any work previously performed by a striking employee assigned to a bargaining unit faculty member is considered an overload assignment. Overload appointments will be assigned an FTE percentage commensurate with normal workload duties and compensated accordingly. Faculty may request that overload compensation take the form of a course release[s].

You have every right to propose an overload FTE if you are assigned work. You might consider the following things when thinking of an appropriate FTE: For a typical course that you teach, what percentage of the total time you spend on the course is spent grading final exams? grading final papers? calculating final grades? Thinking of it as a percentage of the total time you put into a typical course, how much time would it take to familiarize yourself with the material and/or students of a course you've never taught before in order to feel professionally competent assigning grades to students in that course? What about for a course you have taught before, but not in the past two years?

**Q: Do I have to cross the picket line if the GEs strike?**

A: Faculty are contractually and legally required to cross a GTFF picket line in order to fulfill their contractual on-campus obligations. If faculty do not have to be on campus to fulfill contractual obligations, they can show support for the GTFF by not crossing the picket line[s].

**Q: How can I tell the university administration that I want them to settle their issues with the GTFF so that grads don't have to go out on strike?**

A: Feel free to write to your dean and assistant/associate deans, any of the vice presidents or provost and assistant/associate provosts, and the president of the university with your concerns. It doesn't have to be a lengthy email, just a note saying you urge them to bargain a fair contract with the GTFF will help them know that the faculty stand with the GTFF.

**Still have questions? Contact the union office at [info@uauoregon.org](mailto:info@uauoregon.org).**