

USW 1088-4

Newsletter, April 2025

Welcome back to your union newsletter! In this issue, we report news from a union trip to DC, report on the formation of the Research Stream Advocacy committee, and take a look at the presumptive renewal articles of our CBA. Here you will also find a reminder about your opportunity to make nominations to the Bargaining Committee at the April unit meeting, information about the Higher Ed Day of Action events, unit and local meeting times, and other opportunities to get involved with your union.

Union Representatives visit Lawmakers in DC

We sent a delegation to Washington, DC on March 19 to advocate for **federal research funding**. The group met with senior staff for Senators Dave McCormick (R-PA), John Fetterman (D-PA), Shelley Capito (R-WV), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), and Bernie Moreno (R-OH). Senators across parties expressed support for our funding - though they offered little action. We would like to spur them to action with continued political pressure from their constituents. Contact Senators McCormick (<https://www.mccormick.senate.gov/share-your-opinion/>) and Fetterman (<https://www.fetterman.senate.gov/contact/>) and tell them to take action to prevent further cuts to funding that is vital for our health and our jobs!

Contract Corner

The term “presumptive renewal” means for appointment-stream faculty, if you’re doing a good job and there’s work for you to do, your contract will automatically renew with no need to re-apply for your job. Articles 17.4 and 18.6 of

the CBA provide this right to full- and part-time non-tenure stream faculty.

In these articles the CBA also specifies a limited set of reasons why non-renewal may occur, and how much notice must be given. For full-time faculty who have been working at Pitt for more than 5 years, non-renewal notice must be given at least 5.5 months before the end of the current appointment. For full-timers who have been at Pitt less than 5 years, the notice must be given at least 3.5 months before the end of the current appointment. For part-time faculty, notice of non-renewal must be given at least 30 days before the end of the appointment or by April 1 for term appointments. The short list of reasons allowed for non-renewal includes lack of available work to be done, lack of funding, or if the faculty member has been subject to disciplinary proceedings or a performance improvement plan (PIP). We have the right to request information to determine if a nonrenewal is valid. If you receive notice of nonrenewal, reach out to your union steward for support.

Union Meetings

- The next **1088-04 unit meeting for Pitt faculty union members will be April 14 at 6:30 PM** on Zoom. Email invites are sent to all union members; reach out to your steward if you did not receive that email.
 - **This month’s unit meeting will include the Bargaining Committee nominations, so make sure you attend if you’d like to participate in this important process!**
- The next **Local 1088 meeting will be April 30 at 6:30 PM** at USW Headquarters, 60 Blvd of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. Come on in and tell the front desk you are there for the Local 1088 Meeting.

At these meetings, all union members can make motions, vote on motions, participate in discussion, run for leadership positions, participate in committees, and all the other activities that are involved in the running of our union. Your participation counts: every member has an equal vote.

Higher Ed Day of Action 4/17

The faculty union, along with Pitt's advocacy chapter of the AAUP and the Pitt staff and graduate unions, will be participating in the [Higher Ed Day of Action on 4/17](#). The schedule of events is:

- 12-1pm, Schenley Plaza: Public rally with invited speakers. Bring your friends and some signs!
- 1-3pm, 2432 Posvar: watch party for national events and in-person discussions on the topics of "Universities as Political Battlegrounds" and "Who Rules the Academy?"

To help our organizers from the Faculty Union Civil and Human Rights Committee know how many attendees to expect, you can fill out this [confidential registration form](#).

Research Stream Advocacy Committee Formed

In the March unit meeting, Pitt Faculty Union members voted to form a standing committee to specifically advocate for the needs of research stream faculty. These are some of our most vulnerable members, especially given the uncertainty surrounding federal funding for research. We plan to hold roundtable discussions to learn about the issues that faculty are facing and would love to hear your feedback! Please contact Brett Andrews (brett.h.andrews@gmail.com) if you would like to get involved.

Join a Union Committee

Participation in union committees is a great way to make an impact, share your expertise, and learn about your union. Here are some of the active committees, plus the names of the chairs and how to contact them if you wish to join:

- **Workload Policy:** Gretchen Aiyangar (gretchen.aiyangar@gmail.com) and Jeff Shook (jjshook102@gmail.com)
- **Shared Governance:** Drew Flanagan (flanagandrewedward@gmail.com)
- **Organizing:** Melinda Ciccocioppo (melindaciccocioppo@gmail.com)
- **Regional Campus Advocacy:** Kelli Maloy (loamlikely@gmail.com)
- **Grievance:** Marcy Pierson (piersonpittsburgh@gmail.com)
- **Research Stream Advocacy Committee:** Brett Andrews (brett.h.andrews@gmail.com)

Contact Your Steward

The first person to contact for any union-related inquiry is your steward. This is usually a colleague in your department or center, so they will be familiar with issues in your area. Your steward can help you solve your issue or escalate your inquiry to the relevant person or committee. Not sure who your steward is? Want to become a steward yourself? Contact our unit secretary, Melinda Ciccocioppo: melindaciccocioppo@gmail.com.

Contribute to Your Newsletter

If there is a subject you would like to see covered here, or if you have something you would like to share, contact Abagael West: arwest19@gmail.com.