



Negotiations Update: 10-29-2024

Closed Session on Health Care

Management's team asked us for another closed session in order to bring in a "content expert" on healthcare. They brought UA's Heather Arana, Director of Benefits and Compensation. She explained that total plan costs UA had given to UNAC as part of a "request for information (RFI)" did not come from her calculations but must, instead, have come from Premera or Lockton, the managers of our self-funded health plan. The RFI data showed plan participants spending an additional \$10-12M per plan year in plan costs beyond the premium deductions and 18% of net plan costs as negotiated.

Our [CBA](#) says health plan costs are split 82/18, with UA paying 82% of the net plan costs and employees paying 18%. UNAC had thus proposed that UA change the way they accounted for total plan costs in order to include all out-of-pocket plan costs incurred by participants (deductibles, co-pays, etc) and to reduce the burden of cost-shifting onto plan participants. Heather Arana clarified that, while we are correct that plan participants have additional costs beyond the net plan costs, UNAC's proposal would not be allowed by the actuaries who must approve our plan.

Our discussion ended before the scheduled hour was over, and we did not engage in discussion of any other aspect of article 16.

Small Progress

In a late-morning open session with UNAC members in the audience, we did TA (tentatively agree to) [Article 20: Meet and Confer](#), by accepting management's decrease in the number of meetings between UNAC and Labor Relations from monthly to once per semester. While this change may sound alarming, in our current climate these meetings have not resulted in any fruitful resolution to issues.

Ground Rules

Back in August, when the two sides formulated our [ground rules](#) for negotiations, we agreed to the following: *The parties (will) make every possible effort to reach a complete tentative agreement on or before December 31, 2024.* With just three days of bargaining currently scheduled, and management's disinclination today to schedule more sessions, it seems nearly impossible to imagine we will have a TA'd new CBA by December 31, the middle of UA's hard closure.

Where We Stand

Right now, *all CBA articles are on management's side*, including the two that deal with financials: articles 15 & 16. At the conclusion of today's session, their team assured us

that they will have a new proposal for us when we next meet on November 12, 2024.

They also assured us that it will NOT contain article 15 (compensation) or article 16 (benefits), but instead will include article 9 (Faculty Status) based on our discussion yesterday, and possibly other articles.

This means that management will sit on articles 15 & 16 until at least November 25, 2024, with only November 26, 2024, left on our negotiation meeting schedule. UNAC will continue to advocate for scheduling additional bargaining sessions between now and December 31, 2024, which is also the day our current contract expires.

A brief recap what's happened so far with article 15: Compensation & article 16: Benefits

- **8/19/2024** UNAC proposed 5/5/5 (5% raise per year of the CBA) on opening day
- **8/20/2024** and **9/03/2024** scheduled sessions canceled by management
- **9/16/2024** Management countered our 5/5/5 proposal with a supposal
- **9/16/2024** UNAC answered management's counter with a [new counter proposal](#)
- **9/17/2024** Management again countered with a new supposal
- **9/30/2024** UNAC presented a [new counter proposal](#)
- **10/15/2024** Management countered this proposal with an actual proposal
- **10/15/2024** UNAC presented [another counter proposal](#)

What's Next

Our next negotiation session is scheduled for Tuesday, November 12, 2024. We are also scheduled to meet on Monday, November 25 and Tuesday, November 26, 2024. All sessions are scheduled to begin at 9:00 a.m. on Zoom.

We WILL get to a fair and competitive contract *with your visible and vocal support for our bargaining priorities:*

- competitive pay for all
- increased job security for non-tenure track faculty
- inclusion of postdocs in every article of the CBA

Visit the "bargaining center" tab on our website (unitedacademicsak.org) and navigate to the ACTIONS page. Participating in these actions will help our negotiators win a fair and competitive contract for all of us.

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United Academics Local #4996 (UNAC) is the bargaining unit that represents all post docs, non-tenure track (term), tenure track, and tenured faculty at the University of Alaska. UNAC is affiliated with the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) as well as the Alaska Public Employee Association (APEA) and Alaska AFL-CIO.

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