

December 2012

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**2012–2013 EIU-UPI
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“EIU-UPI continues to stand in defense of educational quality, affordability, and availability for Illinois citizens—we speak for our students and for the viability of Public Illinois Higher Education.”

Ann Fritz

Dear Colleagues,

Greetings. I am honored to have the opportunity to serve you as president of the EIU chapter of the University Professionals of Illinois for the 2012–2015 term. I want to give an especially warm welcome to those who have just joined EIU this year. I know your first semester can be daunting as you settle in to a new life and new professional opportunities, and I hope EIU is a place where you can contribute, make a difference, find a meaningful community, and grow.

We live in interesting and challenging times, as you are no doubt aware. Our chapter—along with our UPI sister campuses and other state employee unions—has been engaged in earnest since spring 2012 in the task of informing and lobbying legislators regarding proposed state pension legislative actions that threaten our earned pensions and other benefits. EIU-UPI members let their sentiments be known through volleys of emails and phone calls to legislators, informational picketing at Senator Dale Righter’s office in Mattoon, meetings with legislators at the State Capitol in Springfield, and participation in a rally in the State Capital Rotunda. Undoubtedly, we have more work to do and must be vigilant, particularly as the lame-duck session of our state legislature in January 2013 will almost certainly readdress the issue of our pensions.

Another issue we are keenly following is the legal challenge to the retiree healthcare legislation (SB 1313) passed early this spring. This legal action is expected to end in the Illinois State Supreme Court. As UPI’s Legislative Director John Miller reminded us at the recent presentation on our campus (hosted by UPI’s Political and Legislative Action Committee), Illinois public universities are the only “state agency” whose funding has been cut consistently over the past decade; thus, this precipitous decline in state support for higher education is another front where our voices must be heard. EIU-UPI continues to stand in defense of educational quality, affordability, and availability for Illinois citizens—we speak for our students and for the viability of Public Illinois Higher Education.



UPITalk

Editor: Terri Fredrick

Contact your legislators!

Legislation impacting our pensions will likely be introduced during the lame duck session that begins January 3.

Now is the time to let our state legislators know that we will appreciate their support on any bills impacting us.

On November 20, you received an email from Ann Fritz and Jon Coit with information on how to contact your legislators.

Chapter Highlights

Our chapter ratified a four-year contract on September 27, 2012. The contract deliberations began in February and ended historically early, before the onset of the fall 2012 semester; for the first time in memory, pay raises were included in bargaining unit members' paychecks in the first pay period of the fall semester. Our bargaining-team members (Grant Sterling, Jon Blitz, Jeffery Duck, Carol Jean Dudley, and Ann Fritz) reached a tentative agreement with the EIU administration team in July 2012, employing the Interest-Based Bargaining technique. Grant Sterling, our tireless Chief Negotiator, led informational sessions on the contract provisions this fall.

In addition to strengthening the contract language in several sections, such as the language in support of academic freedom and in oversight of advisor workloads, the contract also encapsulates two key provisions:

First, during this time of fiscal austerity, our team negotiated across-the-board pay increases of 1.5% per year over the four years of the contract. The overload rate also increased by 1.5% per year, as did the minima lanes. Merit awards (academic achievement awards, professional increases, etc.) were increased to compensate for inflation.

Secondly, ALL summer classes, including those offered online or through the EIU School of Continuing Education, will now be paid at a salary rate of 78% of the faculty member's regular monthly salary. In the fourth year of the contract, this rate will increase to 80% of the regular monthly salary. Additionally, all classes will be offered to faculty according to their department's summer rotation list. The previous summer pay rates were a hodge-podge of 100% pro-rata pay combined with an array of vastly different pay scales (TRM, overload rates), often for the same course; the negotiated pay rate and reinforcement of the contractual rotation has stabilized summer teaching opportunities at EIU.

Chapter Leadership

Our chapter is fortunate to have faculty and academic support staff from a wide range of disciplines guiding our chapter's governance and policies.

Executive Board

Executive Board meetings are lively and well attended, which is one sign of a healthy, inclusive, and relevant union:

Fern Kory, Vice President. Fern is a Professor of English and former Faculty Laureate. Fern stepped forward to assume the responsibilities of our chapter's vice presidency after the resignation of elected vice president Jon Blitz.

John Willems, Executive Assistant. John is a Professor and Assistant Chair in Management Information Systems/Operations Management in the School of Business.

Paul Switzer, Treasurer. Paul is a Professor of Biological Sciences and Treasurer for EIU's Phi Beta Kappa organization. John assumed the responsibilities of the Executive Assistant position left open when Fern Kory became vice president.

Tim Shonk, Grievance Officer. Tim is a Professor of English and has served as grievance officer for five years.

Grant Sterling, At-Large Member. Grant is a Professor of Philosophy and the Faculty Senate Recorder. He is a veteran member of UPI's negotiations teams and served as the Chief Negotiator during the successful bargaining of our latest contract.

Barbara Lawrence, At-Large Member. Barbara is a Professor of Chemistry. She is a long-time activist within UPI/IFT/AFT and member of the Committee on Political and Legislative Action (CPAL) and the newly formed Ad-Hoc Diversity Committee.

Janet Carpenter, Unit B Annually Contracted Faculty (ACF) Representative. Janet is director of the EIU Reading Center. She is returning to the Executive Board.

Shelley James, Unit B Academic Support Personnel (ASP) Representative. Shelley is an advisor at the Ninth Street Advising Center and former Executive Board Secretary.

Todd Bruns, Executive Board Recording Secretary. Todd is a recently hired faculty member in Booth Library, where he leads development of “The Keep,” the institutional repository and electronic archive for EIU.

Standing Committee Chairs:

David Carwell (Political Science):
Balloting Committee

Jon Coit (History): Committee on Political Action and Legislation (CPAL)

Henry Owen (Biological Sciences):
Membership Committee

Ad Hoc Committee Chairs:

Our chapter has also convened a number of ad hoc Committees in keeping with the work and goals of the chapter.

Sace Elder (History) and *Jeannie Ludlow* (Women’s Studies Coordinator/English):
Diversity Committee

Fern Kory (English): Chapter By-Laws Review Committee. This committee, convened by the Executive Board in spring 2012, will propose revisions on which members will vote in Spring 2013.

Other Leadership Positions:

Eric Bollinger (Biological Sciences):
Assistant Grievance Officer

Assege HaileMariam (Psychology): UPI representative on the Council for University Planning and Budget (CUPB). Assege also serves as the UPI representative on CUPB’s Program Assessment Committee.

Terri Fredrick (English): newsletter editor

Sheila Simons (Health Studies): webmaster

Lastly, I will mention that many EIU-UPI members have stepped forward to serve as UPI House of Delegates members (many serving their first term), as Department Representatives (listed in the table at right), and/or as members of standing or ad hoc Committees. More than any statement I could make about the strength of our Chapter’s unity and common voice is to point to the many members who have and are devoting their limited time and vast expertise in support of all EIU-UPI members.

In closing, you will hear from us as we prepare for the legislative onslaught in early January and as events unfold. I ask for your vigilance and willingness to act quickly when needed early next year. The EIU-UPI Committee on Political and Legislative Action (CPAL) is poised to act and organize, but will need your participation and help to inform friends, neighbors, and legislators. If you would like to be more involved in CPAL, please contact the chair Dr. Jon Coit at jscoit@eiu.edu—we must all go forward shoulder to shoulder.

Warm Regards,
Ann Fritz, President
EIU-UPI Chapter

Department or Unit	Representative
Admissions & Records	Vacant
Academic Advising	Shelley James, Lora Green
Art	Jenny Ke-Hsin Chi
Biological Sciences	Dan Johnson, Henry Owen
Booth Library	Ann Brownson
Business	Thomas Costello, Ayse Costello
CDS	Toni Chambers
Chemistry	Barbara Lawrence
Communication Studies	Sam Szczur
Counseling & Stu. Dev.	Gloria Leitschuh
Economics	Timothy Mason
Elementary Education	Timothy Croy, Jeff Duck, Linda Reven
English	Fern Kory, Carol Jean Dudley
Family & Consumer Sci.	Kathleen O’Rourke
Foreign Languages	Carlos Amaya
Geology/Geography	David Viertel
Health Studies	Sheila Simons
History	Ed Werhle
Journalism	Brian Poulter
Kinesiology & Sports St.	Jon “Tony” Oliver
Math	Peter Wiles
Music	Jemie Robertson
Nursing	Jane Scheer
Philosophy	Gary Aylesworth
Physics	Don Pakey
Political Science	David Carwell
Psychology	Vacant
Recreational Admin.	Peggy Holmes-Layman
Sec. Ed. & Foundations	Dawn VanGunten
Special Education	Jennifer Stringfellow
Sociology/Anthropology	Darren Hendrickson
Technology	David Melton
Theater	Chris Mitchell

Reminders from Your Grievance Officer

Know Your Weingarten Rights!

If you are investigated for any sort of alleged misconduct or delinquency of duties, please remember your Weingarten Rights. **You have the right to have with you a Union representative** during any meeting that is disciplinary in nature or that may potentially lead to some sort of disciplinary action. If, for example, you are called to the Office of Civil Rights because of a student complaint or called to a supervisor's office for discussion of a work-related problem, you have the right to have a Union representative attend the meeting with you.

Moreover, **you have the right to consult with your Union representative** before you meet with a supervisor. In other words, before you are whisked off to a supervisor's office for a meeting that may be disciplinary in nature, you have the right to delay the meeting until you meet with a Union representative.



Remember the Timeline for Filing a Grievance!

If something has occurred that you believe violates the contract and is, therefore, a potential grievance, keep in mind that you have a limited amount of time to file that grievance. The contract stipulates that **you have 30 working days to file a grievance** following an action or notification that you believe violates the contract. Once the deadline passes, you and UPI are more or less at the tender mercies of the administration in terms of righting a wrong or working out a compromise. In short, after 30 working days, the administration does not have to hear the complaint.

**Need to talk with a Union Representative?
Call immediately!**

**Ann Fritz,
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ahfritz@eiu.edu**

**Tim Shonk,
EIU Grievance Officer
(217) 581-6310
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