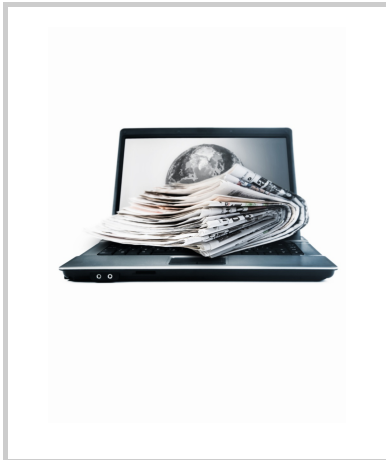




UNAC Connection - September 2023



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Workloads: Revisions & Adjustments

All UNAC members should have a workload signed by your supervisor, your department chair/program coordinator, and yourself.

Please contact your Org VP if you don't have a signed workload (contact information below).

It is very common for workloads to be revised one or more times throughout the academic year. If the work you perform during the academic year changes, revise your workload to reflect that change.

Future annual reviews and the success of your promotion files will be based on completion of your workload activities. Set yourself up for positive evaluations--make sure your workload reflects the work you perform.

If you're asked to do additional work during the academic year and you already have a full workload of 30 workload units, **DON'T** just accept more work.

Choose from the following 3 options:

1.

Negotiate other elements off your workload that are either:

- less important
- less time sensitive
- can be given to someone else needing to adjust their workload

2.

Ask for overload compensation
(CBA article 13.4.3)



3.

Decline the work, citing:

- your full workload
- the importance of work/life balance
- CBA article 13.4.3 states that members *cannot be forced into overload assignments*

Alaska Graduate Workers' Association (AGWA/UAW) Unionization Vote

Graduate student workers in the UA system are holding a final unionization vote, taking place via email from October 13-26.

This follows a ruling over the summer that settled the previous disagreements between AGWA/UAW and the UA system.

If the majority vote is in favor of unionization, AGWA will become UA's fifth union (UNAC, United Academics-adjuncts, 6070-Crafts and Trades, and 1324-UAF Firefighters). They will form a bargaining committee and begin bargaining their first contract.

UNAC leadership officially and wholeheartedly supports AGWA's unionization efforts. We also want to emphasize that *it is illegal to attempt to influence this vote during working hours and at worksites*. We further discourage any attempts to influence this vote while interacting with individual graduate students off the worksite or outside of work hours.

More information about AGWA can be found on [their website](#) and by following them on social media.

Please encourage graduate student workers to vote in this important election, but don't tell them which way to vote.



UAA Faculty Mixer

On Friday, September 22, 2023, UNAC and our Membership & Organizing Committee co-hosted a mixer at the Varsity Sports Grill with UAA's Faculty Senate, the Faculty Senate Diversity Committee, and the departments of Alaska Native Studies, History, Political Science, and Anthropology & Geography. Featured speakers included Anchorage resident, Kim Hays from AK AFL-CIO, and Andrew Halcro-Anchorage resident, business owner, UAA sponsor, politician, and podcaster.

On one of the only sunny Friday afternoons in months, over three dozen UAA UNAC members attended. They listened to the speakers, talked with each other, and went home with United Academics shirts and hats. Four lucky dues payers won prizes, and everyone had a good time.



Left: *Kim Hays, Political Director at AK AFL-CIO, spoke about the importance of union solidarity, such as paying UNAC dues and supporting other unions' efforts throughout Alaska, in our ongoing collective fight for competitive compensation and work/life balance.*



Right: *Professor Tim Hinterberger MC'd the event.*

If you're interested in hosting an event at your location, contact Kate Quick (kate.quick@unac4996ak.com), our Organizing Manager, for help with logistics. That's how this event came to fruition--it started with a single email.

UNAC Office Space at UAA

Since 1973, faculty have had a physical union office at UAA, dating back to the days when UAA was Anchorage Community College, or ACC. As the times and technology changed, our use of the physical office space at UAA steadily decreased, though our representation of UAA members has not.

With UNAC staff located in Fairbanks and the predominant use of Zoom to conduct UA/UNAC business across all worksites, we made the decision to **save \$11,000 annually** in rent by closing our UAA office.

The Executive Board did not make this decision lightly but came to this conclusion in the interest of wisely spending our dues payers' money.

When needed, we will still meet in person at all UA locations throughout the state. Our officers and RA members are spread throughout the state, ready to make time to talk with each of our members. Our staff is here for support too. We are each just a phone call or email away. (contact information at bottom)

Our physical footprint has shrunk, but our representation of members is stronger than ever!



Above: *Over the summer, UNAC staff and a few UAA members packed up our old office -- PSB 214. Files went to storage, facilities services took some furniture, the library took office supplies, and volunteers took a few other items.*



Above: Movers did the heaviest lifting to clear away everything left in the office. Vacating this space by June 30 saved us \$11,000 in annual rent, starting this fiscal year.



Above: After the UAA social, we packed a U-Haul full of files, and our Contract Manager and Secretary drove them from Anchorage to Fairbanks, where the files now sit in a new secured storage unit, consolidated with files we already had in Fairbanks. Files will be sorted, shredded, and digitized when possible.

A Note from AFT President, Randi Weingarten, re: Student Loan Repayment Resumption

After more than 3 1/2 years, student loan payments will resume in the next few weeks. Because of the AFT's advocacy, the Biden administration has made significant changes to make your student debt more manageable and, potentially, easier to forgive.

[This month, President Joe Biden announced the new Saving on a Valuable Education, or SAVE, plan for student loan borrowers. Here's what you need to know.](#)

The SAVE plan is an income-driven repayment plan that calculates payments based on a borrower's income and family size—not their loan balance—and forgives remaining balances after a certain number of years. The SAVE plan will cut many borrowers' monthly payments to zero, will save other borrowers around \$1,000 per year, will prevent balances from growing because of unpaid interest, and will get more borrowers closer to loan forgiveness faster.

[The new plan will provide affordable monthly payments, ensure that borrowers never see their balance grow from ballooning interest if they keep up with required payments, and even provide early loan forgiveness for low-balance borrowers. To learn more, or to sign up for SAVE, visit \[StudentAid.gov/SAVE\]\(https://StudentAid.gov/SAVE\). Payments under this plan qualify for Public Service Loan Forgiveness.](#)

This new program will help thousands of student loan borrowers and builds on the Biden administration's commitment to making sure Americans are not burdened by their education. In addition to the SAVE plan, and because of the AFT's advocacy,

the Biden administration fixed crucial pieces of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program to make it more accessible and predictable; as a result, our members already have had more than \$34 million in debt forgiven.

[To learn more about the SAVE plan, the PSLF program, or how you can get personalized student debt guidance with our online partner Summer, click here to register for an upcoming AFT Student Debt Clinic webinar.](#)

As always, the AFT will continue to push for ways to make college more affordable and accessible and to fight for investment in higher education, so that every student who chooses to pursue higher education can do so.

In unity,
Randi Weingarten
AFT President

UNAC Benefits

Professional Development Funds

All UNAC bargaining unit members of every rank and title are eligible to apply for UNAC Professional Development Funds.

These funds are described in Article 15.9 of our [CBA](#) and are to be used as monetary assistance for professional development opportunities.

Each University follows slightly different application processes. Each provosts' office can help members work through the application process for their university.

UNAC Sick Leave Bank

The Sick Leave Bank application can be found under 'forms and guidelines' on this [UA Labor and Employee Relations](#) webpage.

The UNAC sick leave bank was formerly the UAFT sick leave bank; when the two unions merged into UNAC in 2018, the sick leave bank became the UNAC sick leave bank.

It was incorporated into our most recent CBA (article 16.8). It replaces the leave-share program, which was eliminated over the summer.

Reminders

Current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)

Our CBA is available on our United Academics website:

<http://unitedacademics.net/collective-bargaining-agreement-cba/>

Weingarten Rights

If you find yourself called into a meeting with your direct supervisor that you believe could result in discipline, you have the right to request union representation at that meeting. Contact your Organizational Vice President for guidance. From the [National Labor Relations Board](#) website:

Any meeting may be an "investigatory interview" provided that the following occur:

- A manager, representative of management, or supervisor is seeking to question an employee.

- The questioning is part of an investigation into the employee's performance or work conduct. During an investigatory interview, a representative of management may require an employee to defend, explain, or admit misconduct or work performance issues that may form the basis for discipline or discharge.
- The employee reasonably believes that the investigation may result in discharge, discipline, demotion, or other adverse consequence to their job status or working conditions.
- The employee requests a union representative. Employers are not required to advise employees of their right to representation and third parties (including union representatives) may not make the request on behalf of the employee.

United Academics on Social Media

- Like or follow our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages.
- Like, share, or retweet our content!
- Use our [profile pictures and Zoom backgrounds](#) on your social media and Zoom accounts, especially during University Zoom meetings.

Meeting Notices

UNAC General Membership Meetings

- Regularly scheduled meetings: every second Tuesday of the month from 5:30-7:00 p.m.
- Separate emails with meeting information, including the Zoom link, will be sent to all bargaining unit members before each meeting.
- **Next General Membership Meeting: Tuesday, October 10, 2023, 5:30-7:00 p.m. AKDT.**

Next UNAC Representative Assembly Meeting*

Saturday, October 21, 2023, 10:00am - 2:00p.m. AKDT via Zoom

UNAC Executive Board Meetings*

First and third Wednesday of each month, 9:30-11:30a.m. AKDT

**Dues paying members are welcome to attend the RA and Executive Board meetings. Contact your Org VP and/or office staff for the Zoom link.*



Executive Board and Staff Contacts

President - Jill Dumesnil, Ph.D.

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Treasurer - Nelta Edwards, Ph.D.

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Secretary - Abel Bult-Ito, Ph.D.

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Contract Manager - Melanie Arthur, Ph.D.

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Organizing Manager - Kate Quick

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United Academics Local #4996 (UNAC) is the bargaining unit that represents post doctoral fellows, non-tenure track (term), tenure track, and tenured faculty at the University of Alaska. UNAC is an affiliate of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

www.unitedacademics.net

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