



UNAC Connection - April 2025



- Spotlight: Ryan Harrod
- UNAC Webinars
- Immigration Guidance
- Ramifications of Working While Off Contract
- Workloads
- Open Enrollment
- Faculty Regent Legislation
- Strike Solidarity Corner
- Reminders

Faculty Spotlight



Dr. Ryan Harrod

As a biological anthropologist, Dr. Ryan Harrod loves working with college students and helping identify ancestors and other non-Indigenous human remains. He left a career as **Chief Academic Officer for Garrett College** in Maryland to return to a faculty position at UAA's Anthropology and Geography Department, where he was an associate professor before taking the administrative position in Maryland.

He took a pay cut to come back to UAA and moved cross-country twice with his family because it turned out they wanted to be in Alaska and Dr. Harrod missed conducting research and working with students. He had to go through the tenure process again upon rehire, and he still took the job at UAA! That's because he loves teaching students, and he loves conducting research.

Upon his return to UAA, Dr. Harrod dove back into his role as a faculty member. He became active in shared governance work and union work, and is currently the 1st Vice President for UAA's Faculty Senate as well as United Academics'

<https://www.immigrationadvocates.org/nonprofit/legaldirectory/>

- From AFT: “To assist students and the wider community, we’ve assembled **a compendium of resources on our website as well as in our eLearning community**, which we are encouraging members to sign up for as that is the space where we will be making more sensitive materials and resources available to our membership in a password-protected space.”
- **AAUP’s 1-pagers with legal and personal security resources**, including immigration hotlines for emergency use and digital security advice.
- AAUP and AFT members have access to **Talkspace Therapy** and/or **trauma counseling member benefits**.

These resources are available only to dues paying members of United Academics, except those expressly noted as open to students and non-members.

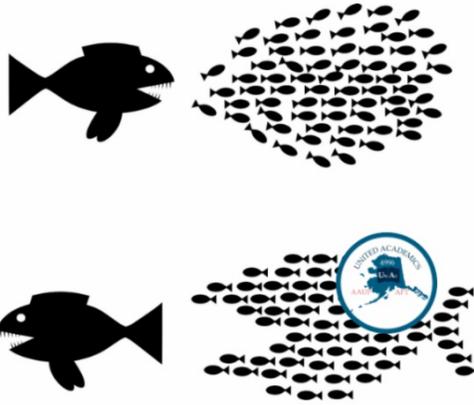
Ramifications of Working Without a Contract in Summer

At our April general membership meeting, members asked about ramifications of performing work while off contract, especially with a noticeable uptick in student complaints resulting in investigations against faculty members. President Jill Dumesnil and UNAC staff met with administrators at UA Labor Relations to address this concern.

The answer is complicated. We all care deeply about our students’ success, and our supervisors take advantage of that by underfunding our work. However, no one should be working for free. With that fact in mind, *unless you have a summer contract, do not perform work with students or in your lab*. If your research requires year-round work, you should have a contract extension. If your students are registered for thesis credits over the summer, and you are the instructor of record, *you should have a contract and be paid for that work*.

If you are not paid and have no contract, you should not perform the work and should explain the situation to your students. Students can seek guidance from the person who chose not to compensate you for your work: your dean or director. This is your supervisor’s problem, not yours. To quote Labor Relations: *“Do not assume you have the authority to work unless you have something in writing from your supervisor.”*

Regarding an injury at a worksite while you are off contract, workers’ comp likely *does provide coverage* for accidents on campus or at worksites, even when a person may not be under contract at that moment. For example, if you are off contract and hurt your back while moving offices, or twist your ankle while walking to your office, workers’ comp will likely cover expenses for your medical treatment. UA’s accident insurance will likely cover expenses that workers’ comp does not cover.



Adding a Faculty Member to the Board of Regents

Two companion bills in the state House and Senate that would add a faculty member to the UA Board of Regents are moving their way through the legislative process:

- **HB10** is sponsored by Representative Ashley Carrick (Fairbanks), Representative Zach Fields (Anchorage), Representative Ky Holland (Anchorage), and Representative Robyn Burke (Utqiagvik).
- **SB118** is sponsored by the Senate State Affairs Committee. The committee decided to sponsor this bill following a **presentation to the committee** by UAS's Faculty Senate President, Brian Blitz, and former President/Faculty Alliance Chair, Jennifer Ward.

UNAC's Representative Assembly passed a **resolution** in support of both bills, reaffirming our longstanding support for legislative efforts to add a faculty member to the BOR. Similarly, the UA Faculty Alliance sent a letter of support of both bills to legislators. Adding a faculty member to the Board of Regents would enhance board discussions and decision-making processes and would broaden communication and understanding between board members and faculty.

Housekeeping Items

Signed Workloads by May 1, 2025

You should receive your final, signed and approved workload from your supervisor by May 1, 2025. If you do not have a signed workload from your supervisor by May 1, contact your UNAC Org VP for advice.

Open Enrollment for Benefits Closes May 2, 2025

The end of open enrollment coincides with the last day of spring finals. The Basic Plan is being eliminated on June 30, so anyone enrolled in that plan is required to go through open enrollment to choose a new

Every person in our bargaining unit needs to be familiar with [CBA](#) article 13: Workloads. We also encourage colleagues within departments or programs to share and compare workloads and attempt to distribute work evenly; transparency helps create equity and builds trust.

healthcare plan. Details are available on [UA's Benefits & Compensation page](#).

Use Your Faculty Time Off or Cash-In up to Five Days

To use your Faculty Time Off (FTO), claim it on your timesheet for the appropriate dates.

To cash in up to 5 days of your FTO in lieu of taking time off, fill out the [FTO Cash-In form](#).

Strike Solidarity Corner

Workers around the world, in every profession, share one common goal: to be respected for the work they perform. There are, of course, differences in the demands of each segment of the workforce. Ultimately, though, the working conditions of one group of workers influences the working conditions of other groups of workers at both a local and a global level. In the U.S., workers across industries banded together in labor actions and won us weekends (1938), the 40-hour work week (1940), an end to child labor (1938), a plethora of safety rules, and improved wages. Those wins can easily be taken away if workers don't continue to stand in solidarity with each other across professions and even across the globe.

Following is a sampling of current workers fighting for increased dignity at work:

- Workers in Greece went on a 24-hour general strike, calling for higher salaries and a return to full collective bargaining rights. ([More here](#))
- University of Rochester Graduate Labor Union went on strike on Monday, April 21, 2025. They're fighting for their first union contract, which will create better working conditions for graduate student workers. ([More here](#), including a link to their strike fund)
- Kaiser SoCal mental health workers have been on strike since October 2024, with 8 members going on a weeklong hunger strike in April. ([More here](#))
- Student workers at the University of Oregon are unionized, and they are prepared to go on strike as soon as April 28, 2025, pending progress in bargaining. They are fighting for higher wages. ([More here](#))
- Non-Tenured Faculty at Wellesley walked off their jobs on March 28, 2025, demanding better pay, additional benefits, and workload improvements. ([More here](#))

Actions

- Watch this [interview with Liz Schuler, President of AFL-CIO](#)
- Check AAUP's [upcoming events](#) page regularly.
- Tuesday, May 13: UNAC's May General Membership Meeting (watch your email for the Zoom link before May 13)

- May 1, 2025: “May Day Strong-Stop the Billionaire Takeover” rallies across the nation. Find or plan one near you! ([details here](#))
- UA staff are unionizing with UAW! Talk with staff who work in your area to see if they’ve signed a card saying “YES! I want a union.” You can refer them to [this website](#) for more information and access to printable cards.

Meeting Notices

UNAC General Membership Meetings

Regularly scheduled meetings: every second Tuesday of the month from 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Next General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, May 14, 2025, from 5:30-7:00 p.m. AKDT

Next UNAC Representative Assembly Meeting*

Saturday, August 16, 2025, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. AKDT

UNAC Executive Board Meetings*

First and third Wednesday of each month, 8:30 a.m.-10:00 a.m. AKT

**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.*

Reminders

UNAC Website

Please visit our United Academics website: unitedacademicsak.org for helpful resources including:

- Executive Board officer contact info & Representative Assembly roster
- A pdf version of our current CBA
- An archive of our monthly newsletters
- E-Board and RA meeting minutes
- Our union by-laws and constitution
- Union member benefits
- And more

Social Media

- Follow us at our new [BlueSky](#) account
- Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)
- Like and share our posts, and tag us in your own posts

YouTube Channel

Our [YouTube channel](#) (@United Academics_4996_AK) has short member-to-member video messages, videos explaining union rights, training videos for promotion and workloads, and other informational content. Contact us if you have additional training or other video requests.

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).

Current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)

Our CBA is available on our United Academics website:

<https://unitedacademicsak.org/resources/collective-bargaining-agreement-1>



Executive Board Contacts

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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).

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