



Briefing Paper: Collective Bargaining for Full-time Faculty at Public, 4-Year Colleges

Support Full-Time Faculty Collective Bargaining Rights

The right to collective bargaining is a fundamental right afforded to thousands of state and higher ed employees throughout Maryland. It should be extended to those who have been unfairly excluded.

- In 2001, University of Maryland System staff won collective bargaining rights, but faculty and students were unfairly denied the same right. In 2021, full- and part-time faculty at Maryland’s community colleges obtained collective bargaining rights. Faculty and grads in 4-year public colleges were again excluded. Collective bargaining rights should be granted to all higher ed workers in Maryland.

Collective bargaining advances the educational mission of Maryland’s Universities and the State.

- Collective bargaining promotes salary equity and helps our universities attract and keep outstanding faculty members. UMD-College Park is second worst among peers in average cost-of-living adjusted salaries and has the second largest gender pay gap among peer institutions. Towson University and Bowie State are lower than all their peers, without exception. None of our Maryland campuses are in the top one-half.
- Collective bargaining helps improve the quality of instruction by addressing ballooning faculty-to-student classroom ratios. Between 2014 and 2022, the number of faculty at UMD-CP increased 3.1% while student enrollment jumped by 10.7%. Our state's HBCUs have also seen large increases in student enrollments without a proportionate growth in faculty positions.
- Collective bargaining makes colleges and universities more efficient by preventing administrative bloat, making sure more state dollars go into the research and instruction that benefit Maryland residents. While full-time faculty ranks have recently dwindled, the compensation for administrators at UMD-CP has skyrocketed by 37.1% between 2016 and 2020 as the university has also grown its managerial ranks by 42.4%. Collective bargaining would allow us to counter this trend, defend the educational role of our institution, and make our universities more efficient and effective.
- Collective bargaining safeguards the quality of instruction and research by defending academic freedom. With a collectively bargained contract, partisan political attacks against what can and cannot be taught in a classroom or what is a field of study worthy of research would be neutralized. USM is slowly dismantling protections for academic freedom by decreasing the share of tenured faculty (down 6.9% at UMD-CP since 2014) and increasing the percentage of faculty in contingent,

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AFT-Maryland, 5800 Metro Drive, Baltimore MD 21215
<http://md.aft.org> • (410) 764-3030

Denise Riley, Director of Legislative & Political Affairs, driley@aftmd.org

at-will forms of employment (up 19.3% at UMD-CP since 2014). Without the job security afforded by tenure, academic freedom is imperiled and universities undermine their core task, becoming unable to fulfill their public mission and their obligation to the state.

Collective bargaining buttresses real shared governance.

- The existing model of shared governance—currently a senate of faculty members whose role is merely advisory—is not working. Faculty have no mechanism to substantively engage in financial and budgetary decision-making, nor are they able to meaningfully engage in determining our working and safety conditions.

Collective bargaining does not benefit only faculty—it benefits the university as a whole!

- Among our national peer institutions, those with some degree of collective bargaining for faculty and graduate assistants on their campuses on average significantly outrank those without collective bargaining.



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