NOTIFICATION TO TAUP FACULTY

REGARDING PETITION FOR UNIT CLARIFICATION

This afternoon, Temple University will submit a Petition for Unit Clarification to the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board (PLRB) regarding the TAUP bargaining unit. The Petition asks the PLRB to recognize academic department Chairs as part of Temple’s academic management team and as such no longer part of the Temple Association of University Professionals (TAUP) bargaining unit. If approved, the action will affect about 70 Chairs currently included in the unit of approximately 1300 faculty and academic professionals.

The University will file the Petition in recognition of the substantially changed roles and responsibilities of department Chairs since the bargaining unit was certified almost 40 years ago. Today, department Chairs perform substantially different roles from the rest of the faculty in their departments.

Chairs function as managerial leaders at the University and have the right to direct the workforce and the ability to initiate and implement rewards or sanctions. They make effective recommendations on administrative matters involving departmental faculty, manage departmental budgets and personnel, and have meaningful participation in the decision processes on such matters as curriculum, class assignments, promotion and tenure. Chairs are expressly excluded from certain deliberations and discussions that take place among departmental faculty to avoid even an appearance of undue influence, further signifying the recognition that they perform as managers and supervisors rather than as departmental faculty.

The University believes that this move reinforces that the Chairs have taken on a clearer leadership role within the schools, colleges and University. This proposed change reflects that the Chairs’ influence at the University has been strengthened and provides the faculty with a more direct channel for addressing departmental issues.
If the PLRB approves the Petition, department Chairs at Temple will become members of the University’s administration and not be subject to the TAUP collective bargaining agreement. Chairs will continue to be appointed by the Dean after consultation with the department faculty. The Chairs will not lose pay or benefits as a result; they will directly negotiate their compensation with the dean, unrestricted by the TAUP agreement. Once a Chair’s service is completed, the Chair may return to the faculty and become a member of the TAUP bargaining unit again.

If TAUP opposes this request, the PLRB will hold a hearing before ruling on the Petition, a process that could take 6 to 18 months. Because the University has had discussions with TAUP regarding the classification of Chairs in the past and TAUP has not agreed with the University’s position, we expect that the PLRB will be called upon to issue a ruling.

The University has developed a list of Frequently Asked Questions which are available for your review on the website of the Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Development and Faculty Affairs. You can link directly to that document here: FAQs Regarding Temple’s Petition for Unit Clarification.

We will continue to keep faculty informed of important developments throughout this process.