

CSU, East Bay – APC Member Questions

During a recent Academic Professionals of California (APC) meeting that was held on the campus of California State University, East Bay, Unit 4 members asked a variety of questions about layoffs and various internal union matters. Below are the questions, and the answers provided by Edward R. Purcell, APC Business Manager / Labor Relations Director:

Question #1: When did the union know the university was going to issue layoff notices?

Answer: Pursuant to **Article 33.1** of the **Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)**, the CSU issued a general notification of the need for layoffs to all unions some months ago. CSU, East Bay was the first (and at the time, the only) campus; however, to actually issue layoff notices. APC was informed by fax at 10:00 PM the night before individual notices were issued on campus. No names were identified at that time.

Question #2: Did APC know the university was going to offer a “reduction in time” option?

Answer: **Article 33.4** of the **CBA** requires that this (and other) options be offered. Campus administration has misled employees – and violated the contract – by first claiming that the option was available only to other unions, and then failing to provide the option prior to commencing layoff.

Question #3: The California State University Employees Union (CSUEU) has told its members not to sign anything until their union has a chance to review each case. Is the same true for APC?

Answer: APC agrees with this point of view and recommends the same. Thus far, the CSU has provided no “savings” target for Unit 4 which, if reached, would reduce or eliminate the need for layoffs. Any savings volunteered by employees at this point would most likely simply be lost in the larger budget hole on campus. Except in special personal circumstances, it is preferable to hold off on voluntary savings ideas until a target can be set and the money saved through voluntary efforts dedicated to meeting that target to save jobs.

Question #4: What if we have already signed an agreement for a time reduction?

Answer: It is unclear if any such agreements are enforceable. If you have already signed one and would like to reconsider, please contact your campus APC leadership.

Question #5: Can we be “bumped” if we have signed for time reduction?

Answer: Yes. However, if for instance, you have chosen a 75% time base; the individual who wishes to “bump” into that position will, most likely, be required to accept the 75% time base as well.

Question #6: How was the decision made to eliminate positions?

Answer: Management made the decisions. Although some “planning process” has apparently been going on at CSU, East Bay for some time, it was not transparent. Why management has chosen to do what it has done in the manner it was done, is not one the Union can answer.

Question #7: Will the people who received notices have a scheduled appointment with a union representative?

Answer: Such meetings are underway now. Anyone who wishes to meet with the Union should contact your campus APC leadership.

Question #8: Is the union doing anything to fight this?

Answer: Unfortunately, many court decisions stand for the proposition that management can decide when it has sufficient funds to maintain its programs and staff, and for the proposition that layoffs can be used. Additionally, these matters were substantially litigated in 1991, the last time that CSU employees experienced layoffs. What the Union can do – and is doing – is to question inappropriate management decisions, look to community and political support to reverse the destruction of the CSU, and work with other unions at all levels of CSU management (including Trustees) to use other means to assist with budget problems without reducing the University’s key staff.

Question #9: What is the makeup of the union leadership and how are they elected?

Answer: The governing body of APC is its statewide Council, composed of stewards from each campus elected by the APC membership on each campus. The Union also has constitutional officers (president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary) who are elected by APC members or (in the case of uncontested elections), ratified by the Council. These officers, joined by one representative elected by the Council, compose the Union’s Executive Board which is responsible for the conduct of the Union’s day-to-day, statewide business. The Union’s constitution can be found on the Union’s web site, APC1002.org, or obtained from the APC Office.

Question #10: Who made the decision to have a board meeting in Las Vegas?

Answer: The decision to use Las Vegas as a meeting site was made almost one year ago as a cost-saving measure. Availability of transportation, low cost rooms, and low cost meals actually save the Union money over California sites. At the February meeting of the Council (held in Las Vegas) the decision was made, however, to use only California meeting locations in the future.

Question #11: How can the union adequately represent us in layoffs when the board is in crisis?

Answer: Although there has been an “up tick” in the political dialog in APC, there is no crisis at any organizational level. Lots of people are working as hard as they can for APC in the effort to stop or mitigate layoffs in Unit 4 and to improve the larger work climate in the CSU.

Question #12: Why has there been no preparation or announcements of the March 4 action – why did APC not join with CFA in supporting and helping plan this action?

Answer: This is incorrect! APC has worked with CFA and other Action organizers from the beginning and allocated funds to assist in the larger effort. Campus chapters are also organizing APC participation at major rally sites around the State.