



Northern Illinois University

*Office of the Executive Vice
President and Provost*

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Dear Colleagues,

I would like to provide you with an update regarding faculty union issues related to the new faculty bargaining unit that was recently certified by the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board (IELRB).

As you are aware, on June 9, 2016, the IELRB certified a bargaining unit for tenured and tenure-track faculty with appointments of 51 percent FTE or greater in all colleges except Law. Supervisory, managerial and confidential employees, as those terms are defined in the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Act, are excluded from the bargaining unit.

Certification of an “exclusive bargaining representative” means that the university must now negotiate with the newly certified union regarding “wages, hours and other terms and conditions of employment” for faculty in the bargaining unit. The university must also maintain the status quo with respect to these mandatory subjects of bargaining and cannot implement unilateral changes without bargaining.

The university negotiates fairly and in good faith with representatives of its employees in any properly certified bargaining unit. We have a history of good relations with the unions representing our employees in the 15 bargaining units that were in place prior to June 9, 2016, and that same spirit will characterize our dealings with this new faculty bargaining unit.

Contract negotiations can be lengthy and complicated, and this is particularly the case when an initial contract is being negotiated for a new bargaining unit. I believe it is important for the campus that the bargaining process be allowed to work and to negotiate a contract that fairly serves the interests of all parties. I hope that we will all respect this process and will allow the negotiating to occur at its proper place: the bargaining table.

The university has a website wherein a more detailed list of [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) is posted. More information regarding existing policies and practices will be posted to that site in the near future. Questions concerning the new faculty bargaining unit should be directed to Stephen Katz, NIU’s Director of Academic Employee and Labor Relations at skatz1@niu.edu.

I am hopeful that we can move through the bargaining process as swiftly and smoothly as possible, and not be distracted from our missions of teaching, discovery and service to our community.

Sincerely,

Lisa C. Freeman, D.V.M., Ph.D.
Executive Vice President and Provost