

# **Professional Instructors Organization American Federation of Teachers, Local 1903**

## **2012-2013 Annual Plan**

### **Executive Summary**

As we conclude the first year of our contract, PIO has established itself on campus as the defender of all part-time instructors and our students. Our numbers are larger than originally thought when PIO was first organized, as 650 part-time instructors taught at WMU last academic year, greater than one-third of the teaching faculty. Of the 570 part-time instructors, 354 are currently PIO members, with more joining all the time. We are well prepared to protect the rights of part-time instructors and to build upon those rights when we return to the bargaining table in 2013.

The following annual plan explains where we are today, and where we hope to go over the coming academic year. Our primary goals involve recruiting and engaging more members to participate in union activities like stewardships, contract enforcement, communications and political education. Engaging more members is absolutely essential to accomplishing our goals next year, including maintaining a balanced budget in the face of potentially severe cuts to part-time budgets around the university. Please take a moment to review the plan outlined below, and please share any comments, criticisms or commendations you may have. Thank you for being a member, and for your continued support of PIO.

Your 2010-2011 PIO Officers:

Steve Cartwright, President

Karl Schrock, Vice-President

Arthur Falk, Secretary-Treasurer

# Professional Instructors Organization American Federation of Teachers, Local 1903

## Plan Outline

- I. Where we are today:
  1. Strengths
    - a. Governance
      1. Committed executive officers and a reliable, engaged network of stewards and committee chairs.
    - b. 11 stewards in 18 departments
    - c. A full-time administrator in charge of membership outreach, bookkeeping and other tasks assigned by the executive council
    - d. Consistently positive membership response
    - e. 354 members as of 10/5/11 (and growing)
      1. 62% membership rate
    - f. Communications
      1. Email
      2. Campus mail
      3. Facebook
      4. Newsletter
      5. Website
  2. Needs
    - a. Increased membership engagement
    - b. More stewards in more departments
    - c. Outreach to new/returning part-time instructors
    - d. Increased public awareness of:
      1. Part-time instructors
      2. Existence and role of PIO
    - e. Political action
      1. Member education program:
        - a. Email blasts
        - b. Facebook
        - c. Newsletter
        - d. Website
      2. Active Committee on Political Education (COPE), with defined roles
    - f. Grievance/Complaint Structure
      1. A comprehensive policy for dealing with issues discovered by the executive council, administrator or members as they arise
  3. Opportunities
    - a. Policy Education

**Professional Instructors Organization  
American Federation of Teachers, Local 1903**

1. Protecting collective bargaining rights for public employees
      2. Making the case for increased higher education funding
    - b. Campus Relations
      1. Social networking events for part-time, full-time and teaching assistant faculty through the United Faculty.
      2. Student outreach
    - c. Professional Development
      1. Keep members advised of professional development opportunities sponsored by WMU
  4. Threats
    - a. The Administration
      1. Incorrect interpretation of Article 11 "Senior Status" clause.
      2. Muddy definitions of supervisors, coordinators, etc.
      3. Slow response to requests for information.
      4. Errors in semester unit lists.
        - a. Wrongful exclusion of part-time instructors
        - b. Mislabeled continuing/senior status
        - c. Inaccurate salary/credit hour reporting
    - b. Non-Members
      1. 213 non-members as of 10/5/11, BUT vast majority are non-compliant, many will become members eventually
    - c. Public Policy
      1. Bills have been proposed in the state legislature that would critically hamper the ability of public employee unions to organize, to negotiate and enforce contracts, and to communicate with their members.
- II. Membership Input
1. Survey
    - a. PIO plans to conduct at least one membership survey every academic year, typically in the spring semester, to inform the annual plan for the following academic year.
- III. Elections
1. PIO will elect new officers in November 2011 to take office in January 2012.
- IV. Priorities of the PIO
1. Strengthen and engage our membership.
  2. Reduce the number of undeclared and/or non-compliant instructors;
  3. Increase our total membership to at least 75%;
  4. Recruit enough stewards to facilitate regular member-to-member contact

**Professional Instructors Organization  
American Federation of Teachers, Local 1903**

- a. Obstacles:
    - 1. Transience of part-time instructors;
    - 2. Lack of engagement among younger part-time instructors;
    - 3. Detachment, apathy and alienation of part-time instructors who don't feel welcomed as members of the WMU faculty;
    - 4. Time constraints of part-time faculty who do not live nearby, have other jobs in addition to teaching, teach at multiple institutions simultaneously, etc.
  - 5. Enforce our contract with WMU, specifically:
    - a. instructors with senior and/or continuing status by ensuring that all part-time instructors with senior/continuing status are recognized by the university and their respective departments;
    - b. ensure that our bargaining unit each semester includes every instructor who, as a matter of right, should be represented by the PIO;
    - c. Include a more clear/consistent definition of supervisor/manager/coordinator, etc.
    - d. Obstacles:
      - 1. The administration's current interpretation of the senior status provision;
      - 2. The administration's apparently slow learning curve in developing and maintaining systems to track part-time instructors according to the new contractual provisions;
      - 3. Lack of awareness or interest among part-time instructors regarding their rights under the contract
  - 6. Raise the profile of PIO among part-time instructors, all faculty, students and staff on campus, within the Kalamazoo community, among state legislators, within AFT (other locals, state, national)
    - a. Obstacles:
      - 1. We are a new organization with little to no recognition off campus;
      - 2. Lack of awareness of the statewide part-time faculty situation among the general public;
      - 3. Lack of funding for political activity, including strict rules for the use of any funds we do use for political activity.
- V. Goals for 2011-2012
- 1. Build and maintain a membership rate of at least 75% of all part-time instructors;
  - 2. Identify and elect/appoint stewards in every department or logical combination of departments across the university to facilitate member-to-member organizing;

**Professional Instructors Organization  
American Federation of Teachers, Local 1903**

3. Hold at least one stewardship training workshop per academic year
  4. Attendance of at least 50 members at membership meetings each semester;
  5. Continue to monitor and audit unit lists received from the university to verify that:
    - a. Our bargaining unit is as large as possible;
    - b. Each instructor is being compensated/employed in accordance with their senior/continuing status;
    - c. The data for each part-time instructor in the unit is accurate
  6. Implement a systematic procedure for dealing with all issues (potential grievance or not) brought to the attention of the executive council and the administrator, in order to appropriately handle the most critical and/or time-sensitive issues;
  7. Maintain a balanced budget;
  8. Develop a communications and community outreach plan to raise awareness of PIO on campus and in the community;
  9. Build an active committee on political education to educate our members about potential issues that may affect their employment or weaken their ability to bargain collectively;
    - a. Will also be responsible for developing relationships with state and federal officials who routinely make decisions affecting the employment conditions, security and collective bargaining rights of our members.
- VI. Annual Budget
1. PIO will develop an annual budget that is balanced yet allocates sufficient funds to accomplish the above-stated goals;
  2. The 2012-2013 budget will be presented to the entire membership for approval at the spring 2012 membership meeting.
- VII. Timeline
1. PIO Annual Plans will span academic years, fall to spring.
  2. The 2012-2013 Annual Plan will be in effect from until June 30, 2013. The PIO will develop the 2013-2014 Annual Plan and present it to the entire membership for approval at the Fall 2012 membership meeting. It will take effect on July 1, 2013.
  3. The 2011-2012 Annual Budget will be in effect until June 30, 2012. The PIO will develop the 2012-2013 Annual Budget to correspond with the goals outlined in the 2012-2013 Annual Plan and present it to the entire membership for approval at the Spring 2012 membership meeting. It will take effect on July 1, 2012.