

**Open Letter to the Board of Trustees, the President and the President-Designate of the University of Illinois:**

As you know, on March 22, the Appellate Court took a position endorsing the Administration's view that the UIC United Faculty (UICUF) union should be organized as two bargaining units: tenure-track and non-tenure track. We believe this decision is a misreading of the law. More fundamentally, we believe that the effort to separate TT and NTT is a misreading both of the relations between the two groups and of the future of higher education. It's not for nothing that the description of NTT faculty as the New Faculty Majority has become commonplace, and it would make more sense for the University of Illinois to take a leadership position on this issue than to fight in the courts for the right to bury our heads in the sand.

Nevertheless, despite the issue's importance and despite the fact that our lawyers think we have a strong case, we do not wish to appeal the Court's decision. Instead, we write today to ask you to voluntarily recognize UICUF Local 6456 as a faculty union consisting of two separate bargaining units -- TT and NTT -- and to begin negotiating with us. Such recognition would be consistent with the Court's ruling and would immediately end the costly judicial process.

We take this step because, like you, we are concerned about the deteriorating relations between the Faculty and the Administration. Although the appeal process so far has only worsened those relations, we recognize and applaud the Board's acknowledgement that there is a problem and we are eager to join with President-Designate Easter in being part of the solution. We would rather work with you at the bargaining table than oppose you in the courtroom.

In urging you to begin negotiations with us as two bargaining units, we are, of course, only asking you to do what you have consistently said you wanted to do. As Provost Kaufman recently put it, the "University is not trying to deprive faculty of the right to organize for collective bargaining purposes" but only to make sure that we are organized in "separate bargaining units." Indeed, from the day we were first certified by the IELRB, the Administration has been clear that it was not opposed to the faculty's unionizing but only, in the words of our Chancellor, to the "effort to combine temporary faculty with tenure-system faculty in a single bargaining unit." And, most recently, in the brief that convinced the Appellate Court, the administration declared that "it is not attempting to deprive tenured system and non-tenure faculty of the right to create two separate and distinct bargaining units" and further argued that two separate and distinct units "would help foster a more stable collective bargaining relationship."

We ourselves are not convinced that two separate units is the best way to foster a better relationship between the faculty and the administration but, like the administration, we are very eager to make that relationship better. The events of the last few years, culminating in President Hogan's resignation, have made clear just how bad it has become. If you will join us -- on your terms -- at the bargaining table, the turnaround can begin today.

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