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Responding to Janus: Collective Bargaining and Membership Engagement

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*Where do we go from here?:
Organizing “professionals”:
Academic employees negotiating a new academy*

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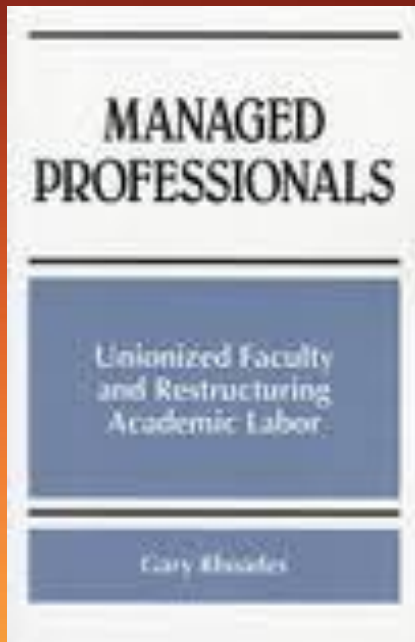
The organizing never stops

Alphonso Mayfield

President, Florida Public Services Union



From “Managed professionals”...



*...to “Organizing ‘professionals’:
Academic employees negotiating a
new academy”*

*Academic employees organizing, mobilizing around, & negotiating provisions
that speak to respect for workers, the work, & the public purposes of higher education*



You're non-renewed
You're not eligible for
unemployment/health
care
You're not loyal
You create problems
You don't make the
employer look good.

*It's not just about money (or profit);
it's also about managerial discretion--power--in the workplace.*

The importance of ...

- ... embodying respect, for workers & for the work (& as I suggest above for the public purposes of higher education).
- ... embedding, (more) explicitly, the public good in concrete ways, in contracts & in campaigns in building coalitions within & beyond the academy.
- ... embracing diversity The future of unionism lies in embracing diversity in union strategy, tactics, structure, and message. (& I would add, the diversity of the workforce, in both employment status & identity)

Three premises regarding higher ed, bargaining, & the public interest

- Both management and labor believe they are the guardians & stewards of the institution's & public's best interests.
- Neither managers nor faculty (particularly tt faculty) have succeeded in persuading the public of this claim; both are often critiqued for pursuing their own (narrow) interests at the expense of those of students and of the public.
- It is possible for managers and faculty to address the public interest more concretely, explicitly, & collectively in contract language.

What are we bargaining for?: Public interest bargaining

- Key points of my 2015 article in *Journal of Collective Bargaining in the Academy*.
- It's NOT “interest based bargaining,” which focuses on the two parties at the table, & tends to accept current direction.
- PIB includes but extends beyond management and labor's immediate interests to a broader consideration of what is at stake beyond the employer and employee, to consider students, the wider communities in which he/she is situated, & the larger public purposes of the academy.
- PIB explicitly connects aspects of the negotiations to the public good. It can involve refocusing insts on core functions and public missions.

Respect-based organizing for the public interest: Academic employees negotiating a new academy

- ◇ Too few provisions demonstrating respect for workers & for the work, too much resistance of recognition.
- ◇ The possibility of provisions identifying beneficiaries in addition to the parties at the table.
- ◇ “The future of unionism [and of higher education] lies in embracing diversity in union strategy, tactics, structure, and message.” (Cobble, 2007, p.11) [and I would add, the diversity of the workforce, in both status of employment and identity] Some explicit invocation of broader interest and even specifically of the public interest, but the need for more.

“Making it a community fight” (Malini Cadambi Daniel)

- ◇ “The biggest challenge facing faculty unions (and management) is to enhance the enterprise’s legitimacy in the eyes of clients, employers, politicians, and ‘the public.’ ... As [Paul] Johnston (1994) has demonstrated, community political support is absolutely essential to the success of pubic sector unions. In the case of public [and private not-for-profit] higher education, that essential public support extends to the statewide community. Faculty must address a public interest agenda” (Rhoades, 1998, p.276) in creative ways, that certainly include, but that also go beyond serving students, to serving communities & society at large.

“Fight for the university you want” *(Mia McIver)*

- ◇ “Fight for the university you want.”
- ◇ “Fight for the union you want.”
- ◇ *ME: Fight for the community, society, & world you want, & for the community college/university role in shaping them. That must, in my view, mean fighting for a higher ed that more fully lives up to its democratic ideals in serving & reflecting not White Supremacy, but the rich tapestry we are, not the Wall Street elite but the Main Street, urban, and rural working people of this country, not patriarchy, homophobia, transphobia, & xenophobia, but a society that challenges/overcomes those forms of privilege.*

Thank you...
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