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Poll of All University of Maine Faculty Members on Potential Work to Rule Actions

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Poll of All University of Maine Faculty Members
Potential Work to Rule Actions at UMaine

Email invitations sent to University of Maine faculty members – 599
Poll responses received – 384 (64% return rate)

I. Text of First Email Sent to Each UMaine Faculty Member

Dear {FIRSTNAME},

Please provide your opinions on specific Work to Rule actions by clicking the link at the end of this message. This poll is being sent to all University of Maine faculty members who have not previously responded to the survey.

Background:

A Work to Rule Vote was recently taken of AFUM faculty members at the University of Maine. A total of approximately 314 email requests were sent to dues paying AFUM faculty members to vote and 111 votes were cast (i.e. a voting rate of about 35%). Of the cast ballots, 87% voted in favor of Work to Rule. The purpose of Work to Rule is to place pressure on the University of Maine System administration through the University of Maine administration to settle the contract with the faculty Union.

One guiding principle of Work to Rule is for faculty members to continue to accomplish normal teaching, research, scholarship, professional service and community service tasks but to refrain from voluntarily accomplishing tasks that are of primary benefit to the administration of the University of Maine System or the administration of the University of Maine. Another guiding principle of Work to Rule is that faculty actions or inaction should do no harm to students, colleagues or to your own professional credentials. Spending more time on scholarship, service and instruction and less on furthering administrative goals may be perfectly compatible with adhering to a Work to Rule stance.

Having said this, there can be great differences in interpretation of what actions or inactions by faculty members might or might not cause significant harm to students or to faculty peers and colleagues. While each faculty member may weigh their own decisions, the elected members of the Faculty Senate have decided to accomplish a poll of faculty peers across campus to determine whether there is strong agreement or not on certain actions that either the Senate itself should take or that individual faculty members might take in support of a Work to Rule environment.

When closed, summary results of this poll will be posted on the University of Maine Faculty Senate web site at <http://www.umaine.edu/facultysenate/documents> under the heading of Academic Year 2012-2013.

Whether the Senate takes any actions based upon the results of this poll is likely to depend on what the poll shows.

The polling process is completely anonymous. The software system closes the ballot automatically at 8:00 pm on Tuesday March 19.

To take the poll, click the link at the end of this message.

Sincerely, Harlan Onsrud, President
University of Maine Faculty Senate

II. Summary of Responses To Each Question

Number of records in this query:	384
Total records in survey:	384
Percentage of total:	100.00%

Field summary for A1

Should faculty members continue to attend Parking, Athletic, Safety and similar campus-wide committees unrelated to curriculum or personnel matters?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	89	24.45%
No (N)	215	59.07%
No answer	60	16.48%

Field summary for A2

On committees that faculty members continue to attend, should matters that primarily advance the interests of the administration be tabled on a case-by-case basis as determined by those faculty members attending such meetings until such time as (a) the union contract is settled or (b) it becomes obvious that an issue might harm students or peers if not resolved?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	268	73.63%
No (N)	44	12.09%
No answer	52	14.29%

Field summary for A3

Should faculty members continue to actively support the preparation of university-wide NEASC accreditation materials?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	147	40.38%
No (N)	130	35.71%
No answer	87	23.90%

Field summary for B1

Should graduate coordinators for unit graduate programs continue to attend Graduate Board Meetings?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	222	62.18%
No (N)	83	23.25%
No answer	52	14.57%

Field summary for B2

Should faculty members continue to serve on committees of the graduate school such as for course and program revision reviews?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	218	61.06%
No (N)	91	25.49%
No answer	48	13.45%

Field summary for B3

Should matters that primarily advance the interests of the administration be tabled on a case-by-case basis as determined by those faculty members attending such graduate committee meetings until such time as (a) the union contract is settled or (b) it becomes obvious that an issue might harm students or peers if not resolved?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	259	72.55%
No (N)	46	12.89%
No answer	52	14.57%

Field summary for C1

Should Faculty Senate representatives on the Blue Sky Pathway teams continue to meet with the teams?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	126	35.59%
No (N)	171	48.31%
No answer	57	16.10%

Field summary for C2

Should Faculty Senate officers appointed to the high-level Blue Sky Steering Committee continue to meet with and communicate with the steering committee?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	132	37.29%
No (N)	157	44.35%
No answer	65	18.36%

Field summary for D1

Should the Faculty Senate standing committees continue to meet?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	187	52.82%
No (N)	101	28.53%
No answer	66	18.64%

Field summary for D2

Should matters that come before the standing committees that primarily advance the interests of the administration be tabled by attending faculty members until such time as the union contract is settled or until such time as it becomes obvious that an issue might harm students or peers if not resolved?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	252	71.19%
No (N)	45	12.71%
No answer	57	16.10%

Field summary for D3

Should the Elected Faculty Members of the Faculty Senate continue to meet as a group?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	246	69.49%
No (N)	53	14.97%
No answer	55	15.54%

Field summary for D4

Should the Full Faculty Senate continue to meet?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	209	59.04%
No (N)	84	23.73%

No answer 61 17.23%

Field summary for E1

Should the Faculty Senate continue to send a faculty representative to the Board of Trustees to attend the Board of Trustees meeting and sub-committee meetings?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	244	70.52%
No (N)	61	17.63%
No answer	41	11.85%

Field summary for E2

Should the Faculty Senate ask the President of the University of Maine to intervene with the University of Maine System and the Board of Trustees on behalf of the faculty in pursuit of settlement of the contract issues?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	297	85.84%
No (N)	13	3.76%
No answer	36	10.40%

Field summary for E3

Should an email invitation to participate in this poll be sent to all faculty members across the UMaine campus?
THIS QUESTION MAY BE SKIPPED SINCE THE ALL FACULTY MEMBER POLL IS NOW OCCURRING.

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (Y)	167	48.27%
No (N)	6	1.73%
No answer	173	50.00%

Field summary for E4

Please provide any comments you desire to make.

Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	276	79.77%
Answer	70	20.23%

Please provide any comments you desire to make.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: The comments expressed below are those of individual respondents to the survey and no response should be taken as the expressed position of the Faculty Senate nor has the truth or falsity of any statement been investigated. Blank lines are inserted between comments of each respondent.

The Senate should only deal with issues of pressing importance to faculty and students. Others not

I don't think safety and athletics should be grouped together. I don't think we should be working on athletic committees.

As important as curriculum review, accreditation, and like matters may be, they can wait until full-time faculty members have a contract.

It seems to me that we must be visible in our refraining from work to make this noticed.

If poll supports proactive actions to protest treatment, be sure to seek media coverage.

Fast Facts from the Independent Fact Finders

1. Faculty salaries make up 16% of the UMS operating budget

Note: Don't be fooled when people parse us into smaller groups. Of course faculty make up a large share of each college budget. As College budgets get squeezed salaries become a bigger share; but the money is elsewhere within the university and system.

2. Net tuition and fees provide 46.3% of revenue, a pretty impressive return on investment when compared to the cost of faculty teaching the courses.
3. The AFUM salary increase proposal (4% & 4%) would cost 0.78% of the UMS budget. The Fact Finders Recommended salary proposal costs 0.43% of the UMS budget. The System proposal cost was less than 0.1%.
 - a. For comparison, the newly implemented "Outcomes based funding" which will remove funding from UMaine, consumes 1% of the Operating budget, growing to at least 5% (1% point per year). A fraction of this money would pay our raises.
 - b. The UM Athletic subsidy increased nearly \$5 million dollars from 2006 to 2011 (an increase of 68%). Nearly half of this growth occurred from 2010 to 2011. This *one-year* increase pays over half of the Fact Finder recommended salary for all faculty throughout the System over *both years* of the contract.

It is not a question of having the money! It is the decision on where to spend it and the choice is made NOT to invest in the Faculty.

Faculty members across campus appear to be conflicted among the following arguments and which may have greater validity/credibility.

1. The faculty has continued to work without a contract and without a raise for several years. UMS negotiators are failing to negotiate in good faith. The UMS has ample unrestricted funds/reserves that could be used for salary purposes rather than for other unidentified purposes. The significant and constant rate of growth of unrestricted funds shows the capacity to provide a pay raise as suggested by the independent Fact Finders and sufficient reserves to handle short-term issues. A Work to Rule stance by the faculty and a good ruling from the sure to happen arbitration process will apply substantial pressure on the UMS to move towards the arbitrator's recommendation on salary.
2. The faculty cause is just but Work to Rule actions are unlikely to impose any substantial pressure on UMS to settle. The faculty should pursue such actions anyway as a matter of principle because to do nothing will only encourage the UMS administration to further maintain faculty salaries as a low priority need and to not plan for salary increases in the future. The current UMS plans for many years into the future are to provide little to no increases which means faculty members will be taking salary cuts through the inability to keep up with inflation and cost of living increases.
3. The faculty cause is just but the proposed Work to Rule actions should be delayed. When many small companies in Maine have downsized their operations laying off people, the unemployment rate is high, and government budgets are decreasing, there is little citizen empathy or support for raises for people at public institutions. Neither Democrats nor Republicans would politically support an increase for UMS faculty at this time. Even if the UMS administration has a pile of money upon which it may draw, the current Governor will severely punish the system financially through any means at his power if the UMS is to provide the level of raise being requested by the union. At least we aren't taking a cut as has occurred in other states. Wait for a more appropriate opportunity such as after the next gubernatorial elections.
4. The faculty cause is just but pursuing it at this time will cause more harm than good. Concerted widespread faculty actions will be highly publicized by the press. From past experience we know that publicized strong dissension and actions by the faculty can lead to precipitous drops in enrollment severely compounding the university's financial challenges. While minor actions might be acceptable to express dissent, aggressive support of Work to Rule actions should be avoided until the economy turns around.

I found it hard to answer yes or no to most of these questions. I'm extremely worried that for the majority of groups that the faculty didn't participate in a decision would still be made (i.e. faculty would have no say). I guess from my perspective it makes more sense to not participate in committees/groups that are in the initial stages rather than the middle or late stages and in any committees/groups where a decision cannot be made without faculty input, although it seem like there are few such cases.

We all want UM to succeed but staff morale is the lowest I have ever seen.

I really cannot answer these questions with yes or no as they are complex issues that in such a survey, have no context.

I have deep misgivings with work-to-rule for a number of reasons (and I preface this by saying that I strongly support coordinated action to push the UMaine system to approve a contract and raises as laid out by the 3rd party arbitration.

- 1) It actually puts MORE power in the hands of administration in the system. This is an instance of ""resisting"" the UMaine system and administration by putting more concentrated power into its hands.
- 2) For the reasons above, and the fact that it is not visible and significant enough, it is likely to be ineffective.
- 3) In the absence of faculty participation and governance in activities currently precluded under work-to-rule, a massive backlog will pile up. When this strategy ceases (which I do not think will be soon), such activities will be waiting for us.

I would support something more contentious and confrontational. I would not, and do not, support work-to rule.

We must not continue to be the toothless tiger.

time for patience is over---action is needed!!

Keep communication lines open with faculty and administration. However, only do things that clearly help students, faculty, and other staff, not the administration. Campus safety committees are important to us all.

If faculty representatives attend BOT meetings or other administrative level committee meetings it should be as observers and recorders only. They should not offer to help achieve meeting/committee goals or objectives. They should also express the desire that a contract settlement be reached before substantive committee work continues/resumes at each meeting they do attend.

We should consider whether to attend these meetings on a case-by-case basis. If we blindly refuse to attend all committee meetings, it may provide the "cover" for the Administration to do what is convenient for them.

I left some of the questions as "No answer" because it is not always clear to me the extent to which an item furthers administrative or system interests or represents a way of critiquing and resisting anti-faculty administrative policies and contract positions. I do hope that the faculty will consider many ways of raising consciousness, becoming more active, and organizing methods of nonviolent resistance.

Missing from this is any mention of college meetings, administrative review committees and search committees. Standing committees, such as the UPCC.

I mistakenly hit next before changing answers on a previous page. The Faculty Senate SHOULD meet because right now of is the academic (and not System) voice if the faculty. Please change those answers about the standing committees, please!

My position is too tenuous to participate in work to rule.

What is done has to be significant or it will just be ignored, much like the reasonable contract terms. Table items, and do not participate in any items that are not tabled. Folks should not volunteer to serve on Univ. wide awards, including faculty awards. Do not attend the president's commencement luncheon.

Work to rule is a good idea. The Administration and the BOT needs to understand that the faculty ARE the University, not SERVANTS of the University...we have tenure, they do not.

More must be done to inform the faculty on these issues. Nothing should be done to directly harm academic programs and students. More must be done to inform the BOT and public about (a) where UMaine salaries are relative to our peer institutions, and (b) the consequences of being chronically lower than our peers [e.g. retention (desertion) and problems with recruitment].

It would be irresponsible for you to abdicate one ounce of leadership by not being at the table. Stop being babies and do your job. At best faculty senate is acting like children - at worst right-wing republicans

The suggestion that there are some matters that only "benefit" the administration is odd to say the least. Faculty members should continue to engage in the full range of activities important to the future of the institution, regardless of collective bargaining issues. It is our duty to our profession to do so. Otherwise we are little more than wage laborers and trade unionists, neither of which do I consider myself to be.

Most of these questions deal with improving the experience for students which should be continued. It is unfortunate that the University has not settled a contract and apparently from my perspective is making no move to do so. Maine has always paid its faculty way less than others in New England and across the country. Those that are here are here because they want to be here. Unfortunately, without a contract and equitable pay/benefits, those that can get other jobs at higher

paying institutions will go leaving those that can't get another job. Maine has a rich tradition of quality education and graduates have done well in the job market and graduate programs. Ignoring equitable pay (while the administration continues to bloat both in numbers and pay) can only lead to a subpar institution. I am profoundly disappointed in the manipulation of campus pay policies to grossly inflate administration salaries and use the excuse that they have more responsibility. EVERYBODY has more responsibility - most departments are half or less the faculty they had a few decades ago. SHAME on them.

The contract issue is at a tipping point, inaction by AFUM and/or the faculty will be a disaster. I am actively seeking other employment, and a continued failure of AFUM to negotiate improved wages and benefits will drive me out of UMaine.

Being a new faculty member I am only aware of part of these issues. I feel strongly that we must maintain a faculty presence in administrative matters

Thank you

The e-mail I received indicated that this poll was being sent to faculty who had not voted on the Union's resolution. [Editors Note: Reread the email for correct interpretation]. I voted on the Union ballot, so I question the accuracy of the assumption on which this poll is based. I recognize that there is an issue of jurisdiction between the Senate and the Union. However I think it is not out of line for the Senate to undertake measures in support of the Union's reasonable demands and strategy."

Regarding the Blue Sky Plan (Project?), which I read very carefully last night: It is an embarrassment. It is poorly written, full of self-serving platitudes, and does not identify or define the problems themselves before throwing up (almost literally) a bunch of approaches to solving vague "problems". I particularly liked the wording "... and a plan to potentially increase [enrollments]" ... Just what does that mean? A plan to potentially..?? I could go on listing absurdities...

The president needs to get involved. He is the head of our campus and it is in his and the campus' best interest to have a suitable contract negotiated.

Clarify the questions not answered here. I cannot determine what they mean.

1. Despite the fact that when I read the various emails outlining those sorts of duties that faculty might no longer perform I see very few that apply to me (because almost everything I do benefits students in some way) I still support the notion of "work to rule" as a show of frustration with the Board in the contract negotiations. I don't know if strong unity among faculty provides any real and effective leverage, but I like to think it might.
2. I wonder if faculty should continue to participate in time-consuming efforts related to accreditation of their units (separate from NEASC). Are such accreditations more for the benefit of the student, or the University/UMS? It's hard for me to say. But I do know that such way takes away valuable time from teaching and scholarship.
3. Thanks for your efforts.
4. It's incredibly demoralizing to have to do all this for a 2.5% raise. That is not a greedy request, especially after a few years of nothing (which as you all know means losing ground in terms of standard of living).
5. It's petty, but someone found money to give the football coach a raise. Why not faculty?

It is tough to be disrespected like this after three years away from retirement after the years of service I have given to students and the University.

Could we please have some meetings in colleges and departments on work to rule? Many faculty are confused about what do so they keep going to meetings for fear of looking bad to colleagues. I think we need clarification in order to respond in a unified manner.

The faculty representative to the BOT should advocate for a contract settlement and use his/her discretion in deciding whether his/her participation is needed on behalf of students and faculty/staff.

The job action will have no effect unless we take some stands.

It makes little sense to do Blue Sky planning until the contract is renewed.

How about a vote on no confidence in the Board of Trustees. Their actions over the past several years have harmed the academic mission of the university. More money is taken away from the academic mission and is now supporting an ever increasing administration. The system office budget should be curtailed to no more than 4 million dollars and all academic services must be returned to their respective campuses. We should involve the legislature in this issue. The system office is too large and needs to be curtailed.

IT IS RIDICULOUS FOR OUR PRESIDENT TO SUGGEST A GRADUATION DINNER WHEN THE UPPER ADMINISTRATION REFUSES TO SETTLE WAGE ISSUES-PAUL DOES NOT RESPECT FACULTY WHEN HE SUGGESTS SUCH A DINNER.

I would suggest formally asking the President to temporarily suspend Blue Sky activities out of respect to his faculty, until this is resolved. I would like to see him encouraged to state that (1) faculty input is vital for a successful Blue Sky plan, and (2) he respected the decision by the faculty to reluctantly go "work to rule", so (3) he was temporarily suspending most Blue Sky activities. If he were to do so, he would buy significant support from faculty in the future.

If this survey is sent to all faculty members, more information is needed about the current situation, contract, and negotiation (or lack there of).

Obviously, I have mixed responses. I think that the admin. would love nothing better than to get on with business without faculty intervention. But that does not mean that we can't attend and be difficult. They know that we won't just strike--although that isn't a bad idea--and other than that, we are toothless. Work to rule is pretty much meaningless because there is very little that we can stop doing that won't hurt students or our colleagues. Seems like a futile gesture and one that doesn't hurt the admin at all. Unless we make a really big stink--go on strike--we won't get anywhere. The play nice and be reasonable thing hasn't worked.

Harm not student or the public.....but give us a cost of living raise. UM works because we do!

I can't see how non-participation in matters that concern/affect faculty advance our interests, so that is why I favor taking up agenda items on a case by case basis...

I do not support the work to rule action. We should continue to engage at every level and keep the message in the forefront, not withdraw and lose support of the public we serve.

If work to rule is enacted then it must be taken seriously. Otherwise it only makes a mockery of the faculty.

Ultimately, if one applies the rule to do no harm to colleagues and students, then it seems to me there's not much we can stop doing.

This work to rule came at a horrible time. This survey assumes that all administrators are anti-faculty and that they don't care about us. I find this so troubling. Your survey is also skewed in that it assumes that we are all participating in work to rule, while many faculty didn't even vote. I urge you to exercise extreme caution in what you assume faculty want when you've only gotten information from a small minority.

I am not convinced that the AFUM-Administration edifice is still relevant or desirable. There must be a better way of structuring "public" higher education in the state of Maine. Ugghh.....

Cost of living increases are essential. It is very discouraging and demoralizing to be working very hard yet falling behind as salary increases do not keep up with the increases in expenses (e.g., food, gas, heating oil). It is insulting for the UMS administration to suggest that .05% is sufficient.

I wish there had been additional choices such as "not sure" or "not sure - would like additional information" The choice no answer is not really a substitute for these choices.

Faculty Senate needs to be very careful to keep their activities independent and separate from the faculty union. This poll and these activities should be coming from AFUM and not from the Senate. In my view, the credibility and effectiveness of the Senate in the eyes of the admin, system, and BOT is dependent on it having a role that is separate from AFUM and collective bargaining. The Senate is about shared GOVERNANCE --not an advocacy group for faculty.

I wonder why an across the board hike was insisted on by AFUM when the other unions found a way to get the money in their bargaining and allow the University avoid cuts from the governors office? If there is a way that the underpaid faculty could get increases on par with inflation wouldn't that be a more likely strategy for settlement? Do those making above 90 grand really NEED a pay raise.

I'm afraid the administration does not listen to the Faculty Senate even though the Senate and faculty at large are by far the better voice of reason, knowledge, and innovation. Anything to restore a balance of power would be welcome, even if it's painful in the short run, as long as it does not jeopardize students' interests.

As many UMaine administrators should be asked to support the cause, and appeal to the UMS offices and Board of Trustees.

My non-answers are not cavalier. I do not know much about the issues at stake and do not feel comfortable playing a role in the decision-making concerning any of these questions. I do appreciate the effort on behalf, however.

Faculty have extensive administrative responsibilities through teaching, research, and service outreach roles with shared governance of University operations, from supervising research students, staff and administering grants. The concept of Work to Rule, treating faculty simply as employees is highly inconsistent with the reality of our role at UMaine. Perhaps the situation is different at other campuses. I find it very hard to imagine any part of my responsibilities that could be put on hold that would not adversely impact the students or my colleagues. But the message that needs to be sent very clearly to the administration is that faculty work very hard to manage their responsibilities and grow UMaine. The continuing lack of a contract and the steady decline in buying power of our salaries does have a negative impact on morale, which indirectly influences our enthusiasm in the classroom.

I've selected "no answer" for a couple of cases where it's hard to know whether keeping faculty concerns present in a given context outweighs the symbolic value of abstaining / being absent.

A statement at the beginning of this survey explaining the aim and goal of this exercise would be helpful.

If we don't continue to participate in some of the types of meetings identified in the questions, we run the risk of being completely side lined. Those at attendance in such meetings should use it as an opportunity to remind Admin that we are doing this out of a sense of loyalty to UMaine and expect good faith action by the Admin

We are still being paid, so we should continue to work on important issues, but it is a good idea to start skipping the non-important meetings

Personally, the University bargaining positions have totally destroyed whatever warm and fuzzy feelings I may have had for UMaine. I shall look back fondly at the experiences I have had teaching at two other first-rate universities, but I shall think and speak as little as possible about my 14 years of teaching and service at UMaine. Retirement can't come too soon.

This was a difficult poll to answer. Although I feel that faculty should not feel compelled to participate in the numerous and lengthy committee meetings listed in this poll, actively NOT participating means that we have no voice and/or input into important matters that affect our lives on campus, and the lives of our students.

Perhaps I am not the target population of this survey. I come from a career in the United States Army where I always worked 60 hours a week. Honestly I believe we have nothing to complain about; indeed I have a wonderful job, great colleagues, an amazing space to do my work and I really enjoy working with students and researching the topics I research. I am thankful for the autonomy I am afforded at my college, and while getting raises is nice, I am happy with my pay, my benefits and my job. I believe we must continue to do what is right, and in the best interest of the students. All things considered, it seems things listed on this survey are important to teaching students.

1. This Work to Rule is a political initiative, which needs to be carefully communicated to the media and Maine people to convey the correct image.
2. If public relations are not properly addressed, the results of the initiative may be very damaging for the entire faculty.
3. The Union and its representatives should consider the dissemination of the reasoning and proper arguments to the entire faculty community and media. That will ensure a quicker solution to the problem, once it gets back up from the media/population.
4. If the BOT succeeds in passing the wrong image about the Work to Rule initiative, then the damage with the public opinion is done, which is very difficult to revert, once people make their mind. Then the chances of success are also compromised.

This is a complex issue and unfortunately there are really no finite answers. That said it appears anything done by the faculty will be taken the wrong way and thus will harm us. I would like to see the administration on the UM campus fight for the faculty but unfortunately I do not see them doing this with a union. Everything that might work will harm the students which would not be beneficial to us or the University. If the faculty could get a wide support from students on this issue it might help but with our systems office and governor that probably will not work. I hate to be so pessimistic but after 34 years here and the economy of the State not many people are sympathetic

It is a shame that this contract cannot be settled.

Selective work to rule actions give too much discretionary power to individual faculty. Try another approach. And if you had a back button on the survey it might be a more reliable instrument.

Color me uninformed, but I don't know what's behind many of these questions.