

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

URI PART-TIME FACULTY UNION

INVEST IN YOURSELF!!

1. ***Why should I join AAUP?*** Throughout the United States, part-time faculty members have been forming unions to help improve their pay, benefits, and working conditions. The AAUP, or the American Association of University Professors, is a large national union that actively supports the right of all faculty members, part-time and full-time, to organize unions. See the AAUP web site, www.aaup.org for more information on the AAUP. To read the AAUP's statement on part-time faculty, visit the following site: <http://www.aaup.org/Issues/Contingent/index.htm> .8

2. ***At what other universities have part-time faculty formed unions?*** The part-time faculty at the City University of New York, Emerson College in Boston, the University of Maine, New York University, College of DuPage, Rutgers, University of San Francisco, Roosevelt University in Chicago, Columbia College, the New School, George Washington University, Syracuse University, and many others.

3. ***Does the law allow me to join a union?*** Yes, under Rhode Island law, you have the right to join, form, and assist a union.

4. ***What other unions are there at URI?*** All other employees at URI, except for management, are represented by unions. These include the full-time faculty, the graduate assistants, the mid-level administrators, the technical staff, the clerical staff, the doctors and nurses, and the service and maintenance workers.

5. ***How can URI part-time faculty bring the union in?*** You must first sign a union membership form. The union will keep these forms strictly confidential. When we receive a sufficient number of signed and dated forms, we will petition the Rhode Island Labor Board to conduct a secret ballot election to determine if a majority of the URI part-time faculty members want to have a union. The secret ballot election will be conducted by agents of the RI Labor Board, a fair and independent body.

6. ***Will we be part of the full-time faculty union?*** No. URI part-time faculty will have their own union, with their own collective bargaining agreement, constitution and officers. The part-time union and the full-time union will both be affiliated with AAUP nationally, but as two independent chapters. There will be many occasions for the two organizations to cooperate voluntarily in matters of mutual importance to the entire faculty, and to the University. The two unions will also participate in shaping the policies of the national AAUP.

7. ***What will the union cost me?*** The union will not charge any dues or fees until you are benefiting from a collective bargaining agreement. The amount of dues or fees will be set democratically by the membership of the URI Part-Time Faculty Union.

8. ***Will I be forced to join the union?*** No, under Rhode Island law, no one can be forced to join the union. However, Rhode Island law does require that all people who receive the benefits of a union pay a collective bargaining fee to the union.

9. ***Who may join the URI Part-Time Faculty Union?*** Any per course instructor at the University of Rhode Island may join and participate in this unionization process.

10. ***Who will negotiate our contract?*** The membership of the URI Part-Time Faculty Union will determine all negotiating proposals and will select a negotiating committee to meet with representatives from the RI Board of Governors to iron out the terms of a collective bargaining agreement. The entire membership will be asked to vote “yes” or “no” on the terms and conditions of the collective bargaining agreement. Representatives from AAUP will assist you with all these negotiating efforts.

11. ***Will we have to strike to get a contract?*** In a democratic union, only the membership can answer that question. AAUP views a strike as a last resort in the collective bargaining process, to be contemplated only when all other strategies and tactics fail to produce a fair and equitable contract. The full-time faculty union has conducted only one strike in its 30 years of collective bargaining.

12. ***If the part-time faculty forms a union, will we have to do what the AAUP tells us to do?*** The URI part-time faculty union will be an independent chapter of the AAUP. The chapter will determine its own affairs, including its own officers, constitution, contract, and all other activities.