

EARLY HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (UEA)

1968-1971 – Discussions of reorganizing the structure of UMD from four divisions (Humanities, Social Science, Science and Math, Education and Psychology) into schools and colleges were underway. Faculty participating in these discussions voiced the opinion that no reorganization on this campus would solve problems created by excessive control of UMD's functions by central administrators on the Twin Cities campus.

During this period, faculty were told that departmental budgets and faculty salaries were confidential. The Faculty Council in Fall 1969 asked that U of M Board of Regents minutes be available in the UMD library. This request was denied. In 1969, new English Department Instructor Tom Bacig recalled seeing "black book" salary information and Regents minutes available in the Twin Cities library, and photocopied this material there. In early 1970, Regents minutes and the salary data became available in the UMD library. Comparative salary studies revealed the need for at least \$200,000 to be appropriated to equalize salaries between UMD and the Twin Cities faculty.

1972 – UMD faculty became increasingly concerned that positive promotion and tenure recommendations leaving this campus were being turned down by central administrators on the Twin Cities campus.

1973 – The Minnesota Public Employment Labor Relations Act (PELRA) was modified to allow University of Minnesota faculty to collectively bargain, but as a single unit, i.e., the Twin Cities campus and all four coordinate campuses voting and bargaining together.

1973 – UMD AAUP Chapter voted to try to avoid unionization by lobbying the legislature directly for salary equalization money. AAUP lobbyists Tom Bacig, Bob Evans, Roger Fischer, and Craig Grau persuaded Representative Jack LaVoy to introduce a rider to the U of M's 1973-75 appropriations bills, calling for salary equalization within the U of M system. The U of M central administration, evidently realizing the potential negative political effect if such a rider were successful, got the Regents to amend their 1973-75 appropriation to include \$165,000 in salary equalization money for UMD. The AAUP Chapter president on the Twin Cities campus called the UMD AAUP chapter and demanded that UMD AAUP people come to a Twin Cities AAUP meeting to "justify" this large sum of equalization money. UMD AAUP leaders declined the invitation.

September 18, 1973 – UMD faculty formed the University of Minnesota, Duluth Faculty Association (UMDFA), a coalition of faculty organizations to represent the UMD faculty "in issues related to collective bargaining." The Minnesota Education Association (MEA) began affiliation discussions with UMD faculty.

UMD faculty leaders expressed continuing concern that PELRA should be modified to allow UMD to bargain separately, not as part of the entire U of M unit.

1974 – UMD faculty leaders expressed concern that the 1975-77 U of M appropriations request again disadvantaged UMD faculty with regard to salary increases and began to work in the legislature to overcome this problem.

1976 – Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) ruled that UMD should be a separate unit, including the UMD medical school faculty in the collective bargaining unit.

1977 – UMD AAUP Chapter opted to lobby in the legislature for salary money rather than vote for collective bargaining. AAUP and UMDFA lobbyists succeeded in getting a “rider” attached to U of M appropriations bill calling for central administration to equalize salaries. This effort produced \$180,000 in salary money for distribution according to “merit” as identified by administration. In at least one college (CLS), departments were told that at least one person in each department was to be designated as the person to receive “zero merit” money. This created a furor as long-time faculty members found themselves being identified as “zeros.”

1978 – Tom Bacig switched from AAUP to UMDEA, noting that MEA had more money available to help in the organizing effort, more clout in the Minnesota legislature (where all contracts with MN public employees must ultimately be approved). It was also noted that the combined faculties of the MN state university system (Inter-Faculty Organization) and the MN community college system (MCCFA) had affiliated with MEA. Many UMDFA leaders affiliated with MEA and formed UMDEA. Both UMDEA and AAUP circulated cards requesting an election to choose a bargaining agent.

1978-79 – The Regents hired an attorney to initiate various legal moves to delay a bargaining unit election on the UMD campus. The court cases involved challenging UMD faculty groups’ rights to distribute campaign literature on campus and asking the courts to allow the Regents to change the tenure code while an election campaign was being organized. The Regents lost in both cases (literature could be distributed and the tenure code could not be changed), but succeeded in delaying the election for several years.

1978-1980 – The legislature amended PELRA to define the bargaining units at the University of Minnesota. The Twin Cities campus was made into one unit, which included the health sciences there and at UMD. The coordinate campuses of Crookston, Waseca, Morris, and Duluth were put into one unit, which meant that any of those four campuses that voted for collective bargaining would bargain together. This was not the option UMD faculty leaders had hoped for (they had wanted Duluth in a unit by itself), but it was the “fall-back” position they were willing to settle for.

May 1980 – the Bureau of Mediation Services held an election to determine the agent on the UMD campus, with inconclusive results. The percentages were AAUP 46%, UMDEA 42%, No-agent 11%, and the Bureau ruled that a run-off election was necessary. Surprise was expressed by many faculty and administrators at the small size of the no-agent vote.

October 1980 – A run-off election was held and UMDEA won by 57% to AAUP’s 43%.

November 1980 – The Board of Regents abolished all faculty governance on the UMD campus, claiming that the faculty governance bodies might discuss some terms and conditions of employment, which by law could now only be discussed with the exclusive representative of the faculty, UMDEA. Many faculty felt this was entirely unnecessary and some administrators later admitted that they believe this was entirely a punitive gesture initiated by then University President C. Peter Magrath.

December 1980 – A UMDEA Negotiating Team was established, with Tom Bacig as Chief Negotiator. Contract negotiations began, with Associate Vice-President Al Linck serving as the administration's Chief Negotiator.

January 29, 1981 – The faculty of the University of Minnesota Technical College, Waseca voted to unionize, joining UMDEA.

February 1981 – The University finally began to meet its legal obligation to cooperate on payroll deduction of union dues, three months late.

July 1981 – With negotiations making very little progress, UMDEA asked the Bureau of Mediation Services to provide mediation. The request was granted and mediator “Andy” Anderson began to meet with both sides.

September 1981 – The academic year began with no salary increase for UMD and UMW faculty.

October 1981 – The Regents refused to continue to pay the full cost of faculty health insurance coverage when the rates went up. The cost of dependent coverage also went up. UMDEA made MEA crisis loans available to faculty who were caught in the squeeze between no wage increases and larger fringe benefit deductions.

October 1981 – UMDEA changed its name to the University Education Association (UEA) to accommodate both Duluth and Waseca faculties.

February 5, 1982 – The administrations' negotiating team abruptly broke off face-to-face negotiations, claiming that UEA had printed confidential items in its newsletter. The administration team said that they would meet only with each team in separate rooms, with the negotiator moving between the two rooms. At this time, almost nothing in the proposed contract had been agreed to.

February 25, 1982 – UEA, through its MEA sponsored attorneys, filed suit in Sixth District Court against the Regents for changing terms and conditions of employment during contract negotiations, for refusing to negotiate key issues such as the effects of retrenchment and the criteria for promotion and tenure decisions.

May 22, 1982 – As students were becoming increasingly alarmed about deteriorating relationships between the faculty and the administration and talk of a strike was being heard, the UMD faculty turned out in record numbers at Commencement to demonstrate to students that the faculty did not want to interrupt the students' education.

June 1982 – A bus-load of UMD and UMW faculty “bannered” Morrill Hall on the Twin Cities campus during the June Regents meetings, carrying picket signs protesting the Regents seeming indifference to and possible lack of knowledge of the “stone-walling” tactics of the administration’s negotiating team. The Regents responded by entering Morrill Hall through tunnels to avoid having to “cross” the bannering lines of the faculty.

August 1982 – UEA formally requested that contract issues be submitted to binding arbitration. The Regents refused.

A group of prominent Twin Cities faculty signed and circulated to the media a letter stating that the Regents should refuse arbitration and should not consider the Duluth and Waseca faculties equal to the Twin Cities faculty.

September 1982 – The academic year began, the second in a row with no increases for UMD and UMW faculty.

October 1982 – UEA members on the UMD and UMW faculty took an official “intent to strike” vote.

November 1982 – Immediately prior to state elections, the St. Louis County Legislative Delegation asked the faculties not to strike and pledged their support in settling the contract. Rudy Perpich, running for governor, also pledged his support.

December 1982 – The University of Minnesota administration finally agreed to settle the contract with terms that UEA found acceptable.

January – April 1983 – final settlement details dragged on until the first contract was finally agreed to and signed in May of 1983, nearly two and a half years after negotiations started.

Fall 1983 – Vince Magnuson was appointed new Chief Negotiator and a new Negotiating Team was formed.

Spring 1984 – The Minnesota Supreme Court ruled against UEA in the suit filed back in 1982 and declared that the Regents and their administration do not have to negotiate the criteria for promotion and tenure, only the procedures.

June 1984 – Negotiations for the 1983-85 contract had now dragged on for a year. Suddenly University President C. Peter Magrath announced that he was willing to settle the contract. Shortly after this, Magrath announced that he was leaving the University to take a job as president of the University of Missouri. Magrath offered UEA a four-year contract, with a pay increase for 83-85 very close to that received by the Twin Cities campus and a guarantee that the 85-87 pay increase will be the same percentage as received by the Twin Cities campus. UEA faculty accepted this contract in August of 1984.