

Mia McIver's responses:

In these answers, I will highlight campaigns I have launched and coordinated as VP for Organizing and make specific proposals for future expansions and developments. Moving forward, I will collaborate closely with the new VP for Organizing, Local leaders, and staff, who will share much of the responsibility for conceiving, coordinating, and enacting our organizing plans. Members who are particularly interested in the organizing issues these questions address may also want to contact their Local leaders for information about the plans their campus developed at our January 28<sup>th</sup> statewide gathering, "Organizing to Win in the Trump Administration" (agenda attached).

**1. Given that our membership percentage in our bargaining units is not as high as we need it to be to survive the loss of Fair Share, what do you suggest would be an effective campaign to increase our membership percentages?**

Achieving supermajority membership will strengthen our position at the bargaining table and fortify us against damaging Supreme Court decisions. I made this one of my two top priorities when I became VP for Organizing. As a result of my initiatives and members' hard work, we have seen an impressive 17% increase in our membership statewide over the last six months. This progress includes stunning gains of 46% more members at Riverside and 28% more members at UCLA (where I serve as Local president). Every single campus, without exception, has more members today than at the beginning of the academic year. Under my guidance, our teams have been so successful that we won CFT's top annual award for most members added.

Even before I was elected to statewide office, I created and implemented an online membership form which has yielded about 650 member sign-ups since it went live in October 2015. That said, because organizing is relationship-building, there is simply no substitute for in-person organizing conversations between members and non-members. We are continuously training members to take part in these conversations in which members partner with each other and with field reps to meet non-members, listen to their experiences, and ask them to join. Our recruitment efforts for the near future should have one-to-one contact at their center, supplemented by online outreach, social events, and phone banking. We should foster cross-campus collaborations in which members travel to exchange recruitment and outreach efforts.

The key is reaching new faculty and librarians as quickly as possible when they arrive on campus. To achieve this, we must fight for the contractual right to offer orientations for new faculty and librarians. We also need to develop a network of department and building representatives who can reach out to new hires to welcome them, learn about their work, and invite them to join our union.

**2. If we are to survive the loss of Fair Share we will need to have a strong and active union membership mobilized to protect our contracts, what do you suggest an effective campaign would look like to develop more member-leaders & activists within our union in advance of the loss of Fair Share?**

This has been the second of my top priorities as VP for Organizing and will continue to be a major initiative if I am elected president. Our leadership campaign should have three components: training new Organizing Fellows, developing networks of department and building representatives, and sponsoring scholarships for members to attend CFT union summer school and other conferences.

Last year, the statewide Council adopted my proposal for an Organizing Fellows program (attached). I trained 13 member-leaders throughout the state who have been leading workshops for Local officers and rank-and-file members on why our union matters, how to have engaging and productive meetings, how to infuse organizing with a sense of purpose, and how to make an action plan to achieve specific goals. In the coming years, I hope to see our OF program expand as we add more fellows who can in turn train more Local leaders in a cascading effect.

Department and building representatives will also be essential to this effort. At UCLA, our department liaisons distribute welcome kits and surveys, publicize events, and keep an ear to the ground for possible contract violations. Asking members to serve as designated department and building reps creates meaningful non-officer leadership roles and distributes work so that many people pitch in. To facilitate this effort, I have mapped and charted campuses in order to provide a visual snapshot of where to locate members and non-members (examples attached). This data helps us set priorities for membership recruitment and leader cultivation.

CFT union summer school offers an exciting opportunity for members to develop their leadership skills in the company of fellow unionists from Locals around the state. In week-long courses, our members can learn about organizing for power, activating leaders, Local officer roles, collective bargaining campaigns, and more. We need to sponsor members to attend these inspiring workshops so that they learn grassroots organizing techniques, get fired up to beat apathy, and bring back their knowledge to their home campus. We should also send more members to the [AFT Higher Ed Organizing Conference](#), the [National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining's conference](#), the [Labor Notes conference](#), and the [CFT](#) and [AFT](#) conventions.

**3. Most of our members do not understand what it means to be a union nor do they understand the value our union contracts provide us, what do you suggest would be an effective campaign to educate our members as to the value our union contracts so that they will actively defend them?**

This is such a great question: better member education is essential. I have composed workshop curricula for "[Understanding the 3<sup>rd</sup>-Year Mentoring Meeting.](#)" "Best Practices for Student Evaluations," and "[Applying for Unemployment Insurance.](#)" These sessions are now being facilitated by member-leaders and field reps around the state.

I support expanding our current practices to all campuses: hosting Know Your Rights workshops, publicizing our grievance victories, distributing hard copies of our contracts (one of our best organizing tools), and handing out flyers (attached) highlighting our contract wins. I wrote a module on "Why Our Union Matters" for the Organizing Fellows' curriculum, and we should make it more widely accessible. Whenever raises or increases in professional development funding go into effect, we should write to members to let them know that our union is responsible. Early contact with newly-hired lecturers and librarians will also inoculate members against management's attempts to discredit our union.

In the future, we need to revise our website to include sections on Know Your Rights for both lecturers and librarians, Top Ten Contract Violations for both bargaining units, How to Read Your Earnings Statement, a union glossary, up-to-date event calendars, and timelines of typical lecturer and librarian appointments showing key career moments and how to prepare for them. I would love to develop a virtual course on union basics and the specifics of our contracts similar to [this tool from UPTe](#).

Plus, our union should be a place where members can come to work on issues that are important to them: anti-Trumpism, free public higher education, environmental justice, gender and racial equity, and other advocacy on behalf of our students. The value of our union resides not only in the salaries and benefits we've won, but also in our ability to act collectively to further the greater good.

**4. Given the negative publicity labor unions will face when the fair share case goes before the Supreme Court what do you suggest would be an effective media campaign to counter negative attacks?**

My approach is pro-active. I highlight members' work on social media whenever a lecturer or librarian publishes an article or book, wins an award, is honored by their community, or makes a noteworthy contribution. This is already shaping a positive public perception of lecturers and librarians. At UCLA, we do move-in day outreach to undergraduates and their families, and our "Love Your Lecturer/Love Your Librarian Day" educates hundreds of students about how our working conditions translate into their learning conditions. Our annual Professional Showcase highlights research, field work, and publications by lecturers and librarians. At Irvine, convening members to celebrate work funded by PDF grants has

been a highly effective technique. I have also cultivated relationships with higher ed reporters at newspapers around the state, most recently sending them press releases about Local 1990's positions on ballot measures in the Los Angeles County elections.

We ought to have a more vigorous press release strategy, a strong graphic identity to unify our communications, and photo and video posts of our members expressing the value they find in our union. We can use [ORCID identifiers](#) to collate and publicize our members' research impact. In the next 12 months, we should ask our current members to sign commitment cards pledging to stick with our union even when we lose fair share.

To counter negative attacks, a media campaign is necessary but not sufficient. We also need an effective *political* campaign in which delegations of members visit their local representatives to offer insight and expertise into the UC, support good legislation and oppose bad legislation, and lobby for pro-labor and pro-public education initiatives. We cannot rely on the supposed beneficence of the Regents or the UC Office of the President, who will do nothing to stop the federal attacks on workers. The fight against Trumpism is a directly political fight that we must take up with policy makers themselves.

**5. There are about 15 unions on our UC campuses. Since we all bargain with the same employer and we all face the same challenges (of building membership, develop leaders & activists, and facing the loss of Fair Share) what would you do to help build coalition with these other unions? What roles could our members play in building these coalitions?**

I whole-heartedly endorse coalition-building. In the past several months alone, I've walked the picket line and spoken at a Teamsters' strike rally, marched with AFSCME to demand sanctuary campuses, combatted sexual harassment with UAW 2865 grad students, collaborated with UAW 5810 post-docs on the March for Science, and joined with United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) to plan a public education fair. I also walked in to LAUSD's Dorsey High School during a "Reclaim our Schools" action along with teachers, students, and parents, CFT President Josh Pechthalt, AFT Executive Vice-President Mary Cathryn Ricker, Education Minnesota President Denise Specht, and Chicago Teachers Union President Karen Lewis.

My role as UC-AFT president will be to meet with other UC union presidents and work on areas of common concern—restoring state funding, protecting our pensions, opposing racist immigration bans, protecting members who are here on visas, defending academic freedom, reducing workload, increasing parental leave and family-friendly policies—and publicly express solidarity on issues that don't overlap. With our coalition partners, we should work on coordinating contract expiration dates to compound our ability to strike.

We should also look beyond the UC to build coalitions nationwide. In the past year, I have contacted faculty and librarians at Long Island University, Fordham, Ithaca College, Barnard, and Temple to express solidarity in their battles against management for fair contracts. Collaborations with New Faculty Majority, the AFT Adjunct/Contingent Faculty Caucus, and UC Faculty Associations are promising.

Our members, many of whom have been UAW members as UC grad students, and many of whom work on a daily basis with colleagues from other unions, can make labor issues a topic of conversation in everyday contexts and can serve as UC-AFT representatives at events and functions hosted by our sister unions. They can also connect our labor and education interests to work they do with other community groups, fostering the exchange of ideas and the linking together of actions and movements.

**6. In what primary and specific ways does your plan for your presidency differ from your opponent's for the short term (your first year) and the longer term (as we look ahead to the next round of contract negotiations)?**

Here, I can only speak for myself. I will address both internal concerns and external concerns.

Internally, my leadership style is communicative and hands-on. I am committed to inclusive, transparent, accountable, democratic governance. I visit each campus at least once per year in order to meet members and find out how people are doing. I attend statewide trainings and meetings along with rank-and-file members. I stand shoulder-to-shoulder with members who are mounting issue-based campaigns. As your president, I will pursue, not a service model in which members are passive consumers of the union's assistance, but an activist model in which members are empowered to win real gains.

I would like to see the statewide Council be more of a decision-making body, with specific agendas circulated in advance so that members can prepare for discussion and voting. Members attending Council meetings for the first time will feel welcomed, and the contributions of women and people of color will be recognized and valued. I will help our leaders understand our budget in more detail and prioritize participatory decision-making and consensus.

Our statewide Executive Board will meet regularly and keep minutes of our discussions and decisions. I will support our VP for Legislation in his work by restoring to him the legislative portfolio that our Constitution provides for. I will support VP for Grievances Ben Harder in training member grievance stewards. I will support Secretary/Treasurer Miki Goral's great work in budget management and union administration.

Relationships between the statewide Executive Board, staff, and Locals will be clarified. I will foster a supportive working environment for our staff so that they can achieve the professional excellence they are already dedicated to, and I will mentor emerging member-leaders and officers to ensure that we will be successful far into the future.

As we look ahead to bargaining for Units 17 and 18, I will work with our new VP of Organizing and the bargaining committees to support our negotiators with strong organizing campaigns—something we have already begun with our recent statewide bargaining training and with flyers I've created to support Unit 17 bargaining (attached). I'd like to see our Unit 18 bargaining positions be more ambitious. We must put an end to concessionary negotiating tactics if we are to achieve our future contract goals.

Externally, our access to policy-makers will continue. During my first year in office, I plan to meet with UC President Janet Napolitano, CA Senate President pro tem Kevin de León, CA Assembly Higher Education Chair Jose Medina, Congresspersons Ted Lieu and Adam Schiff, and AFT President Randi Weingarten. Since the UC-AFT president is a member of the CFT Executive Board and Committee, I will meet regularly with CFT President Josh Pechthalt. I already have good working relationships with Sandra Weese, Jeff Freitas, Laura Kurre, Joe Boyd, Emily Gordon, and Jane Hundertmark of CFT. I know many management figures in the UC's Labor Relations division personally (including LR head Peter Chester and Chief Negotiator Nadine Fishel) and am confident that they will continue to engage with me and with us. We also need to make more of the CFT lobbyist who is designated to work with us on our issues but whose expertise we don't yet fully harness.

I'm deeply committed to preserving and augmenting our ability to influence policy and protect our rights. In addition to our political strategy, I will pursue a coherent communications strategy, ensuring in particular that we make the most of social media as we engage a 21<sup>st</sup>-century public. We should also partner with UC researchers to collect data about our working conditions and issue reports that we can use to influence policy, bargaining, and the public's understanding of our work.

My commitment to inclusivity and participatory governance extends to Bob himself. If I win, I hope that Bob will continue his publishing and his advocacy for free public higher education. There's too much work to be done to exclude anyone. And if Bob wins, I pledge to work collaboratively and productively with him to further our interests and achieve our goals.