

From: Karen Haggemiller <khaggemiller@sandiego.edu>
Date: Tue, Apr 2, 2024 at 1:24 PM
Subject: Important Message to USD Faculty Regarding Collective Bargaining
To: Karen Haggemiller <khaggemiller@sandiego.edu>

Dear USD Faculty,

I am writing in response to an email invitation you may have received recently from a group of individuals within the College of Arts and Sciences attempting to form a collective bargaining unit (CBU) and join the Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

The very foundation of a free and fair election depends on the distribution of accurate information.

That is why I am flagging several glaring mischaracterizations in that communication.

The organizers and SEIU allege that “the administration is refusing to meet with us to negotiate the terms of a free and fair election.” This is untrue and misleading.

On March 7, in open session in the University Senate meeting, one of the union organizers was asked by a faculty Senator if the group had attempted to meet with the administration to discuss its concerns prior to launching its effort. The representative clearly and unequivocally stated that the group made the deliberate decision to unionize first, and then demand that the administration enter into negotiations.

That fact was not included in the group’s recent email.

The week after the Senate meeting, another of the organizers wrote to President Harris asking to meet. Our Chief Legal Officer, Tom Skinner, responded on behalf of the administration (click here to view email) explaining that the President and the Provost would have been pleased to meet before the organizing effort commenced, but now that the group had launched the formal process, the rules and procedures of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) govern.

I would like to take this opportunity to clarify that the organizers and the University do not set the terms of an election – the NLRB does. The NLRB rules are in place to guarantee what the organizers are asking for – that any election be free and fair. That also was not mentioned in the organizers’ recent email.

A fundamental component of a fair election is that each voter be allowed to make their own decision about whether to form a CBU, and to cast their ballot accordingly.

You recently may have received an email from Provost Baker as well as an email from me explaining the overall situation and providing a link to an informational website usdfacts.com. These communications are an attempt by the University to ensure that accurate information is shared with all, and that individual choices may be made based on it.

A decision to organize, and particularly a decision to bring a union to campus for the first time, has enormous consequences. It has cultural ramifications well beyond the specific proposed CBU, or the school in which it is located. I would like to remind everyone to please fact check any information that you receive –including this email – and ask any questions you may have before you decide whether and how to vote or support the effort.

As I mentioned in my email to non-tenure track faculty in CAS last week, my sincere hope is that we can get to a place where all faculty at USD feel valued and fulfilled, with or without a union. Please feel free to reach out to me any time if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Karen

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