

Negotiations In Progress!

Ongoing Work Towards A New Contract

What has happened so far:

Last fall, more than 500 of us attended a round of approximately 75 meetings to brainstorm about the upcoming negotiations. At roughly the same time, we elected a team of members to represent the different regions of the University. Union and management negotiators participated in an intensive joint training on the skills and strategies of “interest-based negotiating”.

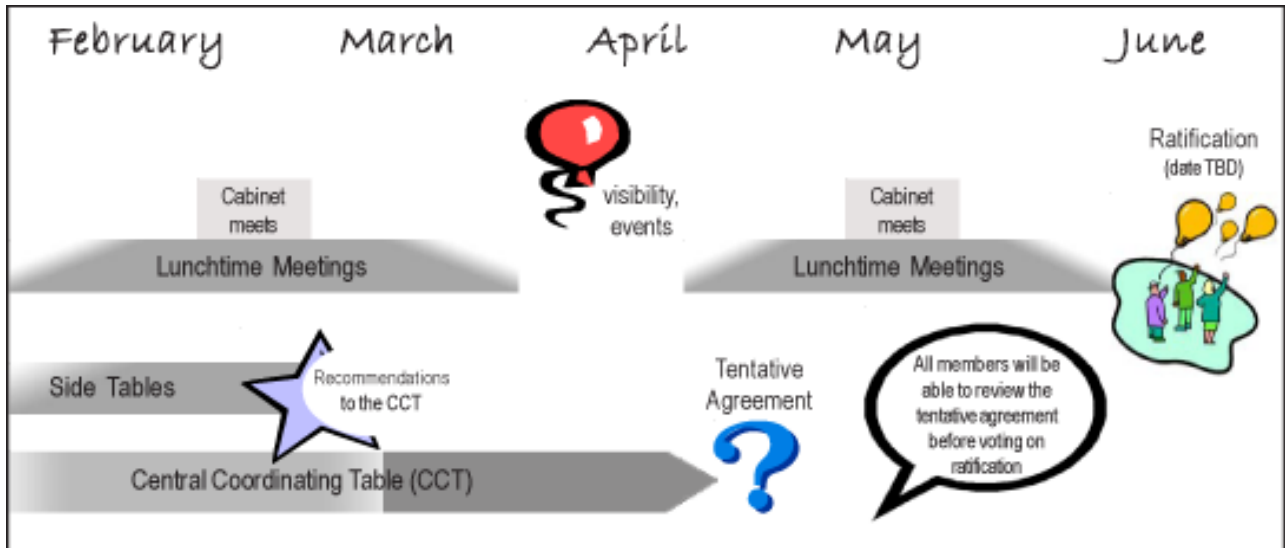
HUCTW and Harvard agreed to negotiate using two structures: one Central Coordinating Table, and eight Side Tables, each of the latter dedicated to a particular subject of mutual interest:

- *Career Mobility*
- *Education*
- *Training*
- *Work/Life Issues*
- *Joint Governance*
- *Benefits*
- *Organizational Redesign and Innovation*
- *Housing and Transportation*

Each of the side tables was composed of 4-5 Union members and 4-5 management representatives.

The Central Table began its work in November, coordinating the Side Tables and the overall progress of negotiations, as well as working to define and research the specific issues to be addressed at the Central Table itself. Each of the Side Tables held meetings in December to define issues, gather information and get organized, and discussions intensified and made substantial progress throughout January and February. Our current contract expires on June 30, 2007, so the goal is to reach a tentative agreement with plenty of time for discussion before then.

For more details on these aspects of the negotiations, please see the negotiations section of our web site.



What is happening right now:

Negotiations on our 2007 Agreement are well underway. As we publish this Newsletter, the Side Tables have completed and presented their recommendations; however, they will continue the crucial work of reporting and consulting to the Central Table. The Central Table itself is well along in reviewing these Side Table recommendations, as well as salary increases and other core issues. The work of the Central

Table is to put together a contract that makes progress on each important issue.

These updates and more are being discussed in the current round of information meetings, and your area organizer, locally elected negotiator, or cabinet member would be happy to give you an update.

What happens next:

The next phase of negotiations is a crucial one, not just at the negotiating table but also across the campus. We're asking for your help on a visibility event, a simple but powerful show of our Union's numbers. This serves to remind the entire University community that we are everywhere; a vital presence in the functioning and spirit of Harvard. This show of unity comes at a key point of the Central Table's negotiations.

When the Central Table achieves consensus on the entire contract **package**—annual pay increases, benefits, side table issues, development of new and existing programs, etc.—a tentative agreement will be reached.

Currently, mini-posters and stickers (designed by Union member Heather Stewart of HLS) are being distributed to all members. If you haven't yet received these, please give us a call and we'll make sure that you do. Stay tuned for more info on this and other events!

From there, we will switch gears and focus all our efforts on getting detailed information on the tentative agreement out to members through emails, mailings, and information meetings. The agreement is not a contract until we as a Union have voted to ratify it as a package, and our negotiating team and local activists will be working hard to make sure we know what we're voting for or against (as well as when and where to vote!).

Report on the Membership Survey

Thank you to everyone who responded to our survey last fall – we've gotten a lot of information that has been useful in our negotiations, and the comment sections were a rich source of creative ideas. 1858 HUCTW members participated in the survey. Here are some highlights—much more information is available in the full report on our Website at:

www.huctw.org

Wages: Out of 1816 survey respondents, 54.5% reported earning more than \$41,000. 71.6% earn between \$31,000 and \$50,000 a year. Over half reported not having money saved for "emergencies or future need," and almost three-quarters reported having monthly debt payments other than a mortgage or a student loan.

Career Development: A majority agreed that their supervisors are supportive and encouraging of career development, but many wrote comments indicating a lack of support for, or active opposition to, an internal

transfer, reclassification, or training and perceived a preference in hiring for external candidates.

Education: Our members care greatly about being life-long learners. Many identified tuition assistance through TAP and the HUCTW Education Fund as one of our most important benefits, but many viewed the details of these tuition reimbursement programs as confusing and bureaucratic.

Housing and Transportation: A strong majority of renters reported wanting to eventually purchase their own home, a goal we're pursuing in negotiations. Assistance with transportation costs was identified as an increasingly important benefit.

Childcare: About 20% of those who responded to the survey are parents who find childcare a significant expense, particularly those with younger children.

Job Training and Job Skills: Most respondents indicated that computer training and communication skills are most pertinent to their jobs. Most felt that formal trainings were fairly

accessible and available and of satisfactory quality, but specific concerns underscore that there is room for expansion and improvement.

Flexible Schedules: The overwhelming majority of staff work full-time, but many have worked a flexible schedule by choice. Most often this was attributed to childcare or family obligations, but a wide array of personal circumstances were described that point to the importance of making work flexibility available to as many HUCTW members as possible.

Health and Wellness: Many members are interested in a variety of options for health insurance beyond family and individual coverage. Most appreciate that we are maintaining our current level of coverage, as compared with other employers. Many of those interested in wellness had difficulty finding programs that would be convenient in terms of time and/or geography.

Announcements

HUCTW Creates!

A group of members are putting together a series of on campus exhibits of creative work by HUCTW members. Current plans include an exhibition in Gutman Hall at the School of Education in July. Stay tuned for more details on the opening celebration for this event. If you have questions, please contact the organizers at: huctwcreates@gmail.com

Call to musicians

HUCTW is looking for instrumental musicians to perform at union events. You could either play solo, or join a small ensemble. Performance opportunities would be occasional, usually calling for background music. To express interest, please write to Bill at: bill@huctw.org

HUCTW.org web site plans

With a new contract on the horizon, we'd like to remake our web site with an eye toward increased usability, more informational content, and more graphics! The goal is a new look and a simple but expandable structure, plus incorporation of photos. If you have web design or scanning skills and would be interested in contributing some volunteer time to this project, please write to us at: webster@huctw.org

Childcare Fellowship Update

Many have already inquired about the new application for the 2007-08 Childcare Fellowship. In the past, applications were made available in April. This year, however, the new application will be **delayed**. As part of the current contract negotiations with the University, we are exploring the possibility of setting up a way in which the awards could be delivered **without tax withholding**. We are **also negotiating for increased Fellowship funding**. We will notify all members as soon as a firmer agreement on these issues is reached and the application becomes available.

LTD Program Negotiations

In discussions separate from contract negotiations, the University has proposed minor changes to the Long-Term Disability (LTD) program. Please see the text of our recent e-mail for more detail and let us know if you have comments:

www.huctw.org/readings/emails/2007/20070417_LTD.pdf

Harvard Union
of Clerical &
Technical
Workers

PHONE: 617-661-8289

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www.huctw.org

If you don't have web access, give us a call at 617-661-8289 and we can get any of this info to you!

ADDRESS:

Please note that the HUCTW Office has moved to:

14 Story Street, 5th floor
Cambridge, MA 02138

HARVARD UNION OF CLERICAL & TECHNICAL WORKERS

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