

Only bargaining will end this strike. Employer stonewalling won't.

The College Employer Council's expensive reputation management firm, [DS Consulting](#), is hard at work.

Council's latest bulletin provides some interesting spin on how and why faculty have come to be on strike. At no point, however, does it discuss their role in forcing a strike, nor how they could help end it now.

Since September 15, College Council has had the unrestricted ability to bring their offer directly to members for a vote, yet they have refused to do so. While this steadfast stonewalling is consistent with their approach to bargaining, there is a simple reason why they haven't done so: they know it's a terrible deal for faculty.



A bad deal doesn't get better with age

Your bargaining team was elected to bring our members a deal we can recommend. We cannot recommend a deal that would gut existing staffing protections in Article 2 and allow the colleges to expand the levels of contract faculty in the system. Their new language on part-time faculty, and their proposal to create a new contract position, "temporary full-time faculty," would increase the percentage of contract faculty in the system with no real restrictions. That's bad enough, but Council's proposal would also create a two-tier system for new hires, forcing them to work longer hours and on weekends without the protections that cover current faculty.

When the majority of faculty voted to authorize a strike if necessary, it resulted in the second highest vote in college faculty history. This is democracy. The faculty bargaining team tried everything we could to avoid a strike, moving and adjusting our proposals several times right up until the end of bargaining. On September 30, we engaged in a series of discussions with Council about what it would take to reach a settlement. Their answer was the same then as it is now: accept our offer or nothing at all.

At every turn, the faculty team has been willing to work with Council to address their concerns around faculty's proposals, including strategies to offset costs. Faculty have asked Council to join with faculty in lobbying the government for increased funding for the college system for several years; Council has turned us down every time. Faculty have a consistent record between rounds of bargaining of trying to work with the colleges to leverage better funding and improve education for our students, only to have these offers dismissed.

Council's stonewalling has made one thing perfectly clear: This strike is about a group of top executives and administrators who are more concerned with saving \$20 million a week in faculty salaries to fund their own pay raises than doing what's best for students and faculty. And that is shameful.



No consultation about saving the semester

We are reaching a point at which students are in real danger of losing their semester. The colleges are trying to reassure students that they have a plan, but if they do, faculty have not seen it. The colleges have not consulted at all with the faculty who will be enacting the plan to save the semester. Instead, a few colleges have casually mentioned that students really only need to meet 80 per cent of their learning outcomes, and that it's the "academic year" that's not in jeopardy.

Students do not pay 100 per cent tuition to receive 80 per cent of the learning. Faculty are passionate about what we teach, and passionate about making sure students

succeed. We want to be back in our classrooms, libraries, and counselling students. But to get there, we need Council back at the table, ready to bargain.

Instead, the colleges and Council are intent on refusing to budge on even no-cost items that would improve services and learning for students, such as academic freedom and better job security for contract faculty. **No offer that they have tabled addresses our key issues of quality and fairness.**



Why force a strike?

Why would the Council force a strike on the students if they truly believed it could be avoided by taking a vote in September? Why would Council allow that strike to continue when they could take a vote and (presumably) end it now? There is only one possible answer: Council knows full well that their current offer is unacceptable.

Read the Council's last proposal. Do it side by side with faculty's proposals at collegefaculty.org. Take a look at our "Fact vs. Fiction" ([Bit.ly/2iE2Bml](http://bit.ly/2iE2Bml)) analysis of their offer. Council has hidden a series of traps in their proposal that would decimate our faculty complement further and worsen our working conditions.

We stand with students

To our students, we ask that you come out to the picket lines, talk to your faculty, and find out why the stand we are taking matters so much to you. We are on the picket lines to ensure that you have a high-quality college system that treats all faculty fairly so that we can provide the excellent education you deserve. Call your college president and tell them to get Council back to the table and negotiating.

To the Council, we say, if your offer is the best you think you can do, bring it to a vote. You have the authority, under the *Colleges Collective Bargaining Act*, to call a vote any time. There is a better way, however: come back to the table and bargain.



Stop stonewalling. Stop stalling. Stop misleading. Negotiate now.

For more information about the strike, visit www.collegefaculty.org/strike_faq

Do you have a question about the strike?

Call our Strike Hotline at **1-844-661-5433**

Contact us by email at collegefacultystrike@opseu.org



#Standwithfaculty

Do you have a picket line story and/or photos to contribute to *On the Line*? Email Emily Visser at evisser@opseu.org

To contact your CAAT-A bargaining team, please write to: bargaining2017@gmail.com

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