

Conducting PSC New-Hire Orientations and Individual Conversations — July 2024

Here's a guide to what may be covered in orientations for new hires at CUNY. Make the most of this opportunity to build union membership and strength!

- Focus on what our strong union and union contract offer new employees.
- Have everyone sign in, or get a copy of the sign-in sheet.
- Leave time for questions that are directly related to the PSC, scheduling 1-on-1 follow-up meetings to discuss individual situations.
- Hand in all completed membership cards IMMEDIATELY.
- Report back to the chapter chair and PSC organizer.

Introduction:

• Welcome to your union, the Professional Staff Congress, and to your PSC chapter at _____. We are fortunate to be working in a union environment, one that has a long tradition protecting our rights and demanding respect on the job, improving our pay and benefits, and fighting for CUNY students and the communities we serve. Our union is successful because of our collective power. Keep it strong by signing up to be a member today!

• We are here to introduce you to your union contract, structure and campaigns.

We are currently in contract negotiations, fighting for salary increases and gains for every title. pushing back against management attacks on job security, governance and academic freedom.

September 10th at 6:30 PM there will be an online Zoom mass meeting with updates and an action plan for PSC's Contract for #APeoplesCUNY campaign. Please plan to attend.

• We will have a Q+A at the end. If you have questions about your new position, we would like to set up a separate time to meet with you.

What is the PSC?

• We are a union representing 30,000 workers, covering all professional staff and faculty titles at CUNY. We are one of the largest locals affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) on the national level and with NYS United Teachers (NYSUT) on the state level.

• PSC advances the professional lives of its members by negotiating and enforcing our collective bargaining agreement. Beyond that, we fight for State and City funding for CUNY, advocate to protect and improve our pensions and healthcare, and campaign for health and safety, and better working, teaching and learning conditions.

Our local PSC chapter:

• Here at _____, we organize and represent you locally. We hold union meetings for faculty and staff, have labor-management meetings with the President, and mount campaigns about our campus concerns. We are here to ensure you are respected and heard. **Our next chapter meeting is on _____. All PSC-represented titles are invited.**

• [Discuss details of your chapter's past and present issues, struggles, and campaigns. Workload, safety and health, etc. If your chapter has a social media presence and/or a local website, introduce them. Provide chapter handouts - see below.]

PSC structure and dues:

- Each member in a teaching title or a non-teaching adjunct position is part of a PSC campus chapter; each Higher Education Officer, full-time or adjunct College Laboratory Technician is part of a cross-campus (University-wide) HEO or CLT chapter.
- Each PSC chapter has delegates (1 per 100 members) who attend open Delegate Assembly (DA) meetings at the union once a month. The DA is the policy-making body of the union. The 27 general officers of the union comprise its Executive Council. The names of your delegates and all elected representatives can be found on the PSC website, PSC-CUNY.ORG.
- Dues are 1.05% for full timers and 1% for part timers.

Why be a member?

- Your membership ensures that the PSC is able to maintain and strengthen current rights and benefits and win new, strong contracts with raises and better benefits, including supplemental health benefits (vision, dental, Rx drugs, etc) through our PSC-CUNY Welfare Fund. It allows us to have contract enforcement staff and attorneys, organizers and support staff and to mount our contract and issue campaigns with real resources.
- Only dues-paying members may vote in union elections or on contract ratification, observe PSC-CUNY bargaining sessions, or run for PSC office.
- Some of NYSUT and AFT's benefits are offered only to members (catastrophic medical insurance, auto, home, life insurance.)
- Like you, thousands of your CUNY colleagues have chosen the union because they know that by joining forces and resources we gain power as a union that we would never have alone.

Where do we stand now?

- Because we have the collective power that union membership creates, the PSC has negotiated salary increases, back-pay and annual salary steps.
- For full-time faculty: Union power won 24 hours of reassigned time for junior faculty, paid parental leave, salary steps, sabbaticals at 80% pay, and a reduced teaching load.
- For professional staff, Union power has won salary differentials, paid parental leave, administrative tenure called 13.3b for HEOs, a professional development fund, salary steps and salary parity for many titles with full-time faculty, and extra pay increases for Lecturers, CLTs and Assistant to HEOs, whose salaries have lagged behind.
- For part-time faculty: Union power has won stable health insurance for graduate employees and for eligible adjuncts, paid office hours, and pay increases for a three-credit course of between 50-70% for teaching adjuncts over the course of our most recent contract. We won a groundbreaking 3-year job security provision for thousands of adjuncts—and are currently negotiating and campaigning to maintain it. That's another reason we need you as a member.

Conclusion: The rights and benefits that come with this job are the result of decades of PSC involvement and collective action. We can only retain these victories and win further gains if we join together in our union! We are now in the midst of bargaining our next contract. We need your membership and the membership of every new CUNY hire to continue to win good

contracts and protect the right we have won! Join today and become an active member of the Professional Staff Congress!

- Use the PSC website (PSC-CUNY.ORG) to get news/updates, find the contract and salary schedules, and learn what different committees of the union are up to. There is an email newsletter, This Week in the PSC, and we are on social media: Instagram, Facebook and X. Always feel free to contact our _____ chapter chair, [Name].

Handouts for New Hires:

Membership card, Membership Matters brochure, and Member Benefits card.

- Chapters should create: 1-page handouts with contact info that includes general PSC contact info, chapter EC members, grievance counselor, social media accounts and local chapter website. List upcoming PSC meetings if scheduled. (This should also be on the PSC bulletin board.)
- PSC buttons, stickers and signs.
- Attendance sheet asking for contact information and sign-up sheets for specific union activities, information on our legislative work, contract campaign... .
- As relevant: HEO handbook, CLT handbook, non-teaching adjunct brochure, adjunct CLT brochure, Continuing Education Teacher brochure, teaching adjunct handbook.