

ARTICLE 15
RETRENCHMENT

Section 1. Determining the Necessity for Retrenchment

A. Retrenchment may be necessary when a judgment, made by action of the Board, based upon evidence made available to the Akron-AAUP according to the schedules set forth in this Article, indicates one (1) of the four (4) circumstances listed in Section 1(A)(1) through 1(A)(4) exists at the University.

1. Financial exigency, defined as an imminent financial crisis which severely jeopardizes the ability of the University as a whole to survive as an institution for teaching, research, and public service. Projections of expenses, enrollment, of instructional subsidies, and of other sources of revenues must be based on the most current information available and must demonstrate that the shortage of funds (also based on the most current information available) will be both severe and persistent and cannot be alleviated by temporary or voluntary measures;
2. Significant reduction in enrollment of a college, department, or program continuing over five (5) or more academic semesters (not including summer) and which is expected to persist;
3. Discontinuation of a college, department or program;
4. Action by the Ohio Department of Higher Education or Ohio General Assembly which explicitly requires the University to discontinue or reduce programs as part of an effort to reduce duplication with other public institutions in the region.

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Section 2. Bargaining Unit Reductions through Attrition First

- A. Normal attrition is the preferred approach to alleviating financial exigency or responding to enrollment patterns.
- B. If the Board determines, according to the criteria listed in Section 1 of this Article, that retrenchment is necessary and, further, that in implementing this retrenchment a reduction in bargaining unit faculty is necessary, the Board shall attempt to achieve the desired result through attrition, including voluntary early retirement.
- C. If, after completing the procedures in Section 2(B), the Board makes the judgment that retrenchment requires reductions in bargaining unit faculty beyond those conducted through attrition, the following procedures establish the process for implementing any retrenchment.

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Section 3. Information

In this Article, “day” means Monday through Friday during fall and spring semesters.

- A. The University shall provide to the Akron-AAUP evidence of the need for retrenchment, based on the criteria listed in Section 1 of this Article, of efforts to implement this retrenchment as outlined in Sections 2(A) and 2(B) of this Article, evidence that these efforts remain insufficient, and evidence that clearly documents the necessity for a recommendation to release bargaining unit faculty.
- B. At the same time, the Provost shall notify the dean of the affected unit(s) or program(s) that retrenchment may be required. Accompanying such notification shall be a written description and rationale for the proposed reductions, a copy of which is to be simultaneously forwarded to the Akron-AAUP.
- C. Upon receipt of the above-described notice of possible retrenchment, the dean of the affected unit(s) shall obtain the recommendations of the affected unit(s)'s members on how best to carry out the proposed retrenchment. The unit members' recommendations, including any alternative proposals, shall be submitted by the dean to the Provost and to the Joint Committee on Retrenchment (see Section 4 of this Article, below) within ten (10) days after receipt of the notification of possible retrenchment, unless otherwise mutually agreed in writing.
- D. The Akron-AAUP shall be provided access and the opportunity to inspect, request, and/or copy any additional information relevant to the anticipated retrenchment within five (5) days after the delivery of a written request to the Provost.

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Section 4. Consultation

- A. Within five (5) days after receipt of the data and information in Section 3(A) a Joint Committee on Retrenchment, with three (3) members appointed by the President and three (3) members appointed by the Akron-AAUP, shall be formed, members shall be provided the information regarding retrenchment identified in Section 3 of this Article, and request such additional information and documents as all or part of the committee deems fit. This group shall hold its first meeting within the foregoing five-day period. The Provost, or designee, shall chair the committee in an ex-officio, non-voting capacity.
- B. In the case of an anticipated retrenchment affecting a college, department, or program, the Joint Committee on Retrenchment's recommendations shall include, with respect to such college, department or program, consideration of:
1. Its historical role and contributions in the University's educational, scholarly and service mission, and those long-range circumstances which may have changed to alter that role and those contributions;
 2. The dependence of other programs in the University on the college, department, or program;
 3. Duplication elsewhere in the University of courses, research or services offered through the department, college or program, and possible organizational arrangements which might serve as alternatives to discontinuation;
 4. Arrangements which can be made to allow students enrolled to satisfy degree or certificate requirements;
 5. Stature of its faculty and alumni, and the possible consequences to the academic stature of the University through discontinuation;
 6. The profile of ages, periods of service and tenure status of its bargaining unit faculty and an estimate of their possible usefulness elsewhere within the University;
 7. Possible arrangements for planned phasing out of the college, department, or program as an alternative to abrupt discontinuation; and
 8. Any other factors the Joint Committee on Retrenchment deems relevant.

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C. Unless otherwise mutually agreed to in writing, within thirty (30) days after the receipt of the data and information in Section 3(A), ~~3(C), and 4(A)~~ this Joint Committee on Retrenchment will submit its advisory recommendations to the President. Such recommendations may include ways to relieve the need for retrenchment by raising additional funds, by reallocating funds, or by cutting or eliminating specified activities.

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D. The President shall forward these recommendations along with his or her own recommendations to the Board as soon thereafter as practicable. ~~The~~ University agrees to take no action regarding retrenchment until the President and the Board have reviewed the recommendations from the Joint Committee on Retrenchment.

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Section 5. After receiving and considering the recommendation(s) in Section 4, the Board will make the final determination to implement retrenchment.

Section 6. The Retrenchment Process

Once the final determination has been made that retrenchment is necessary, the following shall determine which bargaining unit faculty within the affected unit(s) will be released:

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A. ~~All non-bargaining unit faculty (excluding faculty appointed to non-bargaining unit positions pursuant to Section 10 of this Article and full-time administrators holding academic rank), including part-time adjuncts and visiting faculty, shall be released before any bargaining unit faculty of any category.~~

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B. ~~Non-bargaining unit faculty appointed pursuant to Section 10 of this Article shall be released before any current bargaining unit faculty.~~

~~C.~~ Bargaining unit faculty shall be placed in the following categories:

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1. ~~Probationary faculty status~~
2. ~~Tenured faculty status~~

1. ~~Assistant Professors of Practice/Instruction~~
2. ~~Assistant Professors and Associate Professors of Practice/Instruction~~
3. ~~Untenured Associate Professors and Professors of Practice/Instruction~~
4. ~~Untenured Professors~~
5. ~~Tenured Associate Professors~~
6. ~~Tenured Professors~~
7. ~~Distinguished Professors~~

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D. If further reductions are necessary after all non-bargaining unit faculty have been released pursuant to Sections 6(A) and (B), a bargaining unit faculty member within the unit may volunteer to retire or otherwise sever employment to prevent or reduce the need for retrenchment. The savings from such voluntary retirements or departures shall be applied dollar-for-dollar to reduce the number of faculty retrenched. Such voluntary retirements or departures may include incentives such as a period of continued health care, financial compensation, a part-time teaching arrangement, or other agreed-upon terms.

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If further reductions are necessary after all non-bargaining unit faculty have been released pursuant to Sections 6(A) and (B) and any volunteers pursuant to this Section 6(D) have been accounted for, bargaining unit faculty will be released starting with the lowest numbered category in Section 6(C). In making the final determination within each category as to whether or not an individual bargaining unit faculty member will be released, the following additional factors will be given full consideration:

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1. The University's commitment to affirmative action and its policies adopted thereunder
2. The quality of the bargaining unit member's contributions in the areas of teaching, research, and/or service (as appropriate to the appointment)
3. The impact on the academic program resulting from the release of the bargaining unit member
4. Length of service with the University as a fulltime faculty member

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Each bargaining unit faculty member in the affected unit will have the opportunity to submit a recommendation with rationale to the dean of the affected unit regarding the individual bargaining unit faculty to be released, consistent with Sections 6(C) and (D).

The dean of the affected unit(s), after receiving the recommendations of the affected unit's members, will make final recommendations in accordance with Section 6(C) and (D) to the Provost concerning the individual bargaining unit faculty to be released. Whenever bargaining unit faculty within a category are considered approximately equivalent in the ratings on the factors set forth in this Subsection (D), then length of service with the University as a full-time faculty member will be the deciding factor.

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E. The Provost will then make the final decision for the University in accordance with Section 6(C) and (D) concerning the bargaining unit faculty

member(s) to be released and will notify each such bargaining unit faculty member in accordance with the time limitations set forth in the following Section 7. Where some but not all bargaining unit faculty within a category are selected for release, the notice will include an explanation of how the factors in Section 6(D) were applied and provide the released bargaining unit faculty with an opportunity to be heard. A copy of each such notification shall be sent to the Akron-AAUP.

Section 7. Notice of Release

A. The University will provide notice of release to affected members of the bargaining unit in accordance with the following:

1. For Assistant Professors of Practice/Instruction, no later than December 15 if the appointment terminates at the end of the academic year. If the appointment terminates at another time, at least five (5) months in advance of its termination.
2. For an untenured tenure-track bargaining unit faculty member (except those under tenure consideration) or an Associate Professor of Practice/Instruction, no later than September 15 if the appointment is for an academic year term. If the appointment terminates at another time, at least nine (9) months in advance of its termination.
3. For an untenured tenure-track bargaining unit faculty member who is under tenure consideration or a Professor of Practice/Instruction, at least twelve (12) months, spanning at least two (2) academic semesters, not including summers.
4. For a tenured bargaining unit member, at least eighteen (18) months, spanning at least three (3) academic semesters, not including summers.

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Section 8.

A. The University will endeavor to place released bargaining unit faculty, if qualified, in other available teaching positions within the University. No tenured bargaining unit faculty member will be dismissed solely on the basis of discontinuance of a program or department without the University making documented good-faith efforts to relocate the bargaining unit faculty member within the University. In addition to the foregoing, the University will endeavor to find other areas of employment within the University community for tenured bargaining unit faculty that are scheduled for release under this retrenchment Article.

- B. Notwithstanding the foregoing, if there is a consolidation of programs or departments or colleges among any of the public institutions of higher education within Northeast Ohio, such that the University would lose an existing program or department or college, the University may, in lieu of its above obligations to bargaining unit faculty members in such program or department or college: (1) first (1st) place all such tenured bargaining unit faculty members in corresponding positions within that public institution of higher education for which they are qualified within the locus of tenure, at the same salary and in the same rank, as they had at the University at the time of release (and with the same benefits of other tenured faculty of such salary and rank at that other institution); and (2) also place all, or if unable to do so, less than all other bargaining unit faculty in corresponding positions within that public institution of higher education for which they are qualified within the locus of appointment, at the same salary and in the same rank, as they had at the University at the time of release (and with the same benefits of other non-tenured faculty of such salary and rank at that other institution). In the event any such released bargaining unit faculty member had obtained tenure at the time of release from the University, such placement with that other public higher education institution shall include placement with tenure.

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Section 9. During a period of three (3) academic years following release of a bargaining unit faculty member under this Article, such bargaining unit faculty member shall be offered reinstatement to the same or similar position if reauthorized. Released bargaining unit faculty who have been offered reinstatement will have a period of sixty (60) days in which to accept or decline the offer of reinstatement. The released bargaining unit faculty member shall be able to complete the term of his or her current employment (up to one (1) year) before beginning the recalled position at the University. The University's offer to reinstate, if accepted, shall be at the same tenure level, appointment, type, rank, and salary, adjusted to incorporate any general, non-performance based salary increases that were granted since the time the bargaining unit faculty member was released. If the bargaining unit faculty member declines the offer of reinstatement, all reemployment rights at the University shall be terminated and the position may be filled in accordance with regular employment policies and practices of the University. If the same or similar position is not reopened within the three (3) academic years referenced above, the bargaining unit member's employment rights at the University shall be terminated.

Section 10. In the event that a part-time teaching position becomes available in the program of a released bargaining unit faculty member and if the bargaining unit faculty member has the appropriate qualifications for the position, the bargaining unit faculty member will receive first (1st) consideration for the position. Acceptance or declination of such a part-time teaching position does not affect in any way the rights of a released bargaining unit faculty member to reemployment under Sections 8 or 9 of this Article. Declining such an offer shall not constitute a basis for the University to oppose unemployment compensation.

Section 11. A bargaining unit faculty member who accepts reappointment shall be credited with rank and shall be reappointed with tenure if tenured at the time of release or with the remaining years of a term appointment if applicable. A bargaining unit faculty member released due to financial exigency will receive from the University, to commence at the time of release, a one (1) year continuance of the University health insurance policy without charge. A terminated bargaining unit faculty member shall be eligible to continue coverage under the University's group rate benefit programs for health insurance benefits at his/her own expense as provided for under COBRA. A bargaining unit faculty member released pursuant to this Article 15 shall receive a continuation of the tuition benefits provided to active bargaining unit faculty for the member and the member's dependents for a period of time not to exceed four (4) years to enable the completing of a degree program in which the member and/or dependent is currently enrolled, so long as there is no break in attendance and the student continues to meet the applicable eligibility requirements. If the member or the member's dependents are not currently enrolled, the benefits will be extended for one year from the effective date of release, covering at least two full academic semesters.

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Deleted: Section 12. The procedure for retrenchment set forth in this Article is designed to accommodate both the orderly change in the University and reductions that must accompany more abrupt changes in circumstances. The parties recognize that catastrophic circumstances, such as *force majeure*, could develop which are beyond the control of the University and would render impossible or unfeasible the implementation of procedures set forth in this Article. Therefore, this Section 12 shall not be used to accomplish retrenchment as set forth in this Article. If such unforeseen, uncontrolled and catastrophic circumstances should occur, then the University agrees that, before taking any action that could be interpreted as bypassing the retrenchment procedures, representatives of the University will meet with representatives of the Akron-AAUP to discuss and show evidence of the circumstances described above and that this evidence will at least satisfy the requirements outlined in Section 3(A) of this Article and to discuss the proposed course of action.