

Dear University Community,

The University remains committed to reaching a sustainable and fiscally responsible agreement with our UPI Local 4100 Chapter. The University's latest on-the-record proposal, along with updated FAQs, can be found at [wiu.edu/provost/negotiations/update](http://wiu.edu/provost/negotiations/update).

Despite ongoing mediation sessions, it has come to our attention that the UPI Local 4100 Chapter intends to call upon its members to vote for an authorization to strike. We understand the vote will take place Wednesday, April 18. If the vote passes, an intent to strike may be filed with the WIU Board of Trustees. A strike authorization does not mean a strike will occur. We hope a strike can be avoided.

We hope our faculty vote against an authorization to strike, and ultimately, if a strike should occur, remain in the classroom, and remain committed to our students. Our students have entrusted their education to Western Illinois University. They deserve the education for which they have paid. With approximately four weeks remaining in the Spring 2018 semester, we need to live up to this commitment to our students.

If the faculty's upcoming vote on Wednesday, April 18 is in favor of a strike authorization, and if a strike occurs, it is the University's intent to continue classes as scheduled. The University remains committed to its mission of providing a quality education to our students, and will take reasonable steps to mitigate any disruptions to our students' educational pursuits. Even if certain faculty choose to strike, students should still plan to attend class as usual. Our goal is to ensure that students receive the grades and credits that they have earned.

While it is certainly the faculty's choice whether to strike, we ask that our faculty keep in mind the following:

- Striking will not change the economic realities surrounding higher education in Illinois and more particularly at Western (such that the University can afford the contract that the Union wants)
- Striking and even the uncertainty created by the threat of a strike will harm our enrollment and retention efforts
- Striking will not change the fact that the institution needs to move forward with restructuring in order to positively impact the institution's financial health and create a viable and sustainable foundation for the future
- Striking will take instructional time away from students
- Striking will bring negative publicity to the University and surrounding communities
- Employees who choose to strike and do not fulfill their employment obligations will not be paid for the period in which they do not perform their job duties, nor is the University required to provide benefits during a strike

Once again, we urge our faculty to vote against an authorization to strike and request that UPI come to the table and join the administration in reaching a contract that is viable given the fiscal realities we face.

Sincerely,

Russ Morgan

Associate Provost

WIU Contract Administrator