



End Worker Intimidation at UW–Madison Fact Sheet

Why is English as a Second Language (ESL) Program Director Sandy Arfa named in the petition?

As Program Director, Ms. Arfa serves as the manager. She was the one who informed Jambul Akkaziev and Alyssa Franze on August 3, 2017, that they would not be rehired to the ESL Program. Although the ESL Director expressed disapproval of our union and its methods, our campaign is not an attack on ESL or its director; it does not call for her to resign or to be disciplined. It merely calls for restitution for union leaders formerly employed in ESL and an end to worker intimidation throughout the UW–Madison campus.

What evidence is there that Jambul and Alyssa’s union activity was the reason for them not being reappointed/rehired?

In early February 2017 the ESL Director asked the campaign leaders in ESL to “back off” from organizing for fair pay for Faculty Assistants and to stop talking to the press about this pay equity issue. This was despite the fact that the goal of the Fair Pay for Faculty Assistants campaign was to achieve pay equity for all Faculty Assistants at UW–Madison, not just those in ESL. During a February 2017 meeting, the ESL Director described renewable Faculty Assistants as “more difficult to get rid of” than their nonrenewable colleagues.

Other former Faculty Assistants who worked on the campaign are now employed as Lecturers in ESL. Isn’t this evidence that no retaliation occurred?

Jambul and Alyssa were campaign leaders—they were visible and outspoken throughout the campaign. They gave multiple presentations to university committees, spoke on numerous occasions before shared governance bodies and labor unions, participated in radio and newspaper interviews, and organized their colleagues around the campaign; they were not hired into the Lecturer position.

The other Faculty Assistants who were highly active in the campaign and are still employed in the ESL Program today had renewable status, which means that they did not need to apply for the position of Lecturer—they were automatically hired.

The former nonrenewable Faculty Assistants who were hired into the new Lecturer positions were not union members at the time of application or hire.

How did the timing of the Fair Pay for Faculty Assistants campaign correspond to the restructuring of the ESL program?

The Fair Pay for Faculty Assistants campaign began in October 2016. The Dean of the College of Letters & Science announced restructuring of the ESL Program, in which Faculty Assistant positions would be replaced with Lecturer positions, on April 3, 2017, the day UFAS presented its resolution for “Fair and Equitable Pay for Faculty Assistants” to the Faculty Senate. The earliest documentation that L&S Human Resources has provided of the ESL restructuring is dated February 28, 2017.

Did Jambul and Alyssa have a guarantee of employment past Spring 2017?

In Spring 2017 Jambul and Alyssa were fixed-term terminal employees, which means that their appointments were for one semester only. This lack of job security for many Faculty Assistants was precisely one of the problems that the Fair Pay for Faculty Assistants campaign sought to address. Through Spring 2017, Jambul was appointed twice as a Faculty Assistant in ESL (preceded by 20 times as a Teaching Assistant); Alyssa was appointed 5 times as a Faculty Assistant in ESL (preceded by 9 times as a Teaching Assistant). Not rehiring highly qualified, experienced, long-term instructors in retaliation for union activism is wrong, regardless of their employment status.

Moreover, management does not have the right to retaliate against employees for engaging in concerted union activity, whether by terminating them or by denying them the *possibility* of future employment. On March 6, 2017, the ESL Director emailed Human Resources in the College of Letters & Science to request that Alyssa be removed from ESL's Summer 2017 budget. This email was sent *during* Alyssa's first and only formal teaching observation in her two years as a Faculty Assistant. On March 23, the ESL Director emailed Alyssa to inform her she would not be offered an appointment for Summer 2017. The email also directed Alyssa to "look for other employment without further delay" for Fall 2017. The Position Vacancy Listing for Fall 2017 Lecturer positions was not posted until May 23.

Were Jambul and Alyssa qualified for the new Lecturer positions in ESL?

The personnel files for Jambul and Alyssa contain only letters of appointment, formal observations with assessments that are overwhelmingly "excellent," and teaching awards (the Future Faculty Partner Award for Jambul and the Mark and Elizabeth Eccles Teaching Assistant Award for Excellence in Teaching ESL for Alyssa). Despite the documentation of more than satisfactory performance over the years, neither was granted even an interview.

Ten former Faculty Assistants with fixed-term renewable status in ESL were automatically transitioned to the title of Lecturer. In conjunction with L&S Human Resources and unspecified others in ESL and the English Department, the ESL Director determined the qualifications for the Lecturer positions that required (re)application. Some individuals asserting that the hiring process was "fair, open, honest, and based entirely on merit" were not involved in the process.

Jambul was hired as an instructor at the University of California, Berkeley for Summer 2017; he is now employed as a full-time Lecturer at the University of California, Davis. Alyssa is currently employed as a Faculty Assistant in the Department of Sociology at UW-Madison.

Do Jambul and Alyssa want to be reinstated to ESL?

Jambul and Alyssa served a combined 13 years in ESL; they reapplied for their jobs with the expectation of impartial consideration of their applications. The End Worker Intimidation campaign is a continuation of the Fair Pay for Faculty Assistants campaign. The campaign centered around equity and workers having a voice at UW-Madison. The Teaching Assistants Association, Associated Students of Madison, the Academic Staff Assembly, and the Faculty Senate endorsed these principles.

The fact that two union leaders who organized and advocated for pay equity were not rehired to their program disregards the collective voice of labor unions and the advisement of shared governance on this campus. Excluding campaign leaders from enjoying the improvements they helped to bring about undermines the campaign and discourages collective action to improve working conditions in ESL and other departments in the future. Jambul and Alyssa wish to see an end to this intimidation.