

November 5, 2018

Dear Colleagues,

I feel compelled to share my thoughts with regard to the efforts by SEIU (Service Employees International Union) to unionize UT. First, I am not anti-union. In fact, I was raised in a union family. My father worked in a mill and went on strike for better working conditions and pay when I was young. I believe in the power of unions to improve working conditions in certain industries. However, I am 100% against having a union at UT. This is my ninth year at the University as a masters-prepared, non-tenure-eligible faculty member. During that time I have always felt valued and respected by my peers and the administration. Like all of you, I am able to make requests for the courses I want to teach and the times that the courses are offered. I have had opportunities to teach overloads and summer courses, as well as GMAT Prep and First Year classes. I have received a raise every year. When my schedule changed from three to four courses per semester, the decision was made jointly with my Dean and Department Chair; it was not forced on me. Most importantly, our administration worked with Faculty Senate to create a pathway for non-tenured term faculty to not only remain at UT beyond seven years, but to have the opportunity for advancement. Because of that, I was the first person at UT to be promoted to Lecturer II. I look forward to my colleagues doing the same. Other recent improvements include a generous family leave policy and increased pay for adjuncts and overload courses. On Friday, the Faculty Senate voted to simplify our evaluation process and move the due date from December to June. All of these things were accomplished without a union! I'm confident that there will be no benefit for us to have an outside union dictate our teaching schedules, overload opportunities, evaluation process, and pay. I'm positive that we fare better by working collaboratively with administration.

I strongly believe that our faculty is treated well and we do not need a union to represent us. If SEIU takes hold at UT, we will not have a choice to opt out of the union contract. We will be forced to let the union negotiate for us and we will all be treated the same. I do not believe it is in our best interest to have an unknown group bargaining for us. I have been treated very well by our administration and would like to continue that relationship of working together to identify opportunities and ways to improve. I am certain that SEIU will create a divisive culture on campus. On their website, I read that the Faculty Forward campaign is partly about "holding for-profit higher education accountable for dismal student outcomes". First, we are not a "for-profit university" and I don't want UT to be mentioned in the same breath with them! That's not the rhetoric I want to be associated with and I certainly don't want to feel obligated to pay dues to this group. Please don't sign anything without careful consideration of the impact it will have on all of us.

Sincerely,



Lecturer of Mathematics