

**Resolution for MSCA to adopt a “last-is-first” guiding principle to foster greater equity within our union and our campuses**

**Maker: Michelle Corbin, Worcester State University**

**Second: Bryant Sculos, Worcester State University**

**–inequity described–**

**WHEREAS**, all who are employed in state universities under the Massachusetts BHE currently have widely unequal employment circumstances, with a lack of transparent decision-making and access to resources, particularly for part-time and full-time temporary employees; and

**WHEREAS**, these unequal statuses are growing in the context of management tactics that invoke austerity and claims that “this is how the market operates now”; and

**WHEREAS**, these inequalities emerge routinely in ordinary, everyday practices on our campuses and in our union *as well as* within our contracts and other agreements that formally regulate our working conditions; and

**WHEREAS**, these inequalities reflect and exacerbate the intersecting inequalities across race, ethnicity, nationality, and gender; and

**WHEREAS**, these inequalities are not to be confused with differences that are spelled out for tenure-line faculty around seniority and tenure and promotion status; and

**WHEREAS**, our working conditions, which feature this inequity and unpredictability, are our students’ learning conditions, undermining our students’ educations and opportunities; and

**–divide and conquer described–**

**WHEREAS**, these disparate statuses constitute management’s divide-and-conquer approach, which fosters divisions between more- and less-privileged employees in our work arrangements and access to physical spaces and resources in our universities; and

**WHEREAS**, “divide-and-conquer” is a well-known union-busting and union-weakening tactic; and

**WHEREAS**, this divide-and-conquer approach creates working arrangements that leave workers within our ranks subject to widely disparate payment schemes and working conditions; and

**WHEREAS**, this divide-and-conquer approach has actively facilitated excessive growth among university administrations to the exclusion of the needs of the rest, both through bloat and disproportionately high salaries for executives and other administrators; and

**WHEREAS**, the present COVID-19 pandemic and attendant economic crisis have amplified these divide-and-conquer methods as seen in escalating means of intimidation via furloughs and through practices of blunt abrogation of accountability by management for part-time faculty, full-time temporary faculty, and other positions that are more vulnerable under our contracts; and

**—last-is-first introduced—**

**WHEREAS**, MSCA's navigation of the foregoing issues of equity occurs on individual campuses where each chapter takes the lead as well as in statewide contexts such as, but not limited to, the Employee Relations Committee (ERC) and bargaining; and

**WHEREAS**, a "last-is-first" approach involves a decision-making framework wherein an organization centers the needs and concerns of the most vulnerable members of their community, in opposition to the divide-and-conquer strategies and tactics that have fostered internal stratification and unequal working conditions; and

**WHEREAS**, a last-is-first approach signifies that our organization prioritizes addressing these inequities in its policies and decisions when negotiating, making proposals, or addressing community needs and thereby prioritizes these as opportunities to correct persistent and intractable inequalities at work; and

**WHEREAS**, the adoption of this resolution by the Annual Meeting of Delegates is its formal expression of opinion, intent, belief or position to guide the MSCA, its members, Board of Directors, Executive Committee and other groups within the MSCA structure; therefore,

**Resolved, That** the MSCA adopt a "last-is-first" guiding principle, such that in **decision-making the MSCA aims to prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable members as our first priority.**

**Resolved, that, in particular the MSCA Board of Directors will adopt a last-as-first framework in executing its duties which could** include but is not limited to bargaining, membership meetings, resource allocation, and ERC.