A Resolution for Solidarity with the UMass Labor Center

Whereas the UMass Labor Center is one of UMass’s cherished institutions, and carries a special legacy of educating and training members of the labor movement who have fought hard for working people in the United States and abroad;

Whereas a big part of this legacy was that the Labor Center was accessible to all qualified students; funding, in the form of teaching and research appointments, was available to provide tuition waivers and livable salaries to students, making top notch education and training were available to all, such that working people were able to participate in labor movement leadership in a robust way through this arrangement.

Whereas that funding has now been cut¹, meaning that the education and training that the Labor Center provided will now be available only to students with the ability to pay for tuition, effectively putting the resources of the Labor Center out of reach for poor and working people, which is an affront to the special legacy of the Labor Center, as well as the democratic and accessible ethos of a public educational institution;

Whereas the shrinking funding of the UMass Labor Center has not occurred in isolation, but as part of broad cuts to the funding of higher education by the state², with concomitant attempts to allocate graduate funding by the ability of departments to ‘pay’ by the number of undergraduate students taught, as outlined by the Joint Task Force of Resource Allocation (JTFRA)³ at UMass, be it resolved that

Therefore, we oppose funding models like the one outlined by the JTFRA in general, and the cuts in the funding structure to the UMass Labor Center in particular;

Therefore we commit to pushing pressure upwards, through the University Administration and onto the State level, to restore the funding of the students of the UMass Labor Center, and to oppose funding models like the ones proposed by the JTFRA, which tie graduate funding to undergraduate demand.

¹ [via “The Promise of the UMass Labor Center”.PPT by Tom Juravich, Interim Labor Center Director, presented to the Sociology Department body meeting on September 14th 2016]


³ http://www.umass.edu/chancellor/sites/default/files/jtfra-finalreport-and-supplement_042114_0.pdf –Section Model Options