

Matt Cooper

Vice President Candidate

Candidate Statement

Hello, my name is Matt Cooper and I have been teaching part-time here at Eastern Michigan University since 2008. I am happy and proud to say that I was a part of the union recognition campaign for part-time lecturers back in 2010. What started out as a grassroots movement for 600 people who had no say on campus, and little recognition as a group, has turned into a member-driven union where members now have more job security and a stronger voice at the bargaining table.

As a union of part-time and full time lecturers, we have accomplished so much in such a short period of time. Before we had our first collective bargaining agreement there were members making only \$700 a credit hour with no guaranteed raise. Now all members have to make at least \$1160 per credit hour, and annual raises are now included in our contract.

Recently, when several of our full-time members were laid off from the College of Education, I'm proud to say that I was there tabling and petitioning alongside the members from the COE and other departments. This was a great moment because not only were we fighting for our colleagues' jobs but also for our future student teachers who have been affected by changes in the COE. Because of pressure from EMUFT, many of these lecturers have since been hired back.

And finally, I was on the organizing team that fought EMU on their stance of hiring from outside of the bargaining unit before asking the hard working lectures in the math department if they wanted additional class assignments. We took EMU to arbitration and won, thus strengthening job security for lecturers across campus just a little bit more.

But as much as we have accomplished, we have so much more to do to make this a better place to teach, and most importantly, a better place for our students to learn. Together we are stronger. I look forward to working with you on our future challenges, and I hope you will vote for me for Vice President.

Tom Wagner
Vice President Candidate
Candidate Statement

In 2010 with high hopes and expectations, EMU's part-time contingent faculty joined with their full-time lecturer colleagues to fight for and win a 600 member strong union. Today, an increasingly recalcitrant EMU Administration and lackluster Union leadership have eroded many of those hopes and expectations. I offer my candidacy as Vice-President of EMUFT with the mission to restore those expectations and advance the respect and welfare of all its members.

Having been a part-time lecturer exclusively at EMU since 2003 – sometimes teaching 4 classes, sometimes none – I'm well aware of the capriciousness of the Lecturer's position. As a member of both part-time contract-negotiating teams, I marched, sat-in, and fought for member rights – which are currently under attack. With an increasing anti-labor climate, many positive elements once on the table for discussion with the EMU Administration, are now abandoned by our leadership. Regular communication, once maintained through a Union publication called "The Link", no longer exists. Constitutional requirements for semester Membership Council meetings are routinely ignored.

Today, the Union Council is increasingly out-of-touch with its membership, only calling meetings when it wants an endorsement by a hand-full of members on specific issues or prepackaged proposals. Its orientation is toward state and national accolades even as labor conditions deteriorate at EMU.

It's time for the Union Council to reach out to all bargaining unit members and invite them back into the EMUFT governance process. If elected, that's what I would seek to do.

Anthony Kurek
Treasurer Candidate
Candidate Statement

My name is Anthony Kurek and I would be honored to secure your vote for Treasurer. I am a Full-time Lecturer II in the Department of Accounting and Finance and have been a member of EMU-FT since August of 2008 when I began teaching at EMU. I am a licensed Certified Public Accountant in the state of Michigan and worked in public accounting with the firm of Plante Moran prior to leaving industry for academia. I have served as the Treasurer of EMU-FT since May, 2013, and have prepared the last three years' financial statements, guiding the unit through the last three annual reviews, receiving clean opinions from the independent accountant conducting the review in each of those years. Thank you, and I appreciate your vote!

Jill Darling
Secretary Candidate
Candidate Statement:

I have been teaching part-time, in the English Department, at Eastern Michigan University since 2009, and I have been Secretary of EMUFT since March 2014. The union at EMU has been important to many individuals who have needed advocacy and support where before they had none. And it has been and remains especially important for all part-time and full-time lecturers as we grow in strength and make the university aware of our power to support each other, to bargain for stronger contracts, and to be taken seriously as professionals in our fields. We are invaluable resources for our students. My goal is to help make the administration aware that we are invaluable to the institution as teachers and as employees. I believe that we can continue to make EMU a great place for students, teachers, and the community if we work together. But we are only as strong as the individuals who work to raise our voice as a union. None of the work happens without the involvement of members who commit to change and progress. The more members who are involved, the more work we can do. My goal is to expand communications so that more members are aware of EMUFT happenings on campus and in the community, and to make sure that all members know how they can be involved. I look forward to working with you as Secretary, and thanks for your vote!

Laura Zimmerman
Grievance Officer Candidate
Candidate Statement

Greetings members of EMUFT! I am Laura Zimmerman, and I am running for the position of Grievance Officer. Since 2011 I have been a part-time lecturer in the dance program, and I have been an active member of EMUFT since 2012. For the last two years I have served as a member of the Organizing Committee and as a steward for the Music and Dance Department. You have probably gotten phone calls from me about upcoming events, heard me talk about the union at your biannual department meetings, or seen me at organizing events on campus. Behind the scenes I have helped plan campus actions (such as the petition drives for the full-time lecturers in the School of Ed and the change to the PTL pay schedule), organize members, attend grievance hearings, and so much more. With all of this organizing experience under my belt, I seek to shift my focus to another area of personal interest: contract enforcement. Contract enforcement is most successful when members are supporting fellow members. I will bring my skills and experience as an organizer, propensity for detail, and interpersonal communication skills to the position of Grievance Officer.