

EMUFT President Lisa Laverty's comments to the EMU Board of Regents

(Friday, February 5, 2016)

I am Lisa Laverty, president of the EMU Federation of Teachers represents approximately 730 full- and part-time lecturers.

I am here today to speak, again, about the continued problems of part-time lecturers not being paid in a timely manner at the start of each semester.

As you know, EMU unilaterally moved from paying Part-Time Lecturers every two weeks to delaying the first paycheck of the semester until the end of the first month. This change means that Part-Time Lecturers now receive only 14% of their total pay in the first month of any semester, rather than 25% they used to receive.

Because the missed pay is spread out across the remaining pay periods, it takes the whole semester to be made whole. In effect, this policy forces EMU lecturers to make involuntary loans to EMU for the duration of EVERY SINGLE SEMESTER that they work. No other employee class is asked to do this.

This change has real consequences for real people. This is not a theoretical problem; it affects the lives of 630 EMU employees, EVERY SEMESTER, in very negative ways

Lecturers who, in the first month of every semester, must choose between

- buying gas for their car to get to work, or groceries to feed themselves and their families;
- who are forced to default on their student loan payments in order to keep teaching the current generation of EMU students;
- who face the risks of eviction, foreclosure, and health crises as a result of EMU's pay policies –

Part-time lecturers have proved to be dedicated, persistent, hard-working and above all, LOYAL members of the EMU community. Lecturers are the embodiment of "TRUE EMU".

What I am asking for is a modicum of loyalty and basic decency in return. What we are asking for is a real partner in solving these problems.

Next week we are meeting with Dr. Rhonda Longworth to discuss this issue. As we have in the past, we will again propose that this issue be resolved through a memorandum of understanding. We are not interested in gamesmanship on this matter; we are interested in a true partnership to address this problem, and I ask that you lend your honest and open support to that endeavor.