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A Preliminary Report on Non-Faculty Bargaining at Colleges and Universities - 1993

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A Preliminary Report on Non-Faculty Bargaining at Colleges and Universities - 1993

Abstract
[Excerpt] Although we will present more detailed data in subsequent sections, we would like to present a few key pieces of information here. Public sector campuses are substantially more likely to be unionized than private sector, with 55.7% of public and 16.8% of private reporting one or more non-faculty bargaining units. Geographically, non-faculty unionization is notably more prevalent in the Northeast, the Midwest and on the Pacific coast than elsewhere. Among non-faculty employees, there are notable variations in unionization rates. Approximately 43.8% of blue collar employees are unionized (substantially more than reported two years ago), compared to approximately 31.1% of white collar employees. Among white collar workers, approximately 40.4% of clericals are represented by unions, compared to approximately 24.4% of professional and technical workers. Although there are many unions active on college campuses, two have emerged as leaders, the State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and the Service Employees (SEIU).

Keywords
unions, labor movement, organizing, higher education, clerical staff

Disciplines
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Comments
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A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON NON-FACULTY BARGAINING AT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES – 1993

Richard W. Hurd and Elizabeth O'Leary

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I. Background and Research Methodology

The rate of growth of faculty unionization has been decreasing over the past decade. Partly as a result of this trend, the unionization of non-faculty employees has evoked considerable interest among college and university personnel administrators, union officials, and academics. This interest has been heightened by high visibility union organizing successes at Yale, Columbia, Harvard, and the Universities of Illinois and Minnesota. Despite the emerging importance of unionization among non-faculty employees, little research exists in this area.

The National Center recognized the need for more accurate information on the collective bargaining status of non-faculty employees and in 1989 decided to undertake a project to gather relevant data. Subsequently, the NCSCBHEP conducted a national survey of colleges and universities regarding the collective bargaining status of their non-faculty employees. Results were published in January 1991 as the Directory of Non-Faculty Bargaining Agents in Institutions of Higher Education. The research reported here is the outgrowth of a project initiated in the summer of 1991, under the sponsorship of the Institute for Collective Bargaining (ICB) at the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University. Funding became available to devote the resources needed to obtain a higher response rate from institutions contacted, and thus to expand and check the accuracy of the data collected in the 1989-90 survey and to conduct a statistical analysis of that data.

A decision was reached to limit the population to institutions with student enrollments of 500 or more. Based on the 1989-90 survey we were confident that virtually none of the smaller schools would have any collective bargaining agreements. The total number of campuses included in the survey was 2,720. From the Fall of 1991 through the Spring of 1992, telephone interviews were conducted, starting with colleges and universities in states with relatively high levels of unionization. By the Spring of 1992 we had reasonably complete data for nineteen states.[1]

At this stage we determined that the project would move more quickly if we switched from telephone interviews to a mail survey. Using the same survey form as in the telephone interviews with a cover letter explaining the project, surveys were mailed to institutions in the remaining thirty-one states and the District of Columbia in May 1992. There were two additional mailings to non-respondents in July and September of 1992. From November 1992 through February 1993 telephone interviews were conducted to clarify some responses and contact schools which had not returned surveys. The data included in this preliminary report represents 79.4% of the 2,720 campuses. Data collection and clarification will continue through the Summer of 1993 and should be completed by the Fall.

II. Non-faculty Union Representation

Perhaps the most notable result of the survey is to reveal substantially greater union representation than

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reported in the 1991 Directory. The bargaining units for which we have complete data represent 383,698 workers,[2] 135,663 more than reported two years ago. Furthermore, this exceeds the total number of unionized faculty by 154,842. However, faculty on 922 campuses are covered by collective bargaining agreements, while non-faculty bargaining units are present on only 836 campuses (61 more than reported in 1991). Overall 38.7% of the 2,160 campuses responding to the survey reported at least one non-faculty bargaining unit.

Although we will present more detailed data in subsequent sections, we would like to present a few key pieces of information here. Public sector campuses are substantially more likely to be unionized than private sector, with 55.7% of public and 16.8% of private reporting one or more non-faculty bargaining units. Geographically, non-faculty unionization is notably more prevalent in the Northeast, the Midwest and on the Pacific coast than elsewhere. Among non-faculty employees, there are notable variations in unionization rates. Approximately 43.8% of blue collar employees are unionized (substantially more than reported two years ago), compared to approximately 31.1% of white collar employees. Among white collar workers, approximately 40.4% of clericals are represented by unions, compared to approximately 24.4% of professional and technical workers. Although there are many unions active on college campuses, two have emerged as leaders, the State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and the Service Employees (SEIU).

III. Geographic Distribution

Non-faculty unions are highly concentrated geographically. Campuses reporting non-faculty collective bargaining are concentrated in four regions, which account for 84.8% of all units: New England, Middle Atlantic, Pacific, and East North Central. As reported in Table 1, over 50% of the campuses which responded to the survey report non-faculty unions in the New England, Middle Atlantic, and Pacific regions. Although the East North Central and West North Central regions report lower levels of unionization, unions have nonetheless achieved a notable presence there as well. The other four regions have much lower rates of non-faculty unionization, bottoming out in the East South Central and West South Central regions with a combined rate of 4.1%.

The three regions with high non-faculty unionization rates (New England, Middle Atlantic, Pacific) account for 63.4% of the campuses with non-faculty units and 63.9% of non-faculty employees with union representation. The two regions with lower but substantial non-faculty unionization rates (East North Central and West North Central) account for 30.5% of the campuses and 31.4% of the represented workers. The four low non-faculty unionization regions (East South Central, West South Central, South Atlantic, Mountain) account for 6.1% of the campuses and 4.7% of the represented workers. Regional data are presented in Table 1 (campuses with non-faculty unions) and Table 2 (workers represented by non-faculty unions).

There are non-faculty units in five states that did not report any such units in the 1989-90 survey -- Nebraska, Nevada, South Dakota, Tennessee and Texas. In South Dakota and Texas the units were certified subsequent to publication of the 1991 Directory. Units in the other states previously existed but were missed in the 1989-90 survey. Information on individual states is summarized in Table 4.

IV. Types Of Bargaining Units

Non-faculty bargaining units comprise a broad range of occupational categories. For this survey, we have divided non-faculty employees into five categories: clerical, white collar mixed, professional, white collar/blue collar mixed, and blue collar.[3] Table 2 contains information on the number of non-faculty employees by geographic region and by category. The total number of employees with union representation in white collar units is 204,167. The total number of employees with union representation in blue collar units is 93,207. There are 86,324 employees in white collar/blue collar mixed units. Clearly, in terms of absolute numbers, more white than blue collar employees are unionized employees in higher education.

The January 6, 1993 issue of The Chronicle of Higher Education reports federal data on the number of employees in higher education by broad occupational groups. Using this information, we are able to estimate the percent of unionization for various types of non-faculty employees. As reported in Table 3, the estimated number of employees covered by a non-faculty collective bargaining agreement and their percentages are as follows: 112,946 blue collar employees or 43.8%; 270,752 white collar employees or 31.1%; 147,513 clerical employees, or 40.4%; and 123,239 professional/technical employees, or 24.4%. These estimated unionization rates compare to 44.0% for faculty in 1992.

The estimates for the number of represented workers was determined by distributing mixed units

Table One

NUMBER OF CAMPUSES WITH NON-FACULTY UNITS BY REGION

Region	Total Campuses	Responding to Survey	Response Rate (%)	Number W/ Non-Faculty Bargaining Units	Percent of Respondants W/Non-Faculty Bargaining Units
New England	191	181	94.8	106	58.6
Mid Atlantic	417	387	92.8	235	60.7
South Atlantic	469	344	73.3	27	7.8
E. South Central	208	115	55.3	4	3.5
W. South Central	248	152	61.3	7	4.6
E. North Central	435	392	90.1	179	45.7
W. North Central	266	221	83.1	76	34.4
Mountain	152	89	58.6	13	14.6
Pacific	334	279	83.5	189	67.7
Total U.S.	2,720	2,160	79.4	836	38.7

New England (ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT)
Mid Atlantic (NY, NJ, PA)
South Atlantic (DE, MD, DC, VA, WV, NC, SC, GA, FL)
E. South Central (KY, TN, AL, MS)
W. South Central (AR, LA, OK, TX)
E. North Central (OH, IN, IL, MI, WI)
W. North Central (MN, IA, MO, ND, SD, NE, KS)
Mountain (MT, ID, WY, CO, NM, AZ, UT, NV)
Pacific (WA, OR, CA, AK, HI)

based on the relative share of non-teaching, non-managerial employees. The estimates are likely to slightly understate the unionization rate for blue collar and clerical employees and to slightly overstate the unionization rate for professional and technical employees. These numbers reveal a much higher rate of blue collar unionization in higher education than was apparent based on the 1989-90 survey.

Approximately 34% of the campuses with non-faculty bargaining units report single units while approximately 64% report multiple units. Of the 281 campuses with single units, 44 have clerical locals, 5 have white collar mixed locals, 2 have professional units, 137 have white collar/blue collar mixed locals, and 93 have blue collar locals. Of the 555 campuses with multiple units, the breakdown is as follows: 288 have clerical locals, 202 have white collar mixed locals, 171 have professional locals, 143 have white collar/blue collar locals, and 397 have blue collar locals. At the multi-unit campuses, it is common to have more than one blue collar local with divisions often based on skill (food service, buildings and grounds, carpenters, etc.).

V. Regional and Sectoral Variations in Unionization by Occupational Group

There is notable variation among the regions regarding the occupational makeup of bargaining units, as reflected in Tables 2 and 5. Concentrating on the five regions with substantial levels of non-faculty unionization, collective bargaining is dominated by white collar units in some regions, but by blue collar or mixed units in others. In terms of the number of employees represented, the Pacific and New England regions are dominated by those in white collar units, with 63.1% and 61.1% respectively in either clerical, professional or mixed white collar units. Those regions with the highest share of represented employees in blue collar units are East North Central with 39.1% and Middle Atlantic with 30.7%. Mixed blue collar/white collar units predominate in West North Central, accounting for 53.4% of represented employees.

The presence of unions among non-faculty employees is more concentrated geographically for private sector institutions than is revealed in the tables. Six states in the Northeast (Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania) account for 53.7% of the private sector campuses with blue collar unions and 74.1% of those with white collar.

Another difference between private sector and public sector institutions is noteworthy. Of those campuses with non-faculty bargaining units, the share with blue collar unions is far greater in the private sector. Of the 159 private institutions of higher education with at least one collective bargaining agreement, 136 or 85.5% employ unionized blue collar workers. The comparable figure for the public sector is 53.0%. In contrast, among those campuses with collective bargaining, white collar and mixed units are far more likely at public sector institutions. To look at the same information in a slightly different way, over 90% of the campuses with white collar or mixed blue collar/white collar units are public sector, compared to 72.5% for blue collar units.

VI. National Unions Which Represent Non-faculty Employees

Faculty employees are represented by only three different national unions: the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and the National Education Association (NEA). In the case of non-faculty employees, there is much greater variation in national union representation. At least fifty different national unions represent subgroups of non-faculty employees in higher education. However, despite this plethora of unions representing non-faculty employees, AFSCME and SEIU have emerged as the two dominant unions among non-faculty employees. In four out of five occupational categories (clerical, white collar mixed, blue collar, and white collar/blue collar mixed), AFSCME and SEIU are, respectively, the two leading unions. It is only in the professional category that these two unions do not lead.

AFSCME is the dominant presence among university and college clericals with units on 168 campuses. SEIU follows with units on 32 campuses. Other unions which have established a presence among university and college clericals include the two educational unions, AFT and NEA, with units on 32 and 27 campuses, respectively. The Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU), which has a long tradition of representing clerical employees, has units on 20 campuses. In the white collar mixed category, AFSCME and SEIU are present on 57 and 46 campuses, respectively. AFT has units on 52 campuses and NEA is present on 15 campuses.

There is a great deal of variation of national union representation in the blue-collar category. General blue-collar workers such as buildings and grounds and custodial and food service employees are represented by AFSCME on 173 campuses, SEIU on 93 campuses, the Teamsters on 54 campuses and the Automobile Workers

Table Two

NON-FACULTY EMPLOYEES REPRESENTED BY UNIONS BY REGION AND CATEGORY OF UNIT

Region	Total	Clerical	White Collar Mixed	Profes-sional	White/ Blue Collar Mixed	Blue Collar
New England	37,867	14,401	7,281	1,445	4,925	9,815
Mid Atlantic	79,391	21,719	14,926	5,519	12,849	24,378
South Atlantic	12,465	242	1,886	2,182	15	8,140
E. South Central	153	25	0	0	100	28
W. South Central	459	0	0	0	342	117
E. North Central	66,885	11,856	8,042	12,104	8,749	26,134
W. North Central	53,413	5,513	5,178	8,449	28,498	5,775
Mountain	5,035	2,358	120	211	1,373	973
Pacific	128,030	36,606	26,603	17,501	29,473	17,847
Total U.S.	383,698	92,720	64,036	47,411	86,324	93,207

New England (ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT)
Mid Atlantic (NY, NJ, PA)
South Atlantic (DE, MD, DC, VA, WV, NC, SC, GA, FL)
E. South Central (KY, TN, AL, MS)
W. South Central (AR, LA, OK, TX)
E. North Central (OH, IN, IL, MI, WI)
W. North Central (MN, IA, MO, ND, SD, NE, KS)
Mountain (MT, ID, WY, CO, NM, AZ, UT, NV)
Pacific (WA, OR, CA, AK, HI)

on 24 campuses. The skilled trades are represented by the Operating Engineers on 86 campuses, the Electrical Workers (IBEW) on 50 campuses, combined Building and Construction Trades units on 35 campuses, the Carpenters on 29 campuses, the Laborers on 25 campuses, and the Firemen and Oilers on 25 campuses. In the professional category, the Nurses lead the way with units on 96 campuses. AFT has units on 59 campuses, AFSCME on 27 campuses, and NEA on 14 campuses. In the white collar/blue collar category, AFSCME has units on 107 campuses, SEIU on 55 campuses, NEA on 37 campuses, AFT on 19 campuses, and the Teamsters on 16 campuses.[4]

VII. Summary and Conclusions

The foothold established by unions among non-faculty employees at institutions of higher education appears to be secure. The recent survey which provides the basis for this preliminary report has uncovered significantly more unionization than had been documented previously. The relatively high rate of unionization of clerical workers has been confirmed, and our knowledge about the unionization of blue collar employees in higher education has been expanded. The geographic concentration of unionization at private sector institutions in a half dozen Northeastern states has been uncovered. We finally have reasonably reliable estimates of rates of unionization by occupational group. All of these summary conclusions will be documented in detail in the next Directory of Non-Faculty Bargaining Agents in Higher Education, to be published by the NCSCBHEP later in 1993.

Endnotes

1. We have recently discovered that some campuses which had returned apparently comprehensive surveys in 1989-90 were not contacted in the original round of telephone interviews during 1991-92. We are currently in the process of requesting updated information. The responses to the 1989-90 survey from these institutions is included in the data herein presented.

2. This number is probably low since there are a fair number of units for which the number of workers covered was omitted from responses to the mail survey. We estimate that over 400,000 non-faculty employees are actually represented.

3. Units with technical workers are included in the white collar mixed category unless there is evidence that these are blue collar technicians.

4. Independent unions are particularly frequent among professional employees, and in some cases represent workers at multi-campus institutions. For instance, the University Association of Physicians and Dentists represents professional employees in California.

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Table Three

UNION REPRESENTATION RATES FOR NON-FACULTY EMPLOYEES

	Full time Employees*	Estimated Employees in CB Units	Percent Represented
White Collar	870,921	270,753	31.1
Professional/Technical	505,589	123,239	24.4
Clerical	365,332	147,513	40.4
Blue Collar	258,189	112,946	43.8
Total	1,129,110	383,698	34.0

*Calculated from data reported in "Number of Non-Teaching Staff Members Continues to Grow in Higher Education," The Chronicle of Higher Education, Jan. 6, 1993, p. A43.

Table Four

STATE TOTALS OF CAMPUSES WITH NON-FACULTY BARGAINING UNITS BY CATEGORY*

State	Total Campuses Responding to Survey	Clerical	White Collar Mixed	Profes-sional	White/ Blue Collar	Blue Collar
Alabama	34	1	0	0	2	0
Arizona	18	0	1	1	0	0
California	187	37	31	23	67	51
Colorado	21	0	0	0	1	0
Connecticut	36	24	25	16	1	30
Delaware	7	1	0	0	0	2
Dist. Columbia	8	1	2	1	0	4
Florida	72	0	9	9	0	10
Georgia	45	0	0	0	0	1
Hawaii	14	10	10	0	0	10
Illinois	112	25	12	13	11	33
Indiana	56	13	0	0	1	9
Iowa	47	2	2	0	6	11
Kansas	42	0	1	2	1	6
Louisiana	15	0	0	0	6	0
Maine	19	9	9	0	1	11
Maryland	41	1	0	0	0	4
Massachusetts	85	21	5	11	18	28
Michigan	76	23	8	13	5	36
Minnesota	54	19	31	24	15	18
Missouri	34	3	0	0	0	9
Montana	15	7	1	6	1	8
Nebraska	21	1	1	1	0	0
Nevada	5	0	0	0	1	0
New Hampshire	16	0	0	0	1	1
New Jersey	46	18	8	13	10	19
New Mexico	8	1	0	0	0	1
New York	198	71	46	9	53	92
Ohio	101	3	2	3	10	18
Oregon	31	2	0	10	18	10
Pennsylvania	143	10	8	11	12	27
Rhode Island	11	2	3	3	2	5
South Carolina	32	1	0	0	0	0
South Dakota	17	1	0	0	1	0
Tennessee	36	0	0	0	0	1
Texas	102	0	0	0	0	1
Vermont	14	0	0	0	5	1
Washington	45	5	3	3	18	11
West Virginia	22	0	0	0	0	3
Wisconsin	47	19	18	1	6	24
Totals	1933	331	236	173	273	495

*The following states have no reported nonfaculty bargaining units: AK, AR, ID, KY, MS, NC, ND, OK, UT, VA, WY

Table Five

NUMBER OF CAMPUSES WITH NON-FACULTY UNITS BY REGION AND CATEGORY OF UNIT

Region	Clerical	White Collar Mixed	Profes-sional	White/ Blue Collar Mixed	Blue Collar	Total Campuses W/Non Faculty Units*
New England	56	42	30	28	76	106
Mid Atlantic	99	62	33	75	138	235
South Atlantic	4	11	10	0	24	27
E. South Central	1	0	0	2	1	4
W. South Central	0	0	0	6	1	7
E. North Central	83	40	30	33	120	179
W. North Central	26	35	27	23	44	76
Mountain	8	2	7	3	9	13
Pacific	54	44	36	103	82	189
Total U.S.	331	236	173	273	495	836

New England (ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT)
Mid Atlantic (NY, NJ, PA)
South Atlantic (DE, MD, DC, VA, WV, NC, SC, GA, FL)
E. South Central (KY, TN, AL, MS)
W. South Central (AR, LA, OK, TX)
E. North Central (OH, IN, IL, MI, WI)
W. North Central (MN, IA, MO, ND, SD, NE, KS)
Mountain (MT, ID, WY, CO, NM, AZ, UT, NV)
Pacific (WA, OR, CA, AK, HI)

*The totals do not necessarily match the sums of the relevant rows because some campuses have bargaining units in more than one category.