

SAMPLE FACULTY LETTER

Dear Father McShane and members of the Board of Trustees,

My name is XXX and I have been a Professor at Fordham since 2005. I am writing to urge you and the rest of the Fordham Board of Trustees, in the strongest possible terms, to change course in our faculty benefits negotiations and work within the existing set of university statutes to come to a fair and equitable solution. To cut faculty health care and impose a salary agreement without our assent would set the university on a potentially devastating path. I hope that sharing some of my story about why I came to teach at Fordham and why I love this university so much would shed light on why the current policies being put forth by the Board are so very dangerous.

I came to Fordham because I wanted to give back to the next generation of students in my profession. I chose Fordham because of its emphasis on social justice. It has been extremely gratifying work for me. But to do it right takes much more time than you might think. In my current role as Associate Chair of my department, I work seven days a week, virtually every day of the year. I'm on email by 6:30 and often go until midnight, particularly during a busy time like registration. I worked all summer without compensation to prepare for the launch of new programs. I do these things to provide the best education for our students that I possibly can. Much of what I do is uncompensated, but I have always given 100 percent effort to try to embody *cura personalis*.

I am also a single parent of a child with special needs. The excellent health care benefits that I receive as a faculty member have been key in my being able to stay at Fordham, because my out-of-pocket medical costs have been low. If that were to change, I would have to start looking for a new job, because I can already barely make ends meet in this very expensive city on my current salary, which is much lower than the pay of colleagues at unionized universities in our area. I just do not have a few thousand dollars lying around were the co-pays for my child's many medical appointments jump from \$10 to \$50 apiece and my deductible to skyrocket.

I am sure that you know the powerful role of negative public relations. The potential impact of the current policies toward the faculty could be devastating on the entire university should the Board continue them. Faculty will leave, which will lower the university's rankings. As the rankings sink, fewer young people will want to pay the considerable cost to come to Fordham. And in this world where we are all linked by social media, more and more people will hear about the rancor between the Board and faculty, turning off even more prospective students. As a professor who teaches journalism, I must warn you that the negative press from this impasse could be considerable and very harmful to the university's reputation and its ability to attract new students.

For all these reasons, I respectfully ask that the Board change its current course. Please live up to the statutes now in place, and return to the standards of co-governance that have kept the university running well for decades. It is absolutely critical that the Board set an example for our students to be law-abiding men and women for others. To do otherwise will surely be dangerous to the long-term health and success of Fordham.

Sincerely,