

AGREEMENT

Western Michigan University

And

The Teaching Assistants' Union

American Federation of Teachers

AFL-CIO Local 1729

2026-2029

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARTICLE 1 RECOGNITION.....	1
ARTICLE 2 DEFINITIONS	2
ARTICLE 3 NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY.....	5
ARTICLE 4 UNIVERSITY RIGHTS	6
ARTICLE 5 UNION RIGHTS.....	6
ARTICLE 6 UNION DUES	10
ARTICLE 7 INFORMATION	13
ARTICLE 8 APPOINTMENT AND ASSIGNMENT.....	16
ARTICLE 9 SALARIES	24
ARTICLE 10 BENEFITS	26
ARTICLE 11 TUITION REMISSION AND WAIVER.....	27
ARTICLE 12 LEAVE TIME	29
ARTICLE 13 STANDARD PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS AND GENERAL DISCIPLINARY PROVISIONS	33
ARTICLE 14 EMPLOYEE RIGHTS.....	38
ARTICLE 15 GRIEVANCE AND ARBITRATION PROCEDURES.....	41
ARTICLE 16 SPECIAL CONFERENCES.....	50
ARTICLE 17 HOURS AND CLASS SIZE	50
ARTICLE 18 CURRICULUM.....	51
ARTICLE 19 TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	52
ARTICLE 20 SCOPE OF THE AGREEMENT	54
ARTICLE 21 DURATION	56

Article 1

Recognition

The Graduate College at Western Michigan University recognizes graduate appointments of three appointment types: Graduate Assistantships, Doctoral Graduate Assistantships, and Doctoral Graduate Assistantships with Candidacy. Each graduate appointment also carries a classification: teaching, research, or non-teaching.

Pursuant to and in conformity with the certification issued by the Michigan Employment Relations Commission on May 3, 2006, in Case No. R06 B-020, the University recognizes the Union as the sole and exclusive representative for the purposes of collective bargaining in respect to wages, hours, and all other conditions of employment for all employees in the following described bargaining unit:

Included:

All Graduate Assistants, Doctoral Graduate Assistants, or Doctoral Graduate Assistants with Candidacy appointed by the Employer with the classification of teaching. Collectively these positions are known as teaching assistantships.

Excluded:

1. All Graduate Assistants, Doctoral Graduate Assistants, or Doctoral Graduate Assistants with Candidacy appointed by the Employer with the classification of research.
2. All Graduate Assistants, Doctoral Graduate Assistants, or Doctoral Graduate Assistants with Candidacy appointed by the Employer with the classification of non-teaching.
3. All faculty, as defined in the then-current faculty collective bargaining agreement, and all part- time faculty and/or part-time instructors.
4. All supervisors and other employees.

Article 2 Definitions

1. Academic Year: The fall and spring semesters.
2. Appointment Type: Classification of graduate teaching assistantship, i.e. Graduate Assistant, Doctoral Graduate Assistant, Doctoral Graduate Assistant with Candidacy.
3. Bargaining Unit: All Graduate Assistants, Doctoral Graduate Assistants, or Doctoral Graduate Assistants with Candidacy (collectively known as teaching assistants) at Western Michigan University, as recognized in

Article 1. Classification of Teaching: All Graduate Assistants, Doctoral Graduate Assistants, or Doctoral Graduate Assistants with Candidacy will be assigned the classification of teaching if their primary duties are coordinating, leading, or assisting in the instructional process in direct interactions with students or holding regularly scheduled office hours for direct interaction with students, or grading papers or examinations in a manner that requires subjective evaluation above and beyond the mechanical or routine comparison of submitted papers or examinations with answers, responses, or elements predetermined as correct or acceptable by another individual or method.

4. "Business day" refers to those days between and including Monday through Friday, excluding University-recognized holidays and closures.
5. Designated Eligible Individual (DEI): The requirements to qualify as a DEI are set forth in the "Designated Eligible Individual Enrollment Form" located on Western's website, under Human Resources and Forms.
6. Doctoral Graduate Assistant with Candidacy (DGA-C): An Employee appointed as Graduate Assistant or Doctoral Graduate Assistants who is granted Doctoral Candidacy status by the WMU Graduate College will qualify to have his/her appointment reclassified as a Doctoral Graduate Assistant with Candidacy in the semester following his/her award of candidacy, as well as for all subsequent terms of appointment that occur while so ranked, upon presentation of his/her approved Doctoral Candidacy form to the administrator of the unit in which his/her appointment resides (typically, the department chairperson or program coordinator).

7. Doctoral Candidacy: A formal designation of an employee's achievement of doctoral candidacy status is awarded by the WMU Graduate College, upon meeting the qualifications described in the WMU Graduate Catalog.
8. Employee: The term "Employee" (and "Employees") as used in this Agreement shall mean a person in the service of the Employer, Western Michigan University. An individual becomes an Employee on the date set forth in the Employee's Appointment Letter when he/she commences service to the Employer. Upon becoming an Employee, the individual will become a member of the bargaining unit.
9. Employer: Western Michigan University, a constitutionally established institution of higher education located in Kalamazoo, MI, its Board of Trustees, and the administrative agents of the Board. "The Employer," "Western," "the University," and "the Administration" shall be regarded as interchangeable terms.
10. Employing Unit: School, department or college.
11. External Deadline: Graduate Teaching Assistants' positions that are underwritten by funding provided by an agency external to the University are subject to the schedules and timelines inherent in the rules and conditions of awards made by the funding agency. In some cases the rules and conditions of the granting agency may impact the University's ability to provide notification of appointment for the following year as required by Article 8, section 2.iii.
12. Good Standing: A graduate student being in good standing is

determined according to current University policy.

13. Investigatory Interview: An information-gathering discussion, meeting or interview which could result in or lead to corrective or disciplinary action, or which the employee reasonably believes could result in or lead to corrective or disciplinary action. It is not an investigatory interview if the Employer simply notifies or conveys information to the Employee.
14. Letter of Appointment: Rights and benefits of Employees set forth in this Agreement shall be assimilated into and made part of any letter of appointment. The Letter of Appointment constitutes the sole formal offer of employment, and shall contain at least, in writing, the terms and conditions of the appointment as follows: type of appointment (full, 3/4, 2/3, 1/2); Graduate Assistant (GA), Doctoral Graduate Assistantship (DGA), or Doctoral Graduate Assistant with Candidacy (DGA-C), the awarded stipend, amount of tuition remission, conditions of employment, period of the appointment, and the contingencies and requirements of employment.
15. Union: Teaching Assistants Union (TAU), AFT, AFL-CIO, Local Number 1729.

Article 3

Non-Discrimination Policy

Western Michigan University prohibits discrimination or harassment which

violates the law or which constitutes inappropriate or unprofessional limitation of employment opportunity, University facility access, or participation in University activities, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, protected disability, veteran status, height, weight, or marital status.

Employees will be afforded any additional protections, more expansive than above, as set forth by law, or in any current non-discrimination policies of the Board of Trustees of Western Michigan University.

Article 4

University Rights

The University retains, solely and exclusively, all its inherent rights, functions, duties, and responsibilities with the unqualified and unrestricted right to manage, direct and control the University and its programs, and to determine and make decisions on the manner in which the University's operations will be conducted, except where limited by the express and specific terms of this Agreement. This Agreement shall in all cases be interpreted so as not to deprive the University of its legal authority to control all final decisions regarding its academic and non- academic programs.

Article 5

Union Rights

1. The Union's internally designated representatives will be permitted to transact official business with appropriate representatives of the Employer at mutually agreeable times provided that they follow regular Employer procedures.
2. The Union may request to schedule periodic meetings to conduct Union business on campus, subject to customary charges, if any. Other facilities or equipment, such as computing and audiovisual, may also be available at customary charges. Requests for such space shall be processed through regular Employer procedures.
3. Each semester/session, upon request of the Union, twenty (20) minutes will be made available to the Union at the first Employee training or Employee orientation session (if any) of any academic department/school, academic college, or the Graduate College, with scheduling at the discretion of the department school, or college. This meeting will consist only of graduate students.
4. The Union has the right to affix notices to approved or designated bulletin boards on campus.
 - a. Upon request, the Employer shall provide the Union with bulletin board space designated with the Union's name for its exclusive use in ten (10) mutually agreed upon areas for the purpose of posting Union notices. Such space in each area will be large enough to hold four (4) 8½-inch by 11-inch sheets.

- b. All other posting of material must comply with Office of Student Engagement (“OSE”) policy (see, <https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u5/2017/WMU-Poster-Flyer-Posting-Guidelines.pdf>).
 - c. All notices shall be signed by a responsible officer of the Union and be informational to the members of the bargaining unit concerning Union business and social events. In no case will the Union post on Union bulletin board space derogatory or defamatory material about the University, its units, or any employee of the University.
- 5. The Employer will, by the end of the first full week of each semester/session, supply to all Employee supervisors and to all faculty appointed to courses that employ Employees a document summarizing those terms and conditions of this Agreement relevant to those faculty and the Employees they are supervising. This document will be co-written and co-signed by the Employer and the Union, and will be reviewed and distributed each year by August 1.
- 6. The Employer shall provide the Union with file space for a Union website, along with links to the Union website from the Human Resources and Graduate College webs.

7. The Union shall be permitted to distribute materials in University mailboxes on the basis of an employing unit's customary means and through electronic mail.
8. Western will provide, without charge, one (1) teaching assistant parking pass for use by the Union's employee. The Union shall not allow any other persons to use the parking pass.
9. Upon request, the Employer's Director of Academic Labor Relations ("Director") shall meet with TAU officers once each semester. The meeting will be scheduled by the Director and will, absent mutual agreement, last not less than one (1) hour. At the meeting the parties will discuss general questions and issues concerning graduate teaching assistants; the meetings are not to discuss grievances or other negotiable terms and conditions of employment. TAU will develop and, at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting, present a meeting agenda to the Director.
10. Upon request, the Provost shall meet with TAU officers once each semester. The meeting will be scheduled by the Provost or his/her designee and will, absent mutual agreement, last not less than one (1) hour. At the meeting the parties will discuss general questions and issues concerning graduate teaching assistants; the meetings are not to discuss grievances or other negotiable terms and conditions of employment. TAU will develop and, at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting, present a meeting agenda to the Provost.

Article 6

Union Dues

Nothing contained in this Article shall be deemed as requiring a bargaining unit member, as a condition of obtaining or continuing employment with the Employer, to (a) refrain or resign from membership in, voluntary affiliation with, or voluntary financial support for TAU; (b) become or remain a member of TAU; (c) pay any uniformly assessed dues, fees, assessments or other charges or expenses of any kind or amount, or provide anything of value to TAU; (d) pay to any charitable organization or third party any amount that is in lieu of or equivalent to any portion of dues, fees or assessments or other charges or expenses required of TAU members. A bargaining unit member's choice will be respected and will not be cause for harassment or discrimination.

Employees seeking to change their TAU membership status should contact the union directly.

Dues Deduction

1. The Employer shall deduct from the salaries of TAU members, in installments for each pay period, uniformly assessed dues levied by TAU, provided the TAU member has voluntarily executed a standard form – acceptable to both parties - authorizing such deductions (See, Appendix 1). Deductions shall begin in the pay period following the Employer's receipt of the authorization.

- a. A TAU member who has authorized uniformly assessed dues deductions may cancel such authorization by submitting to the Employer and to TAU written notice of cancellation. Upon receipt, the Employer will in writing notify TAU it has received a written cancellation notice. Dues deduction will cease as of the payroll period following receipt of notice by the Employer and the Employer's written notice to TAU.
- b. The Employer shall furnish to TAU each pay period a listing of all uniformly assessed dues deducted from the salaries of TAU members. The Employer shall transfer all dues deductions to TAU each pay period.
- c. The Employer shall use its best efforts to make authorized deductions in the manner set forth but assumes no responsibility for any errors in making such deductions. When, upon receipt by TAU of a written claim, duplicate or improper uniformly assessed dues or fees deduction is found, refund shall be made to the claimant by TAU.
- d. The Employer shall not be liable to TAU, by reason of the requirements of this Article, for the remittance or payment of any sum other than actual deductions made from the pay earned by the TAU member.

- e. Authorized payroll deduction shall be suspended for the period of time that a TAU member is on an approved leave of absence or for up to eighteen (18) calendar months while the TAU member is absent from the bargaining unit. Unless authorization is cancelled, payroll deduction shall be reinstated with the first pay period after the TAU member returns to work in a bargaining unit position covered by the Agreement.

Indemnification

1. TAU shall indemnify and hold the Employer harmless from any liability resulting from any and all claims, demands, suits, or other actions arising from compliance with this Article. Indemnification shall include attorney's fees and the cost of litigation.

Reversion to Prior Language

1. In the event 2012 Public Act 349 is repealed or rendered ineffective as a result of voter, a final judicial determination, or legislative action, the provisions of Article 6, "Union Dues and Service Fees", contained in the 2012-2015 collective bargaining agreement between Western Michigan University and the Teaching Assistants' Union, AFT, AFL- CIO Local 1729, shall become effective per the time-frame established by such voter, judicial or legislative action and will continue in effect through the duration of this Agreement.

2. Acceptable standard “authorization form” language is:

I authorize my employer to deduct membership dues of my semester pay from my regular payroll paychecks. This authorization shall remain in effect until and unless revoked/cancelled by me.

Signature_____

Date _____

Article 7

Information

1. Upon written request from the Union, the Employer will provide the Union with relevant information necessary for the purposes of collective bargaining, as allowed by state or federal law. The cost of providing and reproducing such information shall be discussed and agreed upon by the parties.

2. The Employer shall, when issuing letters of appointment, reference the current TAU website and note that the individual may contact TAU with questions about transitioning to campus.
3. On or before the first day of the first pay period in an academic semester or session, the Employer shall provide, at no cost to the Union, a preliminary list of all current Employees in the bargaining unit. The list will be provided by the Employer in an electronic format, shall be alphabetical, and contain:
 - a. Name of the Employee
 - b. Employing Unit
 - c. E-mail address
 - d. Local phone number

4. Not more than fifteen (15) working days after the start of each semester/session, the Employer shall provide, at no cost to the Union, a list of all current Employees in the bargaining unit, with an updated list provided no later than forty-five (45) working days after the start of each semester/session. These lists will be provided by the Employer in an electronic format, shall be alphabetical, and contain:
 - a. Name of the Employee
 - b. Employee number
 - c. Employing unit
 - d. Enrolled unit
 - e. Job title
 - f. Appointment level
 - g. Appointment percentage
 - h. Rate of pay
 - i. Location of class
 - j. Days of the week for class.
 - k. Start and end time of class.
 - l. Local address and phone number.
 - m. Permanent address and phone number.
 - n. E-mail address.
 - o. U.S. citizenship status.

5. If a court of competent jurisdiction rules it is impermissible for the Employer to provide any of the above information, the Employer will give the Union the opportunity to convene an Article 16 conference before complying with the court ruling. The Employer retains the discretion to decide whether it can delay complying with the court ruling pending an appeal.
6. The Employer shall provide updates of the list of current Employees in the bargaining unit and identify Employees who enter or leave the bargaining unit during the course of a semester or session for any reason. The Employer shall provide notice of any change, in writing, to the Union within ten (10) working days of the information being available to the Office of the Provost.
7. The Union shall retain all information in confidence and disclose it only to those whose Union duties require them to have such information.

Article 8

Appointment and Assignment

1. Appointment

- a. Employing units shall transparently advertise employment opportunities to existing and potential graduate students, including likely work assignments, qualifications, and hiring procedures, on websites, email messages, newsletters, or using other tools. This will include use of the Graduate College website.

2. Appointment Decisions

- a. The Employer, through its employing units, will - in writing - notify Employees/individuals of employment decisions.
 - i. By December 1 for an individual who will become a new bargaining unit member and who will commence employment the following spring semester.
 - ii. By March 31 for a current bargaining unit member who will be employed for either of the immediate following summer sessions.
 - A. Once the offer has been accepted, the Employer will provide the Employee at least two (2) calendar weeks' notice of any change to the Employee's summer appointment. If the need for change becomes known in a period shorter than two (2) calendar weeks, the Employer will provide notice as soon as possible.

- iii. By March 31 for a current bargaining unit member who will be offered an appointment for the following year. However, if there is an external deadline that may delay this notification, then the Employer will notify the Union of the external deadline no later than January 15, after which the deadline for notification to the bargaining unit member will be extended to the date of the external deadline.
 - iv. By March 31, except in cases of 2(a)iii, for a current bargaining unit member, if he/she will not be offered another appointment for the following year.
 - v. An employee who does not receive timely notification should promptly contact his/her employing unit for clarification/verification.
- b. The parties have an accepted offer of employment when the signed appointment letter is received by the Employer.

- c. Upon request, the Employer will share/review the template TA appointment letter with TAU, allowing TAU to provide its input regarding desired/recommended revisions to the template appointment letter. The Employer will discourage employing units/departments from altering the template appointment letter. TAU may grieve appointment letters not in accord with this Agreement. If the Employer grants the grievance, the Employer will provide TAU and the involved employee a notice of correction within five (5) business days after granting the grievance.

3. Appointment Duration

- a. Full-time academic-year appointments have value to both parties. When possible, the Employer will offer full-time academic-year appointments. When not possible, the Employer will offer 1/2, 2/3, and 3/4 fractional academic year appointments.
- b. When academic year appointments are not possible, the Employer will offer 1/2, 2/3, 3/4 and full-time semester/session appointments.
- c. The Employer may also, at its discretion, offer an appointment that encompasses the academic year and one or both summer sessions, or an academic year semester and one or both summer sessions.

- d. If an Employee/individual is offered and accepts an academic-year (fall, spring) or longer (fall, spring, summer I and/or summer II) appointment, the appointment level (1/2, 2/3, 3/4 or full-time) will not be reduced during a subsequent semester/session within the appointment term, unless the Employer has “cause” to reduce the appointment level.
 - i. The Employer will provide at least two (2) calendar weeks’ written notice to the Employee and TAU President. The written notice will explain why the appointment level is being reduced. If the need for change becomes known in a period shorter than two (2) calendar weeks, notice will be provided as soon as possible.
 - ii. If TAU disagrees there is “cause”, TAU may file/initiate a grievance at Step Two of the Agreement’s grievance procedure (Article 15, Section 4(c)).
 - iii. The Arbitrator may award any appropriate remedy, recognizing the Arbitrator cannot order a new appointment and that any monetary damages award must be limited to the remaining portion of the Employee’s appointment.

- iv. If there is insufficient teaching work to maintain the Employee's current appointment level, the employing unit/department will be responsible to find alternate duties for the Employee so that the Employee does not experience a reduction in her/his initial appointment level and/or pay for the remainder of the appointment term.

4. Appointment Renewal

- a. If an Employee's graduate appointment under the classification of teaching is renewed, there should be no reduction in the appointment type or funding level unless by "mutual agreement" of the Employer and Employee.
 - i. The responsible Chair will provide written explanation to the Employee, the Director of Academic Labor Relations and TAU as to why the Employee's appointment type or funding level is being reduced.
 - ii. The Employee's dated signature on the written explanation will serve as and signify "mutual agreement".
- b. Longevity

- i. Duration: Graduate Teaching Assistants (TAs) shall have a reasonable assurance of continued employment within their academic department for the following terms:
Master's (MA/MS) students: two (2) years. Doctoral (Ph.D.) students: four (4) years.
- ii. Eligibility Criteria: This assurance is contingent upon the employee: (1) maintaining good standing in their academic program; (2) maintaining satisfactory performance as an employee; and (3) maintaining continuous employment for Fall and Spring semesters.
- iii. Institutional Flexibility: While the University intends for multi-year employment to be common, continued appointment is not an absolute guarantee. For example, appointments may be subject to change due to academic program restructuring or a loss of undergraduate students in the relevant discipline.
- iv. Nothing in this section is meant to imply that master's students should only work for two (2) years or that doctoral students should only work four (4) years.

5. Appointment Termination

- a. Any appointment may be terminated if the Employee fails to meet or maintain performance requirements as set forth in Article 13.

- b. Any appointment may be terminated if the Employee fails to meet or maintain the academic requirements for a full-time graduate student in good standing in his/her program.
- c. Any appointment and any Employee may be terminated for “cause”.

6. Assignments

- a. Employees may express preferences for work assignments in writing within their employing unit according to established unit procedures. Final determination of all work assignments shall be made by the Employer.
- b. As soon as practical, but not later than one (1) calendar week prior to the start of the semester/session or the appointment start date, whichever is later, the Employer will provide the Employee with their duties, including course record number (CRN) and available course materials.
- c. The Employer will provide the Employee at least two (2) calendar weeks’ notice of any change in work assignment. If the need for change becomes known in a period shorter than two (2) calendar weeks, notice will be provided as soon as possible and at least 72 hours before new duties would commence. If the new duties are significantly different than those in the letter of appointment, the instructor and chair should collaboratively consider additional support such as fewer hours in another part of the work assignment

or additional staffing.

Article 9

Salaries

1. General Compensation Provisions

- a. The salaries and salary adjustments listed below are minimum requirements and do not include the cash value of tuition waivers (Article 11). At its discretion, the Employer may make upward adjustments in the salary and fringe benefits of individual Employees when appropriate. Each Employee will be appointed at one of the approved appointment levels (full, $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{2}{3}$, $\frac{1}{2}$).

2. Salary Baseline and Wage Adjustments for Contract Period

Employees will receive their base pay according to the Employer's pay schedule. For the period specified, pay shall be:

Annual pay for all GA/DGA:

Year (% increase)	Academic Year Rate	Semester Rate	Session Rate
2026-2027 (4%)	\$15,341	\$7,671	\$3,835

2027-2028 (2.75%)	\$15,763	\$7,881	\$3,941
2028-2029 (2%)	\$16,078	\$8,039	\$4,020

Annual pay for all DGA-C:

Year (% increase)	Academic Year Rate	Semester Rate	Session Rate
2026-2027 (4%)	\$18,378	\$9,189	\$4,594
2027-2028 (2.75%)	\$18,883	\$9,442	\$4,721
2028-2029 (2%)	\$19,261	\$9,630	\$4,815

Employees awarded “candidacy” will be automatically appointed as DGA-C beginning in the next full semester or session after achieving candidacy.

Salaries and average hours worked for $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{2}{3}$, and $\frac{1}{2}$ fractional appointments will scale accordingly, rounded up to the nearest quarter/quarter hour.

3. Lump Sum Payments

Each Fall and Spring semester Western will provide each Employee a lump sum payment at the following rates:

\$420	2026-2027 academic year
\$455	2027-2028 academic year
\$505	2028-2029 academic year

4. TAU Academic Success Payment

For the duration of this contract, every employee returning to an appointment for a second or subsequent academic year will receive a one-time payment of \$150 during each Fall/Spring semester, in recognition of their academic success during the prior year of employment. After an employee has completed the equivalent of six (6) full-time semesters as a GA/DGA, this one-time payment will increase to \$250. These payments do not apply to those with DGA-C status.

Article 10

Benefits

Employees will maintain health insurance as required by the Affordable Care Act (“ACA”) and/or Western Michigan University policy.

Employees who are international students will obtain and maintain health insurance as required by the U.S. government (J-1 Visa holders) or as per the ACA (F-1 Visa holders).

If the ACA does not cover any employee group (U.S. citizen or non-U.S. citizen), the parties will, upon either party’s request, promptly re-open this Article for further negotiation.

Article 11

Tuition Remission and Waiver

1. Tuition remission is granted during semesters/sessions falling within the employment period specified in the Employee's letter of appointment. The amount of tuition remission granted shall be pro-rated for fractional appointments. Any tuition owed by an Employee may be paid via the University's deferred payment plan. The set-up fee for the deferred payment plan will be refunded after the first payment is received. There is no interest charged when payments are made according to the payment plan.

2. All full-time Doctoral Graduate Assistants with Candidacy, Doctoral Graduate Assistants, and Graduate Assistants shall be granted a minimum of 9 credits of tuition remission during each of Fall/Spring semesters, and a minimum of 3 credits of tuition remission during each of Summer I/Summer II sessions.
 - a. An Employee with a ½ time appointment will receive 6 credits of tuition remission during each of Fall/Spring semesters and 3 credits of tuition remission during each of Summer I/Summer II sessions.

- b. An Employee with two ½ time appointments in a single semester will be granted a maximum of 9 credits of tuition remission during each of Fall/Spring semesters.

- 3. Delayed Use of the Tuition Remission Waiver. TAU unit members who are on appointments and do not use the full amount of their allotted credits of tuition remission during either of Fall/Spring semesters may defer the unused credits to the Summer I and/or Summer II session subsequent to the Fall/Spring semester in which the credits were granted.
 - a. To qualify for delayed use of tuition remission credits, the Employee must meet the following conditions:
 - i. Hold an active appointment during the Spring semester immediately prior to summer session/s for which delayed tuition remission is being sought.
 - ii. Be registered for the classes in the Summer I and/or Summer II term for which use of the delayed remission is sought, and

- iii. Have submitted notification to the Graduate College at least 30 calendar days prior to the start of the session in which the Employee wishes to apply for use of delayed tuition remission (by use of the Graduate College-approved form of his/her intent to utilize delayed tuition remission credits).
- b. Regardless of appointment type, and regardless of when used, tuition remission (including delayed use of tuition remission) can only be used for classes that are part of the Employee's advisor-approved graduate program of study and are completed or withdrawn from before the end of the period for 100% refund.

Article 12

Leave Time

1. Medical Leave and Pay

An Employee shall be eligible for up to five (5) days of medical leave/pay in a semester/session beginning the first day of the initial employment period or the amount of earned sick time required under the Michigan Earned Sick Time Act (ESTA), as amended, whichever is greater. Leave may be used in half day or full day increments.

The Employee must take leave/pay when unable to meet employment obligations (e.g., lectures, recitations, labs, office hours, staff meetings, etc.) for any reason covered by MI-ESTA, and must use MI-ESTA leave first when it is available. The Employee may utilize leave/pay when fulfilling

military service obligations. The Employer may request documentation of such need, and the Employee shall provide documentation when requested.

When a documented medical reason exists that requires an employee to miss up to six (6) weeks of work beyond earned medical leave during an appointment period, those weeks may be taken without pay and without losing any portion of tuition deferral per the appointment letter and subject to Article 11. During the appointment period the employee will have the right to return to paid status when able to continue assigned duties. A request for unpaid leave must be directed to the department chair/director as soon as feasible, and all requests shall be given serious consideration.

Nothing in this Article shall be construed to limit an Employee's rights under the Family and Medical Leave Act.

2. Jury Duty/Court Testimony

In the event an Employee is unable to meet employment obligations (e.g., lectures, recitations, labs, office hours, staff meetings, etc.), because he/she is summoned and reports for jury duty or is subpoenaed for court testimony in a legal action to which he/she is not a party, the Employee shall be granted paid time off. When summoned or subpoenaed for jury duty or testimony, the Employee shall provide the immediate supervisor (or department or unit designee) with written verification (i.e., copy of summons or subpoena) of the times and dates of the required service.

3. Immigration Proceedings

In the event an Employee is unable to meet employment obligations (e.g., lectures, recitations, labs, office hours, staff meetings, etc.) because he/she is compelled during working hours to participate in immigration proceedings for him/herself or for the Employee's spouse or child (including step-child), such absence shall be with compensation for up to two (2) days of absence per semester or session. If compelled to participate in immigration proceedings during working hours, the Employee shall provide the immediate supervisor (or department or unit designee) with written verification from the involved governmental agency including times and dates relevant to the absence.

4. Bereavement Leave

An Employee will be granted up to five (5) consecutive university working days off with pay to attend the funeral, memorial, or other similar service or gathering, and/or to make arrangements necessitated by the death of a family member. In this case, family member will be defined as spouse, parent (or other person standing *in loco-parentis* to Employee), child (including step-child), grandparent, sibling, or the Employee's spouse's parent, grandparent, or sibling.

5. Designee in Lieu of Spouse

An Employee may, in lieu of and other than a spouse, designate one person for whom the Employee may exercise the benefits of items 1, 4, and

5 of this article.

6. Replacement Coverage

In the event an Employee is unable to meet employment obligations for reasons covered under this Article, the Employee will notify the appropriate immediate supervisor (or department or unit designee) as promptly as possible so that arrangements for the absence can be made by the Employer. In addition, an Employee will make reasonable efforts to assist in arrangements for another to meet his or her employment obligations. It is the responsibility of the Employer to find a temporary replacement. In no case will the Employee be required to pay for the replacement work or coverage.

Except where work assignments (as per Article 8.6b) explicitly include substituting for another instructor or instructors in the case of absence (regardless of their bargaining unit), the maximum number of hours assigned to a single Employee to cover an absence cannot exceed four (4) hours in a single semester, or two (2) hours in a single session, rounded up to the nearest hour, except as agreed upon between advisor and instructor. Hours more than the maximum will be compensated at the effective hourly rate of the appointment, defined as the semester stipend divided by 300 hours, or the session stipend divided by 150 hours.

Article 13

Standard Performance Requirements and General Disciplinary Provisions

In the performance of their duties, all Employees will conduct themselves in a manner that is professional, courteous and conducive to a professional atmosphere in their class/laboratory, employing unit and the University.

1. Employee Responsibilities

- a. Employees are responsible for following University policies and procedures regarding instruction.
- b. Employees are responsible for carrying out their duties under the direction, and according to the requirements, of assigned faculty of record or supervisors.
- c. Employees shall be responsible, under faculty of record or supervisor direction, for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades and professional standards in instruction.
- d. Employees who are assigned responsibility for determining course/laboratory content will ensure that such content is consistent with course descriptions approved through the University Curriculum Review Process.

- e. Where applicable, Employees are responsible for clearly stating course objectives, methods of determining final course grades and any special attendance requirements that differ from the unit's attendance requirements at the beginning of the semester/session, and for specifying the above in course syllabi.
- f. Assignments and examinations are expected to be returned to students with reasonable promptness. Final exams and grading records shall be retained for at least one semester to permit review by students.
- g. Employees are expected to meet their classes at the regularly scheduled times. In the event of illness or injury, Employees will, when possible, notify the supervising faculty or employing unit in advance if they are to be absent. In other cases, absences from class must be approved in advance by the employing unit. Employees are encouraged to assist the employing unit in finding appropriate coverage for the missed classes.
- h. Employees are expected to schedule and keep a reasonable number of office hours, in accordance with established University or departmental policy, and to make appointments available for individual student or small group conferences as needed. These times should be convenient for both students and Employees. Employees shall make reasonable efforts to respond to work-related e-mail communications.

- i. Grades shall be assigned based on the methods described in the course syllabus and turned in to meet employing unit deadlines. When there are multiple Instructors of Record, there will be reasonable attempts to consult on final grades prior to submission of such grades.
- j. Student ratings of instruction (course evaluations) shall be conducted in each class taught by Employees in accordance with established University or department procedures. Copies of his/her student ratings will be provided to each Employee, and summaries of student ratings shall be placed in the Employee's personnel record for use by the employing unit and the University in evaluating the Employee.

2. Unit Policies

- a. Each employing unit shall provide to Employees in the unit a copy of its policies at no cost.
- b. Each employing unit shall communicate to its Employees any new policies or changes in policy, the standards of Employee conduct, and the penalties, if any, for violating such policies.

- c. Departments will make available to Employees information directly relevant to the courses which Employees are teaching, which at the minimum includes course catalog information, departmental syllabi, approved textbook information, exam protocols, and relevant procedures for proposing adjustment to any set course policies.
- d. Departments are encouraged to evaluate the performance of Employees annually.

3. General Disciplinary Provisions

- a. The parties recognize the authority of the Employer to suspend, discharge, or take other appropriate disciplinary action against Employees for just cause.
- b. Discipline and/or discharge may result from unsatisfactory employment performance (subject to the procedure described below) or for Employee misconduct. Either may result from an accumulation of lesser infractions or from a single serious infraction.

- c. Whenever possible, the Employer shall give the Employee advance notice of its intent to hold an investigatory interview. The Employer shall notify the Employee during the initial notice of intent to hold an investigatory interview that they are entitled to the presence of a Union Representative and will copy the Union on the request for an investigatory interview.
- d. If any disciplinary action is taken against an Employee, the Employee will receive a written notice of such action. A copy of the notice will also be provided to the Union.

4. Procedure for Unsatisfactory Performance

- a. In cases of unsatisfactory employment performance, the matter will be discussed with the Employee prior to any action being taken. A written summary of such a discussion will be available at the written request of the Employee provided the Employee's request is received within forty-eight (48) hours of the discussion; whenever the Employee requests such a summary, a copy of the document will also be provided to the Union.
- b. If the Employer determines that the existing situation can be corrected by the Employee and is of such a nature that correction is appropriate, the Employee will be given not less than one calendar week from date of discussion to make the correction.

- c. When appropriate, employment duties may be reduced and employment fraction and pay may be reduced correspondingly, or employment may be terminated.

4. Appeals

Grievances regarding suspension, discharge, or reduction in fraction of employment and pay may be submitted beginning at Step Two of the Grievance and Arbitration Procedures, provided the grievance is submitted in writing within the twenty (20) business day period following notice of the termination, suspension, or reduction. Grievances regarding other forms of discipline may be submitted beginning at Step One of the Grievance and Arbitration Procedures, provided the grievance is submitted in writing within the twenty (20) business day period following notice of disciplinary action.

Article 14

Employee Rights

1. Library Access: Employees will receive the following privileges at the University Libraries when they identify their status as Employees before checkout: the borrowing period for an Employee is one semester; Employees may borrow up to 50 items, and are exempt from ordinary overdue fines. The exemption from ordinary overdue fines does not include fines for overdue recalled items and replacement charges for lost items. Details are available at the library circulation desk.

2. Mailboxes: Each department or unit shall make available a convenient receptacle at a designated location for Employees to receive University business correspondence and U.S. Mail. Where possible, each department or unit shall make available one (1) receptacle for each Employee, but no less than one (1) receptacle for every five (5) employees.
3. Departments will make arrangements for Employees to obtain texts when provided free of charge by the publisher. Any instructional materials required by the department chair or designee for a course being taught by the Employee and required of students taking the course will be provided or made available at no cost to the Employee.
4. Employees will be accorded the use of University facilities (e.g., offices, research facilities, etc.) authorized by the director of the facilities on the same basis as faculty. This provision does not apply to the West Hills Athletic Club.
5. An Employee's department or unit shall make arrangements for the Employee's access to his or her office, and to the building containing that office, consistent with arrangements made for the instructional or research or similarly situated professional staff of that department or unit.

6. Supplies, duplicating, collating and other office machinery (including but not limited to photocopiers, computers and computer printers) shall be available without charge to an Employee at least to the extent required by his/her employment obligations, as determined by the employing unit.
7. Prior to making any changes in final grades, the chair or designee shall make reasonable attempts to consult with the Employee.
8. Parking: Employees will be provided with the choice of either a hang-tag parking pass, or a parking sticker valid for parking in university employee parking lots at no cost. Each pass or sticker will be valid for the period of the Employees' current appointment.
9. Bookstore Discount: Western will use its best efforts to secure from any bookstore vendor a discount to bargaining unit members of ten percent (10%) on all purchases of one dollar (\$1.00) or more made at Western's Campus Bookstore. Western will apply the bookstore discount to any item ordered specially by the Bookstore for a person eligible for the discount if the item is of the type normally carried as a part of the Bookstore's merchandise line. The discount shall apply only to the first copy of any given book.
10. Employees will be accorded priority in securing University housing in residence halls or family housing apartments (if deadlines are observed and vacancies permit).

Article 15

Grievance and Arbitration Procedures

1. Definition and Representation

A grievance is a written complaint and request for remedy involving an alleged violation of a provision or provisions of the Agreement and filed using the procedure outlined below. The primary purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest level possible, equitable resolution of the grievance.

2. Informal Resolution of Workplace Concerns

Nothing contained in this article shall prevent the informal adjustment of any workplace concern, and the parties intend that, insofar as is reasonably possible, every workplace concern will be resolved between the employee(s) involved and the administrative agent(s) of Western immediately involved.

3. Grievants

The Union is responsible for determining when, in its judgment, there has been an alleged violation of the contract, and for filing grievances with the appropriate administrator(s) accordingly.

When more than one Employee has a grievance involving common facts and provisions of the Agreement, the Union shall process the grievance on behalf of all similarly-situated Employees, clearly specifying that it is a “Group Grievance.”

Where one or more extant grievances involve a similar issue, those grievances, by mutual agreement of the parties, may be held in abeyance without prejudice, pending the disposition of an appeal to Step Two or arbitration of a representative case.

4. Grievance Procedure

The specified time limits at each step of the procedure may be extended by mutual written agreement of the parties involved at that step.

An actual verified receipt, time-stamped email, or postmark will be regarded by the parties as evidence of delivery and receipt for the purposes of determining whether time limits have been met.

Grievances are to be held in abeyance when classes are not in session. Classes are deemed to include the days in the final exam schedule, but not include fall break, winter closure, or spring break. During summer sessions the two sides will decide on a case-by case basis if a grievance should be in abeyance based on factors such as availability of the grievant, availability of relevant TAU officers, and whether or not the grievant (or those affected by a chapter grievance) have an appointment in the fall semester. This decision should be mutually determined by the Provost (or

their designee) and the Chapter, but when that is not possible the default is to place the grievance in abeyance between the end of spring classes and the first day of fall classes. A grievance is not in abeyance unless the two parties have talked about the subject of the grievance in advance.

- a. Initiation of Grievance. The Union may initiate a grievance by serving a written notice of it to the appropriate administrative agent (e.g., a grievance within a department shall be filed with the dean of the relevant college). A copy of any grievance shall be filed with the Director of Academic Labor Relations. Such notice shall be clearly identified as a grievance and shall concisely state the facts upon which the grievance is based and when they occurred, identify related provisions in the Agreement, specify the relief and remedy sought, and be signed by the grievance officer of the Union. Such notice shall be filed within thirty (30) business days after the occurrence of the event upon which the grievance is based. If the affected employee or the Union has no knowledge of the occurrence of the event within said thirty (30) business days, then such notice shall be filed within thirty (30) business days after the employee or Union had knowledge thereof or conditions were such that the employee or the Union should have had knowledge thereof.

- i. In the event of an error in the identification of the appropriate administrative agent(s), the employer shall bear the responsibility of notifying the Union of the error and of routing the grievance to the appropriate administrative agent(s). Errors in the identification of the appropriate administrative agent(s), and the time entailed in correcting them, shall not be counted against the thirty (30) business day time limit for the initiation of a grievance.
- b. Step One. Upon receipt of the written grievance, the designated administrative agent shall arrange a meeting to discuss the grievance with the appropriate representative(s) of the Union. The administrative agent may invite an associate to attend, and additional persons may be present by mutual agreement. This presentation by the Union and ensuing discussion shall be completed within fourteen (14) calendar days after the required initiation notice is received by the administrator. A written answer to the grievance shall be given to the Union by Western within fourteen (14) calendar days of that meeting. If the grievance is adjusted to the Union's satisfaction, the adjustment will be signed by the parties. One (1) copy thereof will be given to the Union, one (1) copy to the Director of Academic Labor Relations and Contract Administration, and one (1) copy will be retained by the administrator.

- i. If the representative of Western fails to schedule a meeting within fourteen (14) calendar days of receipt of the grievance, or to respond in writing to the grievance within fourteen (14) calendar days of the meeting, the grievance shall automatically advance to the next step of the grievance procedure. In the event of the failure to comply with the time limits on the part of the Union, the grievance shall be considered as having been withdrawn.
- c. Step Two. If the grievance is not adjusted in Step One, the Union may appeal the grievance to the second step of the grievance procedure, provided such appeal is sought in writing, signed by the Union, sets forth the objection to the Step One answer, and, within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of the Step One answer is presented to the Director of Academic Labor Relations.
 - i. If the representative of Western fails to schedule a meeting within fourteen (14) calendar days of receipt of the grievance, or to respond in writing to the grievance within fourteen (14) calendar days of the meeting, the grievance shall be advanced to arbitration at the Union's option. In the event of the failure to comply with the time limits on the part of the Union, the grievance shall be considered as having been withdrawn.

- d. Impartial Arbitration. Steps One and Two of the grievance procedure set forth in this Agreement shall be pursued to completion before any application for arbitration may be made, unless the parties hereto enter into a written waiver of such step or steps and agree to proceed directly to arbitration.

A grievance, as defined in Section 1, which is not resolved at Step Two of the grievance procedure may be submitted to arbitration by the Union, provided that written notice of intent to arbitrate is received by the Director of Academic Labor Relations within thirty (30) calendar days following receipt by the Union of the Step Two answer (or, as per the time limits set forth in Section 4.c.i.). Such notice shall identify the grievance, and shall set forth the provisions of the Agreement involved and the remedy desired.

- i. Following written notice to the Director of Academic Labor Relations, an arbitrator shall be selected from the rotating panel of arbitrators set forth in Section 4e below. If the arbitrator at the head of the queue is unable to schedule a hearing date within 120 days of the request for his/her services, the next arbitrator will be contacted, and so on until an arbitrator who can schedule the hearing within 120 days is identified. If the Arbitrator does not accept selection, the next Arbitrator on the panel will be contacted.

- ii. The Employer and Union shall jointly notify the Arbitrator of his/her selection, and upon acceptance by the Arbitrator, shall forward to the Arbitrator a copy of the grievance chain, the Union's notice of intent to arbitrate and a copy of the Agreement. If the Arbitrator does not accept selection, the next Arbitrator on the panel will be contacted.
- iii. The Arbitrator shall fix the time and place for hearing the issue or issues submitted for decision. The hearing will be held in Kalamazoo, Michigan, unless the parties mutually agree to a different location.
- iv. At the time of the arbitration hearing, both the Employer and the Union shall have the right to examine and cross-examine witnesses.
- v. Upon request of either the Employer or the Union or both, a transcript of the hearing shall be made and furnished to the Arbitrator, with the Employer and the Union having an opportunity to purchase their own copy. The party requesting the transcript shall bear the cost of the Arbitrator's copy, unless it is mutually requested. In such a case, the cost shall be shared equally.

- vi. At the close of the hearing, the Arbitrator shall afford the Employer and the Union a reasonable opportunity to furnish briefs if either party requests the opportunity.
- vii. The jurisdictional authority of the Arbitrator is defined as, and limited to, the determination of any grievance as defined in Article 16, Section 1 submitted to him/her consistent with this Agreement and considered by him/her in accordance with this Agreement.
- viii. The Arbitrator shall not have any authority to add to, subtract from, or otherwise modify this Agreement. The Arbitrator shall also not have the authority to order that a discharged Employee be reinstated or offered a new appointment, but rather any monetary remedy for wrongful discharge will be limited to the remaining unpaid portion of the Employee's appointment plus interest at the current U.S. Treasury rate.
- ix. The fees and expenses of the Arbitrator shall be paid by the party not prevailing. The expenses of, and the compensation for, each and every witness and representative for either the Employer or the Union shall be paid by the party producing the witness or having the representative.

- e. If, in the event of arbitration regarding suspension, discharge, or reduction in fraction of employment and pay, the Arbitrator finds for the Employer, the Employer will cover thirty (30) percent of the fees and expenses for the Arbitrator.
 - i. The Arbitrator shall render the decision in writing within thirty (30) calendar days following the hearing or the deadline for the submission of briefs, whichever is later.
 - ii. The Arbitrator's decision, when made in accordance with the Arbitrator's jurisdiction and authority established by this Agreement, shall be final and binding upon the Employer, the Union, and the Employee or Employees involved.
 - iii. The provisions of this section do not prohibit the Employer and the Union from mutually agreeing to expedited arbitration of a given grievance or grievances
- f. Panel of Arbitrators: Thomas J. Barnes, Mark Glazer, Barry Goldma, Katheryn VanDagens.

5. Procedure for Disputes Over Employee Classification

- a. In the event that the Union believes an employee has not been properly classified, and the employee's classification would be determinative of whether the employee is a member of the bargaining unit, the Union may request the convening of a special conference (as per Article 16) to discuss this matter. Should the special conference fail to resolve the matter, a grievance may be initiated at Step Two of the grievance procedure.

Article 16

Special Conferences

Special conferences on issues of mutual interest to Employees and the Employer may be arranged between representatives of the Union and of the Employer. The agenda and scheduling of the special conference will be determined by mutual agreement of the representatives of the Union and of the Employer.

Article 17

Hours and Class Size

1. Hours

An Employee with a full appointment will work no more than 20 hours per week, on average; approximately 300 hours total in a semester or 150 hours total in a summer session. Salaries and average hours worked for 1/2, 2/3, and 3/4 fractional appointments will scale accordingly, rounded up

to the nearest quarter/quarter hour.

2. Class Size

- a. Class-size capacities for all courses in a department are determined in accordance with the faculty collective bargaining agreement.
- b. When scheduling Employees' course sections, departments will set class sizes in the same manner as for faculty.
- c. Departments will make known to Employees departmental procedures for adding additional students to class rosters.
- d. The special conference procedure (as set forth in Article 16) shall be made available to discuss Employee concerns regarding class size.

Article 18

Curriculum

- 1. The curriculum and the educational programs of Western Michigan University are established through the University Curriculum Review Process (UCRP).

2. Departmental curriculum committees and associated policy-making bodies are encouraged to solicit and consider Employees' input when re-organizing or reviewing courses taught by Employees.
3. Employees are encouraged to submit written comments and recommendations to departmental curriculum committees and associated policy-making bodies for their consideration.
4. Nothing herein precludes oral dialogue on class-specific or overall curriculum.

Article 19

Training and Professional Development

1. The Employer is responsible for establishing orientation and in-service training programs for all Employees. Such programs shall, at a minimum, provide training in the teaching of subject matter, an introduction to course goals, grading criteria and practices, and classroom procedures. Employees shall, as part of their regular duties, participate in such programs.
2. While such programs are important for all Employees, attendance will not be required for any Employee who is determined by the employing unit already to have the skills and experience equivalent to those provided in the program.

3. The Employer shall consider Employee input and participation in developing training programs. Employing units will consider Employee requests for additional training.
4. To gain feedback and increase Employees' effectiveness, employing units and the Graduate College will be encouraged to provide avenues for professional development at no cost to the Employee. Such avenues may include mentorship in pedagogy and class observation by faculty and/or peers.
5. If required training occurs during the defined work period of an Employee's employment, then time spent in training will be included as part of the hourly total in the Employee's workload. If required training occurs before the defined work period of an Employee's employment, the Employee will be compensated in salary at the hourly equivalent of the Employee's rate. Given a timely request by the Employee, the Employer will provide housing, if available, at the customary rates, to be paid by the Employer for Employees who attend training prior to the first day of the defined work period of an Employee's employment.
6. Employees will not be required to pay for mandatory training sessions.

7. Upon request, the Employer agrees to meet with representatives of the Union, under the auspices of Article 16, to receive input, comments and suggestions relating to the need for specific training programs, the content of programs offered or programs to be considered for development. In such meetings the Employer agrees to arrange for participation of members of the University community with appropriate expertise.

Article 20

Scope of the Agreement

1. This Agreement represents the entire agreement between the Employer and the Union. This Agreement shall supersede and cancel all previous agreements, between the Employer, the Union or Employees. Any agreement(s) that supplement this Agreement shall not be binding or effective unless reduced to writing and signed by the Employer and the Union.
2. No past practice, course of conduct, or understanding prior to the date of ratification which varies, waives, or modifies any of the express terms and conditions contained herein shall be binding upon the parties hereto unless made and executed in writing by the Employer and the Union.

3. The Employer and the Union acknowledge that during the negotiations which resulted in this Agreement each had the unlimited right and opportunity to make demands and proposals with respect to any subject or matter not removed by law from the area of collective bargaining, and that the understandings and agreements arrived at by the parties after the exercise of that right and opportunity are set forth in this Agreement. No provision of this Agreement, nor the right of either the Employer or the Union under the terms of the Agreement shall be changed or altered in any way unless such change or alteration is agreed to in writing between Employer and the Union. Therefore, the Employer and the Union, for the life of this Agreement, each voluntarily waives the right, and agrees that the other shall not be obligated to bargain collectively with respect to any subject or matter covered in this Agreement.
4. Any agreement reached between the Employer and the Union is binding upon all Employees the bargaining unit, the Employer and the Union, and may not be changed by any individual or group of Employees, or unilaterally by the Employer or the Union.

5. Should any part or provision of this Agreement be rendered or declared illegal or invalid by operation of law or by decision of any tribunal of competent jurisdiction or if compliance with or enforcement of any provision should be restrained by such tribunal pending a final determination as to its validity, the remaining part(s) or provision(s) of this Agreement shall not be affected thereby. In the event any provision herein contained is so rendered invalid, upon written request the Employer and the Union shall enter into collective bargaining for the purpose of negotiating a mutually satisfactory replacement for such provision.

Article 21

Duration

This agreement shall become effective as of August 21, 2026, and shall continue in full force and effect until 12:01 a.m. on the 22nd day of August 2029.

It may extend beyond that date upon written consent of the parties. If either party desires to amend or modify this Agreement, written notice to that effect shall be given to the other party by September 15, 2028. Following such notice, negotiations will begin at a mutually agreed upon time.