

# WSU faculty protest contract negotiations during board of trustees meeting

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Local News

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BEAVERCREEK, Ohio (WDTN) - BEAVERCREEK, Ohio (WDTN) - Passions flared during the Wright State University Board of Trustees meeting Friday.

Several hundred WSU faculty members and their supporters waved signs and wore shirts and buttons in protest of stagnant contract negotiations.

The American Association of University Professors chapter at WSU has been negotiating with board of trustees since contracts expired in June 2017. When the parties reached an impasse, the faculty union threatened to strike.

Friday, several faculty members and students addressed the board with concerns the drawn-out process may be affecting the University's reputation and ability to increase enrollment.

Dr. Noeleen McIlvenna, a WSU history professor and faculty union officer, told board members, "You can end this today and should because you will not win the fight you pick with us."

Many faculty remarks and jabs at the trustees were met with raucous cheering during Friday's meeting.

One faculty member said, "The board now appears to be engaged in direct attempts to undermine the academic mission of the university."

Board chair Douglas Fecher responded to the union's accusations with an explanation of fiscal responsibility. He said the board is willing to return to the table for negotiations, but the University is primarily focused on correcting years of financial mismanagement.

"The board's number one care and concern is how do we put this university back on a sustainable financial path so we never get back here again," said Fecher.

In a press conference following Friday's meeting, the AAUP-WSU explained its major sticking point is the board's prioritization of profits over academics.

Dr. McIlvenna said the union offered to make cuts to help the university's budget, but trustees wanted full control of where and how to make the cuts.

"We have to draw a line in the sand for the students because the proposals cut the academic mission," she said.

A fact-finding report is due on October 29th. At that time, the AAUP-WSU plans to vote on its findings and decide whether or not a strike is necessary.

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