



A Union of Professionals

**AFT Michigan**

AFL-CIO

*Press Release*

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## FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY NON-TENURE-TRACK FACULTY VOTE "YES" FOR UNION

**BIG RAPIDS, MI** – Nontenure-track faculty at Ferris State University voted overwhelmingly today for union representation, giving themselves the right to negotiate job security, health insurance, salary, and other conditions of employment with the university administration. The vote, 47 in favor, 7 against, certifies the Ferris Nontenure-Track Faculty Organization (FNTFO) as a collective bargaining agent affiliated with AFT Michigan, AFL-CIO. Eligible to vote were approximately 70 nontenure-track faculty who work on the university's Big Rapids campus. Ballots were counted today, July 2, by the Michigan Employment Relations Commission (MERC).

Nontenure-track faculty, frequently appointed on a semester-by-semester basis, teach an increasing percentage of courses at Ferris State and at universities nationwide. Many supported unionization because of the need for improved job security. "We make a serious commitment to the university; they should be able to make a commitment to us," said Beth Reynolds, who teaches English at the university. Other cited salaries and health insurance. Overall, however, the central issue for these faculty was recognition: "We need a union to have a voice," said Anna Rizzo, an instructor in Biology and a member of the union's organizing committee. "Nontenure-track faculty are currently left out of the decision-making at the university."

Like the nontenure-track faculty unions at Eastern Michigan University, the University of Michigan, Michigan State University, Wayne State University, Henry Ford Community College, and Western Michigan University. FNTFO is affiliated with AFT Michigan, AFT, AFL-CIO. Nontenure-track faculty at Central Michigan University recently reached an agreement with the CMU administration about which faculty will be eligible to vote in a representation election to be conducted later this month.

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*AFT Michigan is a union of 35,000-members working in K-12 and intermediate school districts, community colleges, universities, and local government. The locals extend as far south as Monroe and north to Whitefish Township in the Upper Peninsula.*