

RALLY!

**REJECT: The
Corporate
Model of
TOP-DOWN
Educational
Planning!**

**to Support
Parsons
Fine Arts
Faculty**

SUPPORT

THE FACULTY UNION

When: Thursday, April 23, 12-1 pm

Where: New School Administration Building
@ 66 West 12th Street / 5th & 6th Avenues, NYC

**Come out! Send Fine Arts Chair Coco Fusco,
Provost Tim Marshall, and President Bob Kerrey
a Message They Can't Ignore!**

Sponsored by ACT-UAW Local 7902
212-432-2120 www.actuaw.org

ACT-UAW LOCAL 7902 STATEMENT ON FACULTY DISMISSALS IN PARSONS FINE ARTS

On March 10, a dozen part-time faculty members in the Fine Arts Department at Parsons the New School for Design received notice that their teaching contracts will not be renewed for fall 2009. ACT-UAW Local 7902 protests this unjust action and deplores the administrative mentality it represents. The union has filed a number of grievances related to the dismissals, but contract violations are only part of the problem.

Administrators are trying to hide behind a smoke screen of "curricular change" and other management priorities to justify what amounts to the decimation of a department and the devastation of a faculty. This is both ethically wrong and institutionally counter-productive. It is needlessly cruel to hard-working faculty members at a time of terrible economic insecurity. It is also a terrible management decision, one that plays havoc with students' need for a stable, experienced faculty and a robust curriculum in subjects such as painting and drawing. It has set alarm bells ringing in the wider arts community, generating numerous statements of support for the Fine Arts faculty and condemnation of the administration's actions from cultural institutions in New York and beyond.

At a critical time for labor locally and nationally, this inflammatory move strikes a blow at our entire membership as we head into contract negotiations, with our current contract set to expire on September 1, 2009. Unfortunately, there is considerable truth in Interim Provost Tim Marshall's remark to a *New York Times* reporter that these dismissals are "very typical of what happens in the school every single semester, all the time, all over the place." The Provost's comment, and the dismissals themselves, signal all New School part-timers (89% of the total university faculty) that we are viewed by the administration as expendable. Apparently our talents, experience, and past contributions count for nothing in the face of corporate-style "innovation" from above. We view this attitude as part and parcel of the problems that led to the December, 2008 New School faculty vote of "no confidence" in the administration of President Bob Kerrey.

We call on Coco Fusco, the Chair of the Parsons Fine Arts Department, to make a course correction and re-appoint the affected faculty. We call on Provost Marshall and the Deans to embrace a model of change that includes substantive involvement of all sectors of the faculty, part-time and full-time, in the planning process. We call on President Kerrey to honor his recent commitment to accord part-time faculty a meaningful voice in decisions affecting curriculum. By drawing on the creativity and capacity for innovation of proven faculty, the university can--and must--break exciting new ground while preserving successful programs' existing strengths so as not to short-change our students.

Artnet News April 3, 2009

"Art Faculty Purge At Parsons The New School?"

<http://www.artnet.com/magazineus/news/artnetnews/artnetnews4-3-09.asp>

New York Times April 4, 2009

"Parsons Faculty Is Cut Amid Protests by Artists"

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/04/arts/design/04pars.html?em>

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