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Subject: Article 31 Union-Sponsored Training, Training Catalog Approval

To: Melissa Baumann, NFFE-FSC President

As provided in Article 31.1.b of the Master Agreement, this is Management's notification regarding which courses in the Union's training catalog are appropriate for employees to be released on official time to attend, and which courses are denied, including the reasons for denial.

This determination has been reached after review of the Union's original and revised catalog submissions, as well as a series of clarifying discussions between National Labor Relations Specialist Jeff Patterson and the Union's designated representative in this matter, Debbie Kaufman.

The following eight courses as described in the Union's March 8, 2017, Training Catalog submission are **approved**:

- Basic Steward Training Program on Page 7 - 40 hours
- Intermediate Steward Training Program on Page 8 - 40 hours
- Collective Bargaining (Negotiations) Program on Page 9 – 40 hours
- Federal Employees Basic Program on Page 15 – 36 hours
- Federal Employees Advanced Program on Page 16 – 36 hours
- Arbitration Program on Page 23 – 40 hours
- Advanced Arbitration Program on Page 24 – 40 hours
- Federal Employees Collective Bargaining Program on Page 25 – 40 hours

The following courses are *denied* for the reasons stated:

- Basic Communicators Program on Page 11. From its title and course agenda, the course does not appear to align with the agreed topics of “developing statutory and technical knowledge, mediation skills, interest-based and traditional negotiation skills, conflict resolution techniques, contract administration, partnership development, grievance handling, and improving representational skills, as well as similar sessions that are mutually beneficial to the parties in promoting effective labor-management relations” as stated in Article 31.1.a. Instead it deals with developing generic skills related to producing multimedia products – writing, interviewing, photo-editing, copyright, libel, etc. – such as might be offered in a vocational school or community college.



- Basic Web Development Program on Page 12. From its title and course agenda, the course does not appear to align with the agreed topics of “developing statutory and technical knowledge, mediation skills, interest-based and traditional negotiation skills, conflict resolution techniques, contract administration, partnership development, grievance handling, and improving representational skills, as well as similar sessions that are mutually beneficial to the parties in promoting effective labor-management relations” as stated in Article 31.1.a. Instead it deals with developing generic skills related to producing websites and blogs – primarily the use of Wordpress software – such as might be offered in a vocational school or community college.
- Intermediate Web Development Program on Page 13. Denial is for similar reasons as set forth in denying the basic program in this topic on Page 12, as this course focuses on technical skills in electronic media and graphics.
- Basic Newsletter Development Program on Page 14. Denial is for similar reasons as set forth in denying the Basic Communicators Program on Page 11, as this course focuses on newswriting, desktop publishing, layout and design, copyright and libel, etc.
- Safety and Health Program on Page 17. While Management is fully committed to a safe workplace and recognizes the Unions role in safety, all safety training for Union representatives is covered in Article 27.25, and Article 31.1.e.(3) does not allow such training to come out of the bank of hours to be used for courses in the Training Catalog.
- Women’s Basic Program on Page 18. The stated goal of the course is “to motivate union sisters to become active members within their Local Lodges and districts.” This appears to be internal union business, and the course agenda includes topics that appear to focus more on development within the union organization – e.g., establishing effective committees, mentoring, political action, women and labor history – rather than on the agreed labor-management topics set out in Article 31.
- Leadership I Program on Page 19. The stated goal of the course to develop Local Lodge leadership within the International Association of Machinist (IAM) and to promote unionism. This appears to be internal union business, and the course agenda includes topics – e.g., government and politics, labor history, parliamentary procedure, and lodge administration – that appear to focus more on development within the union organization rather than on the agreed labor-management topics set out in Article 31.
- Leadership II Program on Page 20. Similar to Leadership I, the state goals are to develop Local Lodge leadership and to “expand knowledge of trade unionism and the IAM.” While some of the topics listed in the course agenda might be appropriate for release on official time to attend them, the catalog as submitted does not contain enough information for Management to make reasoned judgment.
- Advanced Leadership Program on Page 21. Denial is for similar reasons as given for denial of the Leadership II Program. Much of it appears to deal with matters such as Union internal communications, leadership, and ethics.

- Train-the-Trainer Program on Page 22. This course is to develop the Union's own trainers to teach a variety of topics, including a considerable amount of internal administration. It does not meet the criteria of the agreed topics in Article 31.

The approved Training Catalog showing course content and hours, and the 2017 schedule, as they will be posted in accordance with Article 31, are attached.

If the Union disagrees with Management's disapproval of a particular course, please contact Janet Crowley or Jeff Patterson for further discussion and to provide any information or conditions that might cause Management to reconsider its denial.



ROBERT VELASCO
Associate Deputy Chief for Business Operations

Enclosures: Approved Article 31 Union Training Catalog
2017 Article 31 Union Training Course Schedule

cc: Janet Crowley, Labor Relations Officer
Jeff Patterson, Labor Relations Specialist
Debbie Kaufman, NFFE Representative