

**Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
UUP Albany Chapter
March 23, 2015**

Attendees:

M. Bartoszek, B. Benjamin, J. Collins, R. Friedman, L. Gallagher, J. Hanifan, J. Harton, T. Hoey, C. Jewell, D. LaFond, M. Manjak, G. Petry, B. Pyszczymuka, H. Scheck, M. Seidel, B. Shadrick, P. Stasi, I. Steen, B. Sutton, E. Torgersen, B. Trachtenberg, R. Vives, L. Wilder, L. Wittner, B. Ziman, V. Comisso, R. Tolley, K. Thompson-LaPerle

I. Minutes

The meeting minutes from 2/19/15 with minor changes were moved by J Collins, seconded by T Hoey and approved by all (with 4 abstentions).

II. Labor Management Notes

LM notes help keep the EC updated on ongoing conversations with administration. B Benjamin invited EC questions and discussion.

- An update on the handicap ramp concern was requested. B Benjamin will follow-up with J Mancuso in HR. J Giarusso from Facilities will be coming to an LM meeting and can also field such concerns.
- Questions were raised by D LaFond about the discussion with Chantelle Cleary, UAlbany's new Title IX Coordinator, at the 2/24/15 LM meeting. Will Title IX standards, especially as related to sexual assault, be weakened by recent legislation (Campus SaVE Act, and the new SUNY-wide Sexual Assault policy)? Will victims receive proper counsel regarding their options, particularly guidance to the federal Office for Civil Rights? Benjamin explained that, in his understanding, Title IX federal legislation remains the standard and cannot be superseded by SUNY policy. The new SUNY regulations establish campus procedures (across all campuses) for documentation, investigation, prevention, and education, which all follow from what Title IX federal law requires. The new Title IX campus coordinator, C Cleary, is willing to come to a future EC meeting, and she is best equipped to provide additional details.
- SIFR scores as an inadequate measure of teaching effectiveness were raised, with particular concern for the role these scores play in the non-renewal of contingent faculty. The contingents panel is working on more meaningful ways to measure adjunct performance and campus-wide guidelines. Management has expressed a willingness to work with the Chapter to develop better measurement practices.
- Regarding the SUNY Excel budget proposal, there were concerns that funds would be withheld until there was a plan. We were told emphatically that the University has no performance plans currently developed. J Stellar is an advocate for experiential learning, but understands and was very mindful of the concerns UUP raised about blanket requirements for internships, and the broader instrumentalization or vocationalization of education. UUP remains uncertain about whether the performance based funding proposals will be passed in the ultimate budget, especially the provision to withhold funds until plans are approved by DOB.
- No UAlbany students applied for UUP scholarships this year. Scholarship rules have been revised to make them available to more students. B Benjamin pledged to pursue this in the coming year.
- All should vote on the faculty Senate amendment and get colleagues to vote. Voting is in MyUAlbany and runs 4/1 through 4/8. A joint statement from administration, Senate and UUP leadership is forthcoming.
- Expansion programs (engineering, homeland/cybersecurity/emergency preparedness, affiliations with Albany Law and Downstate Medical) are all major initiatives and potentially a large draw on resources, but faculty and staff get very little information and by the time the information is available the program is in place and there is no way to not approve it. Administration should be sharing more, at the earlier stages of investigation.
- Performance program copies stopped being returned to employees after being signed by VPs. This worried staff. HR stated once the immediate supervisor has signed, the program or eval is considered

complete. The VP signature is for review only, indicating he's seen it. If anything is added at the VP level, it must come back to the employee. The forms and communication seem unclear. Officers feel completion at supervisor signature is preferable. If there are any concerns, faculty and staff should go to HR to review their file.

III. Discussion of Candidate's Forum

Deferred in the interest of time.

IV. Ombudsperson Proposal

The Academic Concerns Committee passed the ombudsperson proposal provided. B Trachtenberg and M Seidel suggested an ombudsperson when there is difficulty with review, tenure and promotion. UUP is not allowed to grieve these issues. There is an ombudsperson for graduate students. The Senate has attempted twice in the last 15 years to create an undergraduate ombudsperson position. For professionals the A28 written process works. If B Hedberg is the primary contact and he works for the provost who decides cases, there is at least the appearance of a conflict of interest. An impartial party to intervene early and work directly with the various levels of review before the chancellor offers a final decision would be ideal. The committee looked at models at other schools and at the ombudsperson international organization's standards. A proposed list of faculty members could be made that administration, Senate and UUP agree would be good intermediaries, people who are fair and not overly identified with a group, perhaps some Collins fellows, full professors, or emeriti would feel less constrained. Concerns include: there may be a conflict if the university pays the ombudsperson's paycheck, the ombudsperson must report to someone to be accountable, review mechanisms must be in place, this would be a learning process so a more permanent person would be best—perhaps a 3-year appointment. For success, there must be written processes for this position. B Trachtenberg moved, B Pyszczymuka seconded supporting the proposal including renewals for contingents and bringing this to management and the Senate. All approved.

V. Food Pantry Proposal

G Petry and K Thompson-LaPerle provided a proposal for a food pantry for UAlbany students, faculty and staff in need. The old UUP LC subbasement office could house nonperishable items. A survey could be done to determine local needs. At the Stony Brook pantry, which serves 30-50 each week (80% students), visitors swipe in via SUNY ID cards, complete an intake form with a waiver that they won't sue the U or UUP, and get one bag of food per visit. Stony Brook receives \$5000/year via a partnering campus group fundraiser. We might want to partner with a group like the Interfaith Ministry. A motion was made by J Collins and seconded by B Pyszczymuka to support the concept, create an ad hoc group to explore further, meet with the student association and other groups to find out more and refine the proposal. All voted I favor. Volunteers for the ad hoc group were: B Pyszczymuka, D LaFond and B Shadrick. B Benjamin will discuss the revised proposal at LM and inquire about a campus partner.

VI. Theme for an Albany Basket at the Spring DA

Theme suggestions were discussed. Other suggestions should go to B Benjamin.

VII. Peace and Planet Mobilization Sponsorship

L Wittner stated there are still 15,000 nuclear weapons in the world. The UN will be reviewing the nuclear nonproliferation treaty dealing with nuclear disarmament. Every 5 years a review conference takes place. In late April/early May it would be good to keep pressure on countries in the days just beforehand. Several hundred groups have endorsed this effort, including a unanimous vote from the Solidarity Committee. No financial support is requested. L Wittner proposed and D LaFond seconded that the UUP Albany chapter endorse the peace and planet mobilization effort. All voted in favor.

VIII. Officers' Reports

Reports were provided prior to the meeting. No concerns were raised.

IX. Other New Business

- a. A lunch time workshop with EAP and UUP presenters was proposed to address concerns with non-renewals, time off, sick time, discrimination, email etiquette, power dynamics, personality conflict, mutual respect and effective communication with practical tips to navigate workplace challenges. G Petry made a motion to fund a lunch time workshop 4/30/15 for 20-30 people on employee strategies for effectiveness in workplace communication. R Vives seconded. All voted in favor.
- b. There will be an EAP fair Thursday 4/23/15.
- c. The April EC meeting originally scheduled for 4/16/15 was moved to Mon 4/13/15 to avoid the start of the DA.

Meeting adjourned 2:00 pm. Minutes submitted by J Harton.