

UUP Albany Chapter Labor Management Meeting Minutes January 28, 2014

Attendees:

Labor: B Benjamin, B Trachtenberg, T Hoey, R Vives, J Harton, M Seidel
Management: R. Jones, J Mancuso, C Threthaway, B Hedberg

1. **President Jones provided an update on CNSE.** The governor shared plans in his state of the state address. Separations plans are still being developed by the transition team. Jones and UAlbany will continue to participate in negotiations with the idea of making a mutually beneficial separation. Jones stated that CNSE programs should not compete with current or planned (engineering programs/possibly a College of Engineering) UAlbany programs. For 2014, students will still be admitted to UAlbany and have their financial aid and admissions handled here. These students will have the option to receive a UAlbany degree. The provost is calling a transition committee to work on separation matters.

Regarding shared phone systems, UAlbany could not wait and had to go out on bid for phones and since separation was imminent, UAlbany asked if CNSE wanted to continue to share the phone system. CNSE opted to have its own phone system.

UUP is concerned what collective bargaining will look like at CNSE. Currently CNSE has about 3100 employees with over 3000 in RF positions. Who is assuring Taylor Law is not violated by transferring bargaining unit work? Jones stated that UUP may now go to the chancellor directly regarding CNSE UUP matters.

2. Members are raising concerns and asking for information regarding the **review of tenured faculty** under the aegis of “equitable contribution” and threats to raise teaching loads of faculty deemed not to be sufficiently productive. UUP is still investigating the matter, so does not offer a definitive statement at this time. UUP is not opposed to evaluation of research productivity, but is concerned by the manner in which it appears to be rolled out and noted the goals have not been shared. Administrative clarity, transparency, meaningful conversation, substantive discuss across departments, and goals/benchmarks need to be clearly articulated and understood by faculty and staff and a determination made as to whether these goals are attainable. These pieces do not seem to be in place. The current process seems punitive rather than constructive, and is likely to be counter-productive in fostering research productivity. Benjamin asked if the U believes post-tenure is necessary and what the objectives are. While Jones says he has not advocated for a formal post-tenure review (although he had to implement it at U Minn), he believes there should be a way to assess faculty productivity and periodically ask if work is satisfactory. This should be done around professional developmental processes, satisfactory performance assessment, and allow time to correct deficiencies and reassign work to add value to the U as needed. Jones agreed that transparency, communication, and consultation with faculty were essential, and agreed that any review should account for disciplinary specificity and offer a holistic review of faculty contribution. Jones was alarmed at U Minn how many faculty “got stuck” at the associate professor level, but admitted that interests can change and if faculty prefer to teach more and still contribute to the department’s mission, they should be accommodated.

Benjamin has asked twice for something in writing from the CAS dean about this, but has not heard back. **Officers plan to meet with the CAS dean. Jones asked Benjamin to report back to him following that meeting.** Hedberg has had several exchanges with the CAS dean regarding the upcoming meeting. Hedberg stated this is “part of the equitable contribution discussion that has been underway for several years” and is in reference to annual reviews of the faculty activity reports (FARs). The CAS dean now has 2 associate deans to help her review FARs (something she had done herself in the past). Hedberg said the review is not limited to associate professors. The CAS dean flags cases to discuss with department chairs, asks if the FAR is complete/accurate, then wants to learn more about what is holding the faculty back, what interventions are appropriate. Hedberg shared in the past the expectation was that chairs would have follow-up conversations with faculty, but this time an associate dean has been asked to have that conversation because some chairs are not willing to have it. Hedberg stated that the equitable contribution discussion began in response to concerns of productive faculty members who were looking around and seeing less work done by others. The provost introduced the equitable contribution idea with the deans. Hedberg stated efforts were made to engage faculty in the dialogue to ensure conversation grounded in norms for each of the disciplines, practices at other institutions, etc. Benjamin asked for forthright discussion of this issue as UUP investigates further. He asked administration to provide any policy documents about the equitable contribution reviews (under Taylor Law UUP should have access to these documents). Faculty, concerned that their productivity may have been compromised by their significant volunteer work as program directors, chairs, graduate directors, etc., may begin to refuse such roles. Many faculty have been over-serviced in the past. **UUP promised to follow up with Jones and Hedberg once it had a chance to speak with Wulfert and gather more information.**

3. Regarding **Start-up NY**, Hedberg is not aware that the Start-up NY committee and ancillary faculty committee have started yet. Biology space on the podium may be a possible site. Management was asked what services (phones, parking, supplies/resources, staff) UAlbany will be providing to the Start-Up NY companies and whether the bargaining unit would be involved in servicing this. Hedberg stated when proposals are received specifics will be have to addressed. Benjamin expressed concern with the final paragraph on p. 13 indicating an accelerated decision making process where the president can proceed unilaterally without consultation. This seems to preclude discussion. Hedberg stated “we are staffing up to make this process work efficiently and quickly. There’s a need with the private sector [for us] to be nimble.” **Benjamin asked that UUP be informed when the proposal has been approved, when companies are approved, who is on committees, and what the procedures are. Hedberg will talk to Mike Shimazu and provide an update at the next meeting.**
4. Regarding **contract implementation**: Benjamin noted the on-call/recall memo went out and asked when designations will be made. Mancuso was not sure designations would be made on our campus stating that he has not heard from supervisors and that supervisors cannot implement it without HR. He shared time sheets and processes are not set up yet for recording this. Benjamin asked what annual date had been set to review employees’ on-call/recall status. The contract states an annual review date is required. Mancuso was not aware of this. **Seidel will share the contract language with Mancuso. Benjamin will ask members to talk with supervisors and clarify their roles since this is a new process.**

Hedberg shared the committee has met virtually regarding **IDAs** and will meet shortly in person. The call went out last week. He has received 3 applications. **Benjamin will recirculate the call and encourage new faculty who may not be as familiar with the IDA.** Hedberg asked UUP to **reach out to part-timers** since the committee is always short on part-time applications. Applications are due the Monday after break. Eligibility is retroactive to 7/2/13.

5. The **bus stop** in front of the Science Library is to be temporarily relocated to the Social Science dock May 2014-September 2016. The Disability Rights and Concerns Committee is concerned this will cause difficulties for disabled bus riders since the basement level west door is not handicap accessible. Mancuso said he shared this with John Giarusso who said this would be corrected.
6. Hedberg has no sense of movement on **transfer pathways** and the seamless transfer memo. **He will discuss this and Start-Up NY with the provost and get back to Benjamin.**

Meeting adjourned 11:25am. Minutes submitted by J. Harton.