

UUP Albany Chapter Labor Management Meeting Notes
February 27, 2017

Attendees:

Labor: B Benjamin, P Stasi, R Tolley, T Hoey, J Harton, M Seidel

Management: J Stellar, W Hedberg, R Stark, C Trethaway, J Baronner

1. **Contingent Committees:** Hedberg has not reconvened the oversight committee yet, but it's a high priority now and will move forward. The compensation/benefit committee is moving from estimates to actual figures. 60% of UAlbany courses are now taught by contingents. The costs of the raise to \$3600/course will be \$48K more than anticipated because there was more instruction to mount than expected. Deans will be asked to contribute more or Management may have to borrow against the \$300K set aside for next year. Stellar is committed to improving contingent salaries. Hedberg plans to update and reissue the part-time faculty pamphlet and create something similar for other types of contingents. The career paths committee is interested in the University of Toronto model of title changes and culture change. The "instructor" title here could be a series of promotional titles. Benjamin noted the Cortland model suggests new positions go through assessment—if there is a need to hire another part-time lecturer departments must ask first whether this should be a tenure track line. If there are reasons for it to remain a contingent hire, the department must ask if this could be added to a current contingent faculty member's position to make it a full-time line. This might encourage departments to consider more than react. Stellar asked Benjamin to share other models. Benjamin said there were plenty—U Denver is the best known example of moving to teaching tenure model, and Canadian universities are ahead regarding movement to tenure lines, Cal State has graduated terms and longer contracts. Penn State system has good processes. An AAUP document summarizes such research on universities. CUNY has a pilot system of longer-term contracts. Stellar will obtain a copy from CUNY. Administration sent a memo asking chairs to give more than one course to lecturers, but doesn't know if they did so. Empirical data still needs to be analyzed. Benjamin stated changes here are having ripple effects across other SUNY campuses. UAlbany could become a national leader in how it addresses contingent concerns and improve its academic reputation.

Both the UUP and UAlbany contingents reports stressed concerns about evaluations and the use of SIRFs. We don't currently have a good tool for this assessment. One good thing about moving toward tenure is for the university to give feedback to instructors, whether they're doing a great job or to address any issues immediately which work to improve academic quality. UUP is happy to help on subcommittees, providing information/models/data, participating in joint campus/union presentations, etc.. There is a long history of shrinking resources leaving people feeling embattled and threatened. Stellar stated we need a culture shift.

2. **Performance Programs and Evaluations:** VanVoorst is to present this information to the Executive Committee soon. Before our next meeting Stark hopes to have a report to Benjamin. UUP's first priority is performance programs, since evaluations follow that. Evaluations cannot be done without programs in place. Stark stated the data query is set now, that he can pull information as needed. In April Hoey, Seidel and HR will hold another joint talk on the downtown campus.

UUP agreed to run three joint labor management trainings. Benjamin and Stark completed the forms. After the fact UUP was told payment could not come from joint labor management funds and UUP was sent the catering bill. HR was charged for facilities use. There were more participants from outside UAlbany than within. We need to reconsider the benefits of such workshops.

3. **Simulated Labs** (like Labster's virtual science labs) came up at the UUP Delegates Assembly as a system-wide concern. Hedberg asked Wulfert and our campus hasn't heard of these. Benjamin asked Hedberg to let him know if he hears about this here. Corporations are trying to sell these packages to universities. Virtual labs seem antithetical to the academic excellence UAlbany wants. There was broad agreement from both sides that simulated labs posed problems for accreditation and seemed to undermine the quality of instruction. It would be a concern to see them introduced.
4. UUP asked about the status of the **SPH Review**. Hedberg has contacted Dean Schweitzer to find dates to meet with Benjamin and Stasi to discuss concerns related to the bylaws and administrative structures of the SPH departments. They have begun to discuss bylaws concerns. UUP reiterated that it must be involved in such changes to procedures for evaluation, as they are mandatory subjects of negotiation. Hedberg acknowledged the Chapter's standing in such matters.
5. The infrequency of **Civil Service Exams** being offered is affecting several offices' abilities to hire CSEA clerical positions. UUP asked again what could be done to increase the number of exams offered and/or to help departments that find themselves short-staffed. Stark stated there is not much HR and UAlbany can do. He had a meeting to discuss this and made a smaller work group to analyze data to see if anything can be done. A McCloskey been the contact with the State and has been working with Civil Services to encourage more lists. The group meets tomorrow. In the past one fee could cover taking several exams, but now each exam requires a separate fee, which discourages people from taking the exams. On campus we are limited with promotion opportunities and have retention loss to other state agencies with higher growth salaries. Incentives are being considered.
6. **Outreach and Legislative Agendas:** The 2017 UUP Legislative Agenda is now available online at <http://uupinfo.org/legislation/pa.php>. UUP's legislative agenda most years is robust. This year it has been narrowed to focus on a few key priorities. UUP is interested in working collaboratively on overlapping UUP and UAlbany priorities. Hedberg and Stark will check with UAlbany and share its agenda with Benjamin. The two groups need to be aware of each other's' agendas to make the greatest impact. Since the '08-09 cuts SUNY lost \$500M from operating budgets and we've been flat the last few years, which is a de facto reduction as enrollments rise, costs go up, and salaries increase. We need to work to recapture \$250M incrementally, \$50M additional this year to the 4 year campuses, push for full-time faculty hires, add hospital proposals (they are poised to be hit hard by the repeal of the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid), get rid of debt services and fringe, work on EOP/EOC funding & proposed EOP modeled teacher ed programs increase diversity in teachers.
7. Requested **UHS Data** has not yet been provided regarding how many UHS sections have been taught (broken down by department and course number) over the years and the numbers of high schools and enrolled students. Statewide UUP has noted UHS programs' growth. An increasing number of UAlbany credits obtained before students reach the university is a de facto erosion of unit labor. As UHS has grown, more students are speeding time to degree without doing the academic work required at the university, the high school teachers are not required to have an MA in their field (just an MA in Ed with 2 courses in the specialty area) so the level of degree/credentialing is not equivalent to UAlbany faculty (these teachers would not be approved to teach courses at UAlbany), and students are paying significantly less for this nonequivalent high school credit. Management of curriculum and content is also a concern. Hedberg believes the increase was years ago and noted community colleges have argued UHS is stealing enrollments from them. He further stated teacher qualifications are reviewed and that the curriculum is consistent. Hedberg will return to Dean Wulfert to discuss what data might be provided.
8. **Snowday Concerns:** UUP asked about policies for allowing telecommuting on snow days like the recent emergencies. Some staff's jobs can at least in part be accomplished online, but they were

made to come in to work on a recent non-essential day and braved the road conditions. When HR sends a liberal leave notice on a weather day, what is HR's expectation on supervisors' discretion to allow work from home on days when much of the campus is nonfunctional as staff opt to stay home? Stark's liberal leave expectation is it cannot be made a time to stay home. While some positions could use the day to catch up and have access online to work at home, the university's position is staff must use liberal leave or come in. That said, individual supervisors have a degree of latitude to make decisions about how best to deploy their supervisees in such situations.

9. Stellar noted the NY Times pointed to UAlbany as helping students move from the bottom to the top of the economic ladder and stated UAlbany is doing a good job at being diverse. He added a blogger he reads is talking about the end of the "entrance era" in higher ed where schools have required minimum SAT scores, noting that SAT scores may not be the best predictor. He pointed to a UAlbany increase of 3% in freshman and sophomore retention using an EOP-like system of personal encounters, stopping large lecture formats, attention to developing writing/critical inquiry skills, developing learning communities, putting student faces on faculty's course rosters, using big data analytics to analyze national tax records. He noted UAlbany's working with a firm researching data from the Department of Labor and marrying that with analytics big data on campus to see what we're doing right. He anticipates using this in the **strategic plan**.

Meeting adjourned 12:00pm. Notes submitted by J. Harton.