

UUP Albany Chapter Labor Management Meeting Notes
August 25, 2015

Attendees:

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

Management: R Jones, J Stellar, B Hedberg, D Szelest, C Trethaway, J Giarusso

1. John Giarusso provided **campus facilities projects updates**. The Campus Center east expansion had some mechanical issues but should open 9/8/15. Plans to decommission Dutch Quad dining are on hold until then. Concrete is being poured in the west addition. The Campus Center expansions should be done fall 2016 and student groups will move from the Campus Center 3rd floor to CC west space. A study is being done on the best use of the vacated space. The quad tower windows and façade repairs are done (there are no additional funds to gut the towers). Tunnels, damaged by heavy vehicular traffic, have been shored up. Cracks around the podium were addressed. Deck and planter leak repairs are ongoing (currently replacing the corner by the main fountain closest to Ed). The updated Washington Avenue entrance is open with landscaping to be completed in cooler weather. Building 25 will be gutted/renovated starting in September, an \$11M 2-year project. Occupants of BA need to be moved for renovation, Africana Studies and Economics will move to Bldg 25 while BA is renovated, others possibly to the library, modifying shelving or moving little used books to storage. Economics and Education will share the renovated BA space. ES will be the next podium building to be renovated. All podium doors will be replaced next spring with wider, more handicap accessible models. Classrooms were refreshed and equipment was replaced in conjunction with ITS. Two engineering classrooms were completed in the ES basement and 2 sandbox classrooms (instructional rooms with a tech support room between them to facilitate distance learning/online work) were made from the old HU039. Downtown cornice and façade work was done as well as work on Schuyler (the old High School), including partial roof replacement. The old computer center are being vacated with ITS moving to the new data center in October. The old space is being renovated starting with removal of halon fire suppression system. Design work is starting in Schuyler for Computer Engineering and additional programs coming over the next decade. ETEC/Homeland was in planning to be on the visitor lot by LS, but it is making more economic sense now to be with Harriman buildings. An ADA study is being done on campus with bathroom renovations campus-wide are first to be modified. \$28M gut renovations are planned for all the LCs to be phased in over multiple years. There is a study on renovation of the PE building. The Facilities Master Plan is the roadmap for all work, but adjustments are made as new initiatives are added. Costs are \$300M in total is needed. Last year's state appropriations were only \$10M. Benjamin asked that on projects air intakes be moved from ground level where they pick up pollutants (cigarette smoke, exhaust fumes, etc.) to the roof. Giarusso stated they don't dictate specs, but will ensure clean, filtered air.

Benjamin provided a business plan draft for the **food pantry** opening in January. Giarusso raised concerns about loading, parking, refrigeration and vermin which Benjamin addressed (no loading/parking/refrigeration needed and items will be canned/shelf-stable). Benjamin and Giarusso will speak separately regarding space possibilities and consult with VanVoorst.

2. Szelest sent the current list of **contingent employees** to Benjamin in email and will send the final rolls when they are ready. Some on the current list may finish in summer and late adds may not be on the list yet. UUP plans to reach out to those on the list ASAP to welcome them, invite them to meetings, and share information. Seidel asked for clarification on whether UUP retirees who come back to teach as adjuncts are in UUP covered positions; Szelest confirmed that they are UUP.

Benjamin asked if the U can provide contingent contract letters before contingents start for the semester. This is contractually mandated. Szelest stated last year did not go well, that they are doing

better this year, but noted if HR does not get timely information, timely letters cannot be generated. Although some appointment requests were received in May, summer appointments were the priority so there are some related delays. Benjamin suggested longer appointments would mean fewer letters and sending letters directly to contingents (not through deans' offices) could improve speed. Stellar's office has encouraged longer appointments and appointment to 2 classes (to get benefits) which could also mean fewer letters. Stellar asked Szelest to generate a list of slow units and will encourage timely submissions there. Late letters signals to contingents that they are not valued and this matter was framed as a social justice issue by the Contingents Task Force. Seidel reminded the room that it was also a matter of contractual obligation that employees know the terms of their appointment before they begin working.

Hedberg stated that the final draft of the Contingent Task Force report is being reviewed and consists of an 18-page narrative with 3 tables of data, 4 appendices and 14 recommendations. There were 2 types of recommendations, salaries and ways to express respect for the work done. Hedberg plans to issue the report by the end of August and present it to the Executive Committee on the Compact Budget Process 9/2 to begin to address the compensation recommendation. Stellar stated academia has adjusted compensation funding over the years related to the contingent workforce and that process now needs to be reversed to resolve the issues. Deans will be discussing this soon. Stellar plans town meetings with year-long conversations regarding recommendation implementation. A graduate stipend report is also in the president's office.

3. Benjamin stated with member concerns and turnover of many supervisors, this is a good time to offer **comp time training**—that it is better to address contractual issues up front than try to fix them later. Szelest stated comp time is case by case, professional obligations differ and as such that trainings would be difficult, and that HR had issued a general memo on comp time a few years ago and she would send that again after sending to Hedberg and Benjamin for input. Hedberg stated new/interim deans and new VPs will be doing orientations and can address the issues in their areas. Seidel argued that the contractual language on comp-time was not vague, and that there was real merit in making it explicit to managers. Benjamin and Hedberg agreed to start with the memo and consider additional training options in the future.
4. Stellar stated there are 2 components to **SUNY Excels and Performance Based Funding**, evaluation of campuses/presidents and request for funds. These are moving targets. SUNY is interested in ideas campuses can integrate into a legislative pitch for another SUNY2020. The deadline was 8/28. Funds are one time. Stellar indicated that the University will use the strategic plan to enhance the student experience and develop proposals for student retention and success following graduation. Draft proposals went to the president. The next deadline is the end of September. There are 17 parameters campuses and presidents are being evaluated on. Bruce Szelest is developing a draft for the president on suggested targets. Stellar shared that Tennessee gives allocations on graduation rate performance (increased graduation rates yields more funding) and he expects other states, including NY, will adopt this. SUNY is interested in using data to support decisions. He believes if students feel well cared for they will graduate here and that the goal is to graduate them effectively into the rest of their lives, not just graduate them. We need to see how we are doing and also capture whether graduates go on to MA and PhD work. Benjamin expressed frustration that important collaborative work that has material consequences for the priorities and resources of the institution was again demanded from campuses on a short deadline, when most faculty were away. SUNY should get this feedback and recognize that such top-down directives both alienate faculty, and produce a poorer product since faculty expertise is excluded. When will the Senate, departments and faculty get to weight in? When will we see the plans? At Benjamin's request Stellar will share the 2 page proposals after Jones reviews them. Faculty can work together with administration in September to modify proposals for the September due date. Stellar noted failure to coordinate could be a disaster

for the institution. Stellar stated the process was not ideal and the timeline was externally imposed. He prefers a consensus process like the strategic plan and invited Benjamin to tell him when he misses the mark. Benjamin indicated that he was happy to oblige.

Benjamin stated while data can be helpful in evaluating a university's success, it can also serve to distort and drive university decisions. Both the parameters established and the quality of data shape the ultimate findings. UUP has seen no substantive campus discussion on the metrics of evaluation. The legislature doesn't want a complicated vision of success, but basic, straightforward information, tied to goals that are frequently not educational or academic. Simply collecting data is not an effective way to get results. This is especially true if future funding becomes tied to metrics that are established externally. If faculty don't set and control performance metrics, results will be reductive and have the potential to do great harm to the University. Stellar noted administration cannot afford to disconnect with faculty and recognizes we must have common goals. He stated administration is responding to SUNY to obtain funding, for example, for more professors. There is a clear national need for more tenure-line professors. It is clear contingents have been used for economic, not instructional reasons. Stellar would like to see a university in which adjuncts comprise a maximum of 20% (UAlbany is around 50%) of the instructional workforce addressing specialty areas we currently don't have. He proposed that roughly half of new tuition revenues went to hire new faculty, a quarter to staff programs and a quarter to presidential discretion. If faculty will innovate, UAlbany can make money in the short term with SUNY Excels. Benjamin suggested, and Stellar agreed, that the key here is to ensure that educational needs and initiatives are the driving forces for innovation and not externally imposed measures that divert us from the core mission of the University.

5. SUNY provided **DSA** rosters late last week. Hedberg stated no decision has been made about this year's process and the president has not received a recommendation. Benjamin reiterated this year's funds are one-time awards (not to base) and in 2 separate pools, one part-time and one full-time and that it makes sense to give funds across the board, particular since there is an absence of an efficient, systematic process to review faculty, especially contingents. Hedberg agreed with the concern about contingent evaluation and noted that the contingent task force report raises this as a concern. Benjamin reiterated that the process is an enormous amount of work for departments with very small return; the process causes unnecessary frustration and anxiety. If the intent is to recognize outstanding service, there are other ways the U can do that with better cost benefit ratios. Hedberg anticipated resolution in 7-10 days.
6. Benjamin heard Albany Med is moving files to the new **data center** and there are new surveillance cameras coming. Stellar stated that medical data must be highly secure and Albany Med is private. The possibility is in discussion as a great research asset for the institution and data mining projects and as another opportunity to serve the community in the Albany region. No decisions have been made to move in the Albany Med data, and hence the cameras and other security measures are still in the discussion phase.
7. Jones welcomed all back. He noted that the University is experiencing the largest expansion since it was built in '60s, including new schools of Engineering and Emergency Management. Transportation is being discussed to make it easier to travel between campuses. Work is in progress on **how best to integrate and maximize the Downtown and East campuses**. Adding Engineering to the Downtown campus "will be a game changer." Programs and biotech on East campus are "poised to be world class," including multiple businesses using the space. Regeneron (the second largest pharmaceutical firm in the area), for example, is interested in leasing more space and could be a source of internships. It is time to take advantage of opportunities so Jones has appointed a temporary vice president to strategically rethink our health sciences assets and relationships with Albany Med, Albany College of Pharmacy and Downstate. A formal announcement will be made

today. Benjamin suggested this would be an ideal time to have conversations with units on those campuses regarding expectations for faculty tenure and review, composition of voting faculty, articulating bylaws for better alignment and coherence with the rest of the U. The academic programs on those campuses need to be brought into alignment with the academic mission and expectations of the university at large.

8. Benjamin was named to the **contract negotiating team**. The lead negotiator is Philippe Abraham.

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