



United University Professions
Albany Chapter

Executive Committee Meeting: Minutes
5.26.2020

Attendance: Jim Collins, Zakhar Berkovich, Marco Varisco, Aaron Major, Deborah LaFond, Paul Stasi, Bret Benjamin, Laura Wilder, Penny Ng, Michael Dzikowski, Ronald McClamrock, Carol Jewell, Robert See, Sandra Vergari, Patrick Dodson, Maureen Sidel, Danielle Judge, Lana Sullivan, Gary Farkas, Michitake Aso, Samantha Rider, Greta Petry, Janna Harton, Ron Friedman, Andrew Lyons, Carmen Serrano, Barbara Sutton, Roxana Moslehi, Benjamin Weaver, Loretta Pyles, Allison Craig, Meredith Weiss, Lauren Casertino, Alison Olin, Richard Burton, Ronald Friedman

1. Approval of minutes from the April 29 meeting.

Motion to approve Minutes Marco Varisco, seconded Robert See. Motion passed.

2. President's Report and LM notes.

Members asked for a clarification about the "hybrid" use. It was noted that some use of hybrid is described as having classes in person and portion being online, but there is also a Hy-flex version when the camera is located in the classroom and the class either synchronously transmitted or recorded for later view.

There is a conversation about health and safety in the classrooms, and proper movement within the campus. There are still outstanding questions about whether faculty can request to teach online based on their personal and medical situations. There are concerns about potential enrollment drop and a possibility of increased instances of COVID during fall semester. Members also asked to be considered of the faculty members who may not have job security in terms of expectation and pressures they may face in how to "comply" with the expectations for the modalities of teaching.

There was a question asked about what members who serve on the "Forward Together" committees can assist with? Mainly good representation of the members, secondly clear guidelines for health and safety, job security, details of the expectations for next semester.

Todd Foreman suggested that University is restricted on the cash and they are following guidance from the state. There were no official notices of non-renewals sent out as far as we know. Some suggested that there are some employees who are not being re-hired, but additional information is needed in order to assure compliance with the contract. UUP is trying to keep on top this specifically. This is one of top priority.

There is no guidance of the budgets, so it is very hard to plan. In terms of graduate students, some of them are “promised” teaching in the later years of their Ph.D. term. A request was made about the expectation for the notification about the term appointment and non-renewal.

3. GSEU petition (L. Pyles).

Four main demands in the petition that has been circulated and received over 1000 signatures. The petition has been sent to the Chancellor but received no response.

- *No workforce reductions. Maintain all current state-funded teaching assistant, research assistant, and graduate assistant positions.*
- *Reimbursement of all mandatory fees for the Spring 2020 semester to all state-funded teaching assistants, research assistants, and graduate assistants.*
- *Extended time-to-degree and funding for all current Ph.D. students for a full additional year, regardless of the date of admission. The extension must cover the university’s eligibility requirements for dissertation completion.*
- *Adequate provision of PPE and safe workspaces to all essential graduate student employees, as per Governor Cuomo’s Executive Order and standards set by Communication Workers of America.*

Brett Benjamin made a motion to approve the endorsement of the petition. Paul Stasi seconded. Aaron will make some editorial changes to the text and will post to the action network for members to support and sign. Motion passed with one abstention.

4. Fall 2020 and Campus Reopening

What should be our next steps? Should we do a survey? Gather member information that can be used to go back to the administration.

A recommendation was made to continue holding town halls throughout the summer and even holding EC. A note was made that survey should be short and Y/N answers. It was also articulated that no members should be forced to work where a health and safety could be compromised. There should be flexibility offered, especially for untenured, term appointed faculty/staff. A recommendation was made to have the survey designed after the draft plan is circulated.

Another note was made about holding a caravan/march on campus or downtown by SUNY to organize and encourage member participation against the cuts and austerity. There is a Citizen Action caravan that may take place in June focused on the “Tax the Rich” legislature. UUP may join them and then take a ride over to SUNY building.

A question was asked about continual information flow. We will continue holding Town Halls, and EC meeting throughout the summer.