

**Executive Committee Meeting Minutes  
UUP Albany Chapter  
January 25, 2016**

**Attendees:** P. Abraham, M. Aso, M. Bartoszek, B. Benjamin, J. Collins, R. Dressler, M. Flynn, R. Friedman, J. Gendron, M. Grosshandler, J. Hanifan, J. Harton, T. Hoey, C. Jewell, G. Landsman, K. Latal, A. Major, R. Moslehi, A. Loin, G. Petry, L. Pyles, B. Pyszcymuka, A. Richie, P. Romain, R. See, M. Seidel, B. Shadrick, R. Tolley, E. Torgersen, B. Trachtenberg, R. Vives, C. Walcek, L. Wittner, K. Thompson-LaPerle, R. Trimarchi, M. Lyon, F. Kowal

**I. Approval of Minutes**

Postponed to an upcoming meeting.

**II. UUP Leadership**

Fred Kowal and UUP Central staff visited the EC to discuss UUP priorities and concerns. Of primary importance is changing the culture of UUP from a service union to an organizing one, connecting people more. The Friedrichs case decision may come at any time. If the plaintiff wins the court could rule no one is required to pay union dues. The urgency? 1) The courts may rule to immediately cease payroll deductions, leading to significant financial impact, 2) following a ruling in favor of the plaintiff the courts will see more cases eroding unions which is dangerous to the progressive movement, 3) an organizing culture is essential to strengthen the union. The majority of fee payers don't realize they haven't signed/aren't members. All fee payers must be reached and personally invited to sign up. One on one conversations and key to connect and keep members engaged. UUP Central officers created materials (palm cards with talking points, information online, video clips, updated memberships cards to make signing easier, online signing is possible, etc.) to help. There will be phone banking by AFT and NYSUT to invite members. We are at 30,000 members (85%) now. Among full-timers the percentage is 95%; among adjuncts since fall, the numbers have gone from 45% to 65% signed. Interestingly, 85% of adjuncts think they are members. Grad students who are not on assistantships (ie they're employed as lecturers) are in the UUP bargaining unit, but many don't know that. B Benjamin is working with GSEU. Education of prospective members is crucial. Fee payers and members need to understand the implications and why it's important to be committed so they don't naively withdraw support later. Why sign up? To have input in the contract and to vote. Non-members have no say. Because of the Taylor Law members and nonmembers currently receive the same benefits, but Friedrichs or NYS could change that such that fee payers would receive no representation or services.

Some important things to remember: UUP is the only advocate for our state's university system. SUNY leadership's focus this year is raising tuition, not supporting schools. The attack on tenure is national. Undermining unions undermines tenure and permanency. Vision and dental plan are negotiated directly so if the union is weak, the ability to negotiate is negatively impacted (see Wisconsin as an example). Optoutnow.org and the Koch brothers are engaged in a campaign to tell members how to quit and are using their political and financial power and political techniques to convince people that unions are negative. No union dues in NYS are used for any political purposes. All members should connect with colleagues, help them understand the importance of the union, and share why they decided to join.

There will be another department representative meeting soon, but all were encouraged to talk to fee payers and invite them to sign, not to wait for department reps to do this. Fee payers can sign the card on site; a picture of the card can be made with a cell phone and emailed to Kelly in the UUP Office. UAlbany has about 400 to contact. New people are being contacted immediately. Active retirees can also be helpful and persuasive with their histories. All were encouraged to take a few minutes at department meetings and encourage activism. Tuesday after the DA is an advocacy day. This is crucial work.

UUP Central is considering different financial scenarios. AFL/CIO put together a public sector union workgroup to develop legislative steps to mitigate the possible impacts of Friedrichs and plan what to do

if the unions can't collect dues. In Florida it's state law that if you're not part of union/don't pay dues/haven't signed a card, you get contract negotiated benefits, but no due process protections, the union will not represent you, you must hire own lawyer. Laws might be changed like in Nevada where unions charge a fee for nonmember support. There may be changes required in the NYSUT and UUP constitutions. The governor does not want NYS to be a right to work state.

There is a major constitutional amendment on the DA ballot to combine the offices of elected secretary and treasurer, following the pattern at NYSUT, AFT and other unions. The two officers currently in those positions suggested the change which will save money and release time.

Kowal thanked everyone, urged activism, and reminded all that this contract's chief negotiator is Phillippe Abraham and that the UUP Central officers are always available and can provide chapters whatever is needed.

### III. Old Business

- a. **Budget discussion regarding our savings** was deferred to a future meeting.

### IV. New Business

- a. L Wittner reminded all about the democratic **primary**.
- b. L Gallagher has resigned from the **Assistant VP for Professionals position** citing work overload. In fall the EC appointed an interim Assistant VP for Academic (A Major) when P Stasi, who was elected to the position, went on sabbatical. The resignation leaves part of this term (1.5 years) vacant. The bylaws say the EC can appoint or have an election of the full membership. Election would cost \$2-5K (including mailings to all members) and take 6-8 weeks of labor intensive effort (for statewide as well as chapter officers) to complete. The officers discussed this and recommend the EC appoints. **T Hoey moved and G Petry seconded that we choose to appoint then discuss after that. All approved.** Per the bylaws the authority to appoint is vested in the EC, not the president. The process: those interested in the position will self-nominate and submit a statement, at the next EC there will be a conversation, the president will give a name, the EC will vote the candidate up or down. A secret ballot was requested. **L Wittner moved and T Hoey seconded that we continue the same process for the EC appointing a replacement as last time. All approved, less 2 nay votes and 1 abstention.**
- c. **UUP/Senate forum on academic freedom 3/25/16 130-330pm** in the Campus Center Assembly Hall with panelists and discussion. **C Jewell moved and P Romain seconded that the EC provide funding (no more than \$250) for light refreshments. All voted in favor.**

Meeting adjourned at 1:35pm. Minutes submitted by J Harton.