

**UUP Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**March 7, 2012**

Attendees: P. Abraham, B. Benjamin, L. Bickmore, J. Collins, S. Dearing, C. Fox, R. Friedman, J. Gendron, M. Grosshandler, J. Hanifan, J. Harton, T. Hoey, S. Knapp, M. Knee, D. LaComb, D. LaFond, G. Landsman, K. Latal, C. Merbler, B. Pyszczymuka, C. Quin, P. Romain, M. Seidel, B. Shadrick, P. Stasi, I. Steen, E. Torgersen, B. Trachtenberg, E. Warnke, L. Wittner, B. Ziman, K. Thompson-LaPerle

Merbler asked for a volunteer to serve as acting secretary for the day. Benjamin agreed to take minutes. The meeting convened at 12:20pm.

**Approval of minutes from 2/15 meeting**

Moved by Romaine. Second Trachtenburg.

Harton asks to clarify 4<sup>th</sup> Bullet about vote to leave AAUP and Abraham's decision to run for AAUP office. The correction is as follows:

“as a result of UUP's decision to leave AAUP, Briere asked whether Abraham would still be willing to run for AAUP office”

Minutes were approved: 5 abstentions, otherwise unanimously in favor.

**Minutes for 2/28 Special EC Meeting**

Moved by Abraham. Seconded by Romaine

Lafond asked for the following corrections:

I did not understand what the duties would be and who the person reports to. I did say that I was for encouraging more participation and if this did that, I was for it. However, it was not clear to me.

Amendment #2012-12 AVPs

LaFond asked

a question that the Secretary did not understand and therefore, did not scribe in these minutes.

Please correct.

Amendment #2012-5 S

LaFond agrees that it is important that people learn how to participate and “[have opportunities to speak that they may not get in their jobs](#)”. STRIKE how to speak.

Please correct.

On the Leadership AVP, What I said was that we need more understanding as

Exec members of what some of the history is when it comes to voting on issues. Perhaps an AVP would help. When the leadership workshop was raised in response, I said, I was under the impression that the leadership workshops were intended for those considering running for officers. Amendment #2012-12 LaFond said there is history that EC, but do not have and need. Merbler said EC members could attend Leadership workshops, but only she and Abraham had signed up. LaFond said she didn't know she could attend those workshops.

Landsman requested the following change: ammendment 2012-12: "Landsman understands Steen's concerns" strike "shares"

Minutes approved. 3 abstentions, otherwise carries unanimously.

### **Waive minutes from 10/19 2011**

Moved by Abraham. Second by Romaine  
Unanimous approval

### **President's Report**

Merbler: Busy few days. Pres and VP workshops. New Leaders workshop. Shadrick and Lafond attended New Leaders workshop.

Yesterday spent advocating at Legislature. Higher Ed day. PSC and other Groups. Ivan, Phillipe as well. Worthwhile experience. Please be aware that EOP day will take place on 3/27.

At a previous meeting Darryl McGrath spoke to us about the untimely death of Chris Ringwald, former UUP member. McGrath thanked us for uur contributions, which totalled \$200, and reported that in sum she was able to raise \$2100 for Ringwald's family.

Contention with Chartwells over the cost of lunch at the Dane's Den vs. costs of moving to ED 123. We dispute the additional charges. Merbler will continue to work with Chartwell's to reduce catering charges.

Brian Elk who worked in ITS died of a heart attack last Friday. There is a scholarship fund for children. Does Chapter want to do something?

Chapter Grievance officer Greta Petry was in bad car accident yesterday. She is fine, but her car was totalled. Merbler asked EC members to reach out to Gretta to express sympathy and well wishes.

Merbler will be leaving country next week on vacation. Back on night of 3/18. Ready for LM on Monday.

Discussion:

Steen: Phillippe and I were also down at the Legislature. Making good progress. Gov feeling pressure on Tier VI. TIA CREF suggests that contributions at proposed level will not be sustainable. Big disappointment: no other Albany members. No one has come over the past few weeks. Steen implores Albany members to join advocacy efforts.

Abraham. UUP and NYSUT working together on a legislative agenda. Abraham seconds Stein's plea for members to participate. Stressed that new advocates need not take the lead, but can participate to the degree that they are comfortable.

Knapp: Should I invite retirees?

Merbler, Abraham: All are welcome to come. Wed 3/14 is a big higher education advocacy day. Wed 3/27 is the EOP day. Please sign up on the website to volunteer your time and help talk to our elected officials.

LaFond: Can we clarify whether members need to take time off?

Merbler: They need to take time off and talk with supervisors.

Wittner: Was down at Leg with ACCFL advocating against Tier VI. Sensed broad resentment of Gov. Cuomo's policies from Legislators.

Stasi: Could Merbler send a blast mail to members, requesting participation in advocacy days and stating the University/contract's policy about release time in its strictest terms. Making members aware of the policy, even in its strictest possible interpretation, might help increase participation.

Merbler: I have made numerous pleas in writing, in general membership meetings, etc.

Steen: Republican legislators supporting Cuomo more than Democrats. However they all look at polls, where Gov.'s support has dropped recently. Some politically acceptable compromise position is likely to emerge.

**Report from VP for Academics: Collins**

Next Lobby on Wed. 3/14 during break. An opportunity for academics who teach on Tuesdays. Meeting at Chestnut and Swan at 11:00 and will walk to Legislature from there.

Apologies for no written report. Away for 4 days and still catching up.

What have we learned from management? Need to keep coming back. Update on NYSUNY 2020. Has not yet been approved. If UAlbany does not get its proposal approved,, then we will not get the tuition raise that the two centers Buffalo and Stony

Brook have already received. Without this money (from tuition) we won't be able to pursue the hiring and construction initiatives of the UA Strategic Impact plan.

Asked about an MA in Secondary Ed involving language classes. Who is entitled to offer an MA level language classes at this Univ when language depts have been dismantled? Will continue to follow up on this question as new information has begun to emerge.

We need to be persistent in inquiries to management.

An ongoing effort to focus on what we can learn from members: satisfying uptick in responses from newsletter Someone read Friedman's piece on shifting dates of break, and took it upon themselves to contact UPC who are now reconsidering the issue.

Grievances. Anderson and Petry are the point-persons and do great work. UUP recently prevailed in its grievance over one renewal case. Another case ongoing. There is very little due-process for renewals of untenured faculty. Important to remain attentive. Anderson and Petry do the detailed work on these cases; Collins' role is to have initial conversations and direct cases to Greivance.

Echoes Steen and Abraham to encourage members to go down to advocate in Legislature.

Discussion:

Merbler: Binghamton has not yet presented or perhaps has pulled out?  
Not confirmed by others. Something to look into further.

Trachtenberg: Inquires about status of Theatre Dept.

Seidel: Merbler and Seidel having a meeting with Hedberg on THR Dept's status.

Merbler: situation remains convoluted. UUP working on clarification.

### **Report VP Professionals: Abraham**

Stress to all Professionals. Anytime they get an unsatisfactory evaluation, professionals should immediately contest it. Such evaluations are very serious. Contact Abraham, Anderson, Petry immediately. Very important.

Two events planned:

4/11 workshop for professionals;

4/24 joint labor/management workshop on supervision of professionals. 12-2pm CC375

Abraham ran a special workshop for professionals at New Leaders retreat. Intends to run more workshops both statewide and at UA.

Collins: If we host a tenure workshop, where statewide VP comes, can we expand that to include information on renewals?

Seidel: Panel usually includes someone who is pre-tenure or recently tenured, along with more seasoned academics, Dept chairs, and (former) members of CPCA. Includes presentation of best practices. Could include discussion of renewals for academics/professionals.

Gendron: Who should attend workshop on management of professionals? Does that apply to everyone even if such supervision is only a small portion of their job?

Abraham: The workshop is for everyone who has any role in supervising professionals.

Abraham: I will be sending an e-mail blast message stating my withdrawal from AAUP election. Based on DA's vote to disaffiliate, I have chosen not to stand.

**Secretary absent due to illness. No report.**

**Treasurer on vacation and was unable to prepare a report.**

**Officer of Contingents: No report**

### **Standing Committees Reports**

**Solidarity Committee:** Wittner: Benedicto Martinez. Independent Mexican workers federation. Co-president speaking on aftermath of NAFTA and Mexican resistance. Mon 3/19 6:30-9pm, main meeting room of SEIU at 15 Washington Ave. sponsored by many local labor and community groups. Moves to have UUP sponsor the event and make a \$100 contribution to the group. Second Romain.

Collins: Speaker will talk about a number of strategies for cross border organizing. Mexico an important site for US labor to consider and demonstrate worker solidarity. Good event for us to sponsor.

Merbler: Where should the money come from?

Wittner: Agency shop fee reimbursable.

Motion carries. 2 abstentions, otherwise unanimous.

### **Peace and Justice:**

Friedman: Lecture on 3/6 by Iranian Peace activist well attended. She discussed spending priorities. She argued that Iranian sanctions and aggressive military posturing are stifling budding democratic groups in country. Interesting work with union groups in Colombia, and elsewhere. Has brochures. Willing to take donations for organizations. Will talk to Hoey for a donation from statewide Solidarity.

**Newsletter:**

Stasi: One more issue this semester. Submissions welcome. Deadline 4/15.

Merbler: Please submit every newsletter issue and apply for every category for journalistic awards from UUP statewide. Mike Knee should also submit nomination from website.

Merbler: Special thanks to Eric Torgerson who has managed website in Knee's absence. Applause. Note of thanks seconded by Knee.

**Health and Safety:**

Harton. Traffic concerns. Trimming hedges for safety. Custodial services reminded about storage of cleaning carts. Handicap door buttons not working. Important to report health and safety concerns so that they can be addressed. No clear process for resolving issues, so this committee is pressing the issues.

**Ad Hoc Committees:****GOV Ad Hoc Committee:**

Fox. Senate elections coming up. Two vacancies for Faculty at Large. Two vacancies for Professionals at large. Slates have been announced, but nominees can be added with 25 signatures by Mon 3/19. Also two vacancies for UAS board. Also one vacancy for SUNY statewide at-large senator.

LaFond: recommends Meredith Weiss, who is running for Faculty at large seat.

Hanifan: What has GOV committee done since resolutions from Wills were passed earlier in the semester?:

Fox: two meetings. Provost at first. No surprising reversals from Provost. A Task-Force has been created run by Dan White, who will make a case. He has been given an extension to complete the report until the next Senate meeting. Third resolution which asks campus to evaluate the place of language instruction on campus is complex. SEC tasked GOV to evaluate this. David Wills will be a member of the committee. Any information on language instruction should then be passed to Wills or to Fox. Second resolution about future consultation practices under debate. One group says such provisions are already in By-Laws. Another group states that the resolution was not vetted by SEC, and there are questions about whether it is actionable. Unsure how to resolve issues. Convoluted issue. More negotiations to follow.

Collins: It is good that we are making public the fact that administration wants *carte blanche* to follow or not-follow the By-Laws. Forcing clarification and public scrutiny is valuable for transparency and participation on campus community.

Fox: GOV also working on a task force on Administrative assessment. Opposed by President Philip.

Merbler: this should not need President's approval. Merbler spoke out about this at the meeting.

Fox: President appears to be backing down, asking for Senate to work with Admin to find a resolution.

Abraham: Now there is a form that must be signed confirming consultation took place.

Lafond: What about faculty who have been let go? Many at Senate meeting asked for University to address the situation of these faculty, especially given that the University is planning for an aggressive round of new hires.

Fox: Provost indicated that we were still in a dire economic situation. No clear recovery. Changes in budgetary climate have not made it possible to rehire the faculty who have been released or the programs that have been deactivated.

### **Old Business.**

EC votes to table discussion on Good and Welfare spending.

### **New Business:**

EC votes to table Resolution of Support for Contingent Faculty

Abraham moves a Resolution to fund Luncheon for Professionals Workshop on 4/11/12. Seconded by Hoey. EC votes unanimously in favor

Abraham moves a Resolution to fund a Luncheon for Supervisors of Professionals Workshop on 4/24/12. Hoey (and others) second. EC votes unanimously in favor.

Hoey moves a Resolution to create an Ad-Hoc Committee to Draft a UUP Chapter Letter to the Presidential Search Committee. Seconded by Lafond.

Hoey: We would write a brief letter congratulating the people who were appointed to Pres Search committee. Remind them that we are a unionized campus. And indicate some of our criterion about priorities for Presidential candidates.

Merbler: we have not historically participated in Presidential searches. Chancellor has recently changed procedure, making more secrecy, emphasizes confidentiality. Union Presidents were only invited to participate in interview, with no advance notice or time to prepare. Confidentiality has been the emphasis. Suggests that ad hoc committee help shape questions for such a process if it happens again this time.

Collins: Resolution is not a request to be at the interview. Rather, as a union, we announce to the Search Committee that they need to be aware of the circumstances we've just been through and where we currently stand as a campus. Ask that the committee keep the process as open as possible and that the committee be aware of key issues. This is a public stance about the kinds of qualifications that we want. Suggests that we publish letter in newsletter.

Abraham: Guidelines set by Chancellor. I am concerned that there is only one professional on committee, and that professional position is appointed not elected.

Hanifan: some members of the search committee membership may not be pro-union. Suggests a supplemental urging of faculty and staff to raise their concerns with search committee and potential presidential candidates through meetings or the comment line on website.

Wittner: Let's do both. Write the letter and urge members to participate as individuals.

Harton: Reminder, there is an open meeting with Search Committee on Friday 3/9: We should get our colleagues to attend.

Hoey: this is something the Union can do to make a public position about what we value as a campus community.

EC votes unanimously in favor:

Ad Hoc Committee constituted with Benjamin, Freidman, Collins, Stasi. Committee agrees to draft a letter by the next EC meeting.

LaFond moves to offer a Workshop for Chapter Membership on future of Higher Education.

Seconded by Hoey.

Lafond: Good event on 3/4 as part of the University in the City lecture series— could we repeat that event for general membership with presentations by UUP members who were on the original panel (Benjamin, Meredith Weiss, Jannel Hobson).

Collins: provides context on University in the City lecture series and the Progressive Faculty Caucus.

Merbler: what's involved in sponsorship?

Lafond: room, projector, \$150 contribution, probably an evening event. CC375. Beverages and cookies.

Shadrack: Make it more coherent and focussed. Has reservations about event.



Collins: Suggests a date in early May. Volunteers to help. Will work with Deborah to put together a committee and arrange a program.

Merbler: Thompson-LaPerle will book a room. Please work with Chapter on details.

EC votes to approve, with one abstention.

**EC votes to table report on New Leaders event.**

Brief announcement about upcoming talk by Benedicto Martinez. (see Solidarity Committee Report above). Wittner clarifies that it is not an SEIU event; rather SEIU is one of many local sponsors.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bret Benjamin, Acting Secretary