

**Executive Committee Meeting Minutes  
UUP Albany Chapter  
May 9, 2016**

**Attendees:** J. Aini, M. Aso, B. Benjamin, P. Breiner, E. Briere, J. Collins, R. Friedman, J. Gendron, J. Greiman, M. Grosshandler, J. Harton, T. Hoey, C. Jewell, M. Manjak, R. McClamrock, R. Moslehi, D. Myers, A. Olin, G. Petry, B. Pyszczymuka, A. Richie, G. Robinson, P. Romain, R. See, M. Seidel, B. Shadrick, B. Sutton, B. Trachtenberg, C. Walcek, L. Wilder, L. Wittner, K. Thompson-LaPerle.

**I. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes were moved by J Collins, seconded by B Trachtenberg and approved with 2 abstentions.

**II. Review of LM Note**

February and April's notes were provided. In March there was no formal LM meeting, but separate meetings were held with HR and B Hedberg. The contingents committees have mostly been staffed. The compensation/benefits committee has met. The compensation committee is pushing to have a new base pay of approximately \$3600 for fall. Pathways to permanence and professional environment are missing members. Senate and UUP are nominating members. R Tolley is the UUP representative on the oversight committee, but UUP would like to see other members, particularly contingent faculty, participating here as well.

**III. Chapter Assistant Summer Hours**

Today's Good & Welfare contributions will go to the chapter assistant in recognition of Administrative Professionals Day. As usual the chapter assistant has requested reduced summer hours. The president asked for formal EC approval to pay for the chapter assistant's reduced summer hours to 24 hours across 3 days per week during the summer break. P Romaine moved, D Myers seconded, all approved.

**IV. Membership Drive**

B Benjamin sent around the most updated spreadsheet of remaining fee payers. Each person who signs stays on the roles even if they are off the payroll a couple years. Approximately 90 people signed cards since 3/1/16, but we have added almost as many new fee payers (there is a lag receiving updated lists). Graduate students regularly transition to UUP and don't know to join. We need a plan to address this, perhaps a parallel to the contingent representatives program, but the grad student dynamic is difficult--grad directors and their committee members should not be asking them. We may wish to remind fee payers near retirement of retiree member benefits.

**V. Discussion of VPA/AVPA vacancies**

B Trachtenberg, our VPA, has taken a position at another university starting in fall. He will be here through July and wrap up the cases he can. There was not enough time for this meeting to do call for nominations and it doesn't make sense to do this over summer since academics are not here and should participate in the appointment of their VPA. B Benjamin proposed we use same process we have used before with interim AVPA positions. Before the first meeting in fall (Sept 6.) B Benjamin will send out a call for nominations. There are formal elections in spring to elect a new slate of officers and delegates. The position to fill this vacancy runs from the start of fall 2016 through summer 2017. A Major AVPA will stay in his role during summer until P Stasi comes off sabbatical. All agreed this sounded reasonable. B Trachtenberg volunteered he will be available to discuss the position with whoever takes over.

**VI. Officer Reports**

AVP B Trachtenberg:

- The renewal/tenure and promotion report was presented to administration and officers met with B Hedberg and J Stellar to discuss the report. Of 10 departments reviewed, only 2 had full documents in place for renewal/tenure and promotion processes, bylaws and clear procedures corresponding with the Contract/SUNY/the university. Administration was concerned by the lack of information for

faculty going through the process and wants the Provost's office to be the repository for all the documents. This summer they will contact department chairs. These documents should be reviewed on a regular cycle. Senate and UUP will work together to follow up on this. UUP insisted on the right, as UUP, to be part of the process. All sides recognize the importance of this. UUP wants to see that the teaching faculty and professionals have the due process rights they are entitled to as public employees, know rules and know who's reviewing them as early as starting at the university. They should know when they will be reviewed, when the opportunities for response are, and what the standards are. All departments should have this. UUP should also provide outreach to departments. It is crucial to members that they have clear guidelines. An information session with UUP and Senate should be held to address why issues like this and the ombudsperson are so important. Senate will be taking this up in their provost meetings as UUP does at LM. The newsletter will have the full report with a link online.

- Nine junior faculty members went through the virtual boot camp program of the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity, all reporting that it was very helpful to them in balancing teaching, research and service. B Trachtenberg met with ODI recently to discuss how to spread best practices and look for ways to get the university to commit to paying for this training regularly. We can't go back to the same source for funding. Funds may be made available when faculty are hired at the university. Institutional membership would cost \$20K/year and would allow all faculty, professionals, contingents, and graduate students to benefit from the workshops, mentoring and resources available which could help with retention and professional development.
- A recent Judaic Studies talk raised student protest and concerns about academic freedom. B Trachtenberg sent an email to Judaic Studies students about the talk and a department chair forwarded an informational email to students, without comment. The chair was labeled as anti-Semitic and anti-Israel and students wrote a letter attacking both. No students spoke to either in person. The CAS dean met with students after speaking with the department chair and told them such talks are in the purview of the university which is supposed to investigate subjects critically and she encouraged students to attend the talk. There was no protest at the talk.
- Administration still sees the ombudsperson position as important, but wants to broaden this beyond promotion and tenure, but not to students.

VPP T Hoey shared he is working on many member issues. The workshops have been going well thanks to P Romain's work. The recent professionals permanent appointment workshop had many in attendance. The next workshop, on performance programs and evaluations is scheduled for 6/7/16. These are joint workshops with HR.

Grievance Officer G Petry stated it has been a busy spring regarding grievance cases.

## **VII. Chapter President Release Time Report/Application**

B Benjamin asked for the EC's engagement in setting the coming year's priorities. The EC discussed the two draft documents he provided prior to the meeting which he must submit to statewide at the end of the month. The EC was impressed with the documents and seeing in print the many things that were accomplished this year and now B Benjamin is also involved in negotiations. The 50 % release seems insufficient. The EC suggested he include that the union has in the last five years become increasingly more engaged and involved in governance, that it would be good to point to this sea change. One member stated he's not seen the chapter this effective for decades. Membership has become more engaged across many areas showing the chapter's ability to communicate and respond. This ability depends on an organizing model of not just signing up members, but activating them.

For the coming year continuity is important, not just creating new priorities. The chapter should continue to press hard on contingents concerns (compensation, benefits eligibility, longer term contracts, etc.) in collaboration with the Senate and with the new committees in place. The Senate's recent survey indicated there was goodwill toward Senate but faculty did not know what the Senate did or how to find information. Ensuring UUP and Senate's overlapping constituencies have information and are

empowered is important. We should continue to recruit and train new union activists/leaders. There is ongoing work to convert fee payers to members and here the contingents representatives are a particularly powerful force. The department representative structure is good, but needs attention in certain areas on campus. We must continue to activate members. The ombudsperson, review/tenure and promotion and SIRF matters should be pursued. For professionals, retention, internal hiring, career development, and which units are doing well in cultivating a productive atmosphere should be further explored. The past co-chairs of the Women's Concerns Committee has been making progress on its survey data and hopes to have another substantial report focusing on gender equity this fall. The EC should continue to advance strong policy initiatives for the University. The newsletter has been excellent and should continue. The website was redesigned, highlighting the work of the chapter required ongoing updates to be most effective. The chapter should continue to put on regular events and workshops meaningful to the different constituencies and offer these spread out throughout the year. UUP should work to convince supervisors that UUP work is a valuable service component of their jobs (this will enable more members to be more active). Members should make a point of including their union work in their faculty activity reports and performance programs. UUP should work on retention issues. Many departments have lost faculty who have not been replaced which is causing difficulties (including 4 departments trying to withdraw Senators due to shortages in faculty lines). The compact planning process of giving hires only to programs that promise big enrollment shifts is having adverse effects. Many are leaving UAlbany for various reasons and those remaining are being negatively impacted by the loss. Following the discussion of Chapter projects for next year, Benjamin recused himself for the vote on his request for Chapter support of his release time application. B Trachtenberg moved that the release time report and proposal be approved and that the chapter pay 10% of the release time. P Romain seconded and all approved.

#### **VIII. Special Recognition**

B Trachtenberg and J Greiman are leaving the university this summer to take positions at Wake Forest University. Both have been committed EC members and trusted partners, contributing enormously to the union and the university. In particular B Trachtenberg's work as VPA was noted in a plaque that read, "In Grateful Recognition of Barry Trachtenberg, Vice President for Academics 2013-2016. For your leadership, integrity, and dedication. Your incisive political critique, your mature savvy as an organizer, and your unbending commitment to labor will be sorely missed. You have shown us how to intervene with artful diplomacy, while never crossing the firm line of principle. We commend your exceptional service to the Chapter." Further testaments came from many other EC members about the many outstanding contributions of both Jennifer and Barry, and made note of other faculty who are also departing this year. Following the thunderous applause and standing ovation, tears were dried, cake was served, and well-wishes were offered by all.

**IX. B Shadrick thanked the EC** for the chair she received in honor of her years of service with UUP.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00pm. Minutes submitted by J Harton.