



**United University Professions
Albany Chapter**

Labor-Management Notes 10/25/2021

1. Update on Telecommuting Guidelines implementation. We are requesting information on the implementation of the new Telecommuting Guidelines implementation. How many of our members have applied for telecommuting? How many of those requests have been granted?

M. By last week 197 employees have applied, 189 were approved. These are not sorted by bargaining unit. Five that were denied were UUP members. One appeal was denied. Expect these to continue into the Spring so that folks don't have to re-apply. The average telecommuting was 3-5 days per pay period. Supervisors have been great, although bi-weekly progress reports may create supervisor fatigue over time. Management will provide a better data set.

L. Appreciates the info.

2. Energy-saving telecommuting program over intersession. We are requesting information on what our members are reporting as a proposed expansion of telecommuting during the upcoming winter intersession in order to allow for the campus to save on energy costs. While, in principle, we welcome this move we believe that its details should be negotiated with the Chapter before they are finalized.

M. During intersession, some buildings will be closed. Employees will either be sent home or moved to other spaces on campus, but this is separate from telecommuting arrangements. Job duties might be modified for some employees. The energy-saving efforts will be mostly a carbon-copy of last year.

L. Makes sense. Running from the end of finals to the beginning of Spring semester?

M. Yes. This will save a lot of money and make the campus more sustainable. We don't have an announcement date yet.

L. The more notice folks have, the better.

3. Continued HVAC concerns on downtown campus. We remain concerned for our members with offices in parts of the downtown campus that are not connected to a centralized HVAC system and thus do not have a way to effectively circulate air. What solutions to this problem are being considered by the campus (for example, installation of standalone units, like ductless minisplits)?

L. Some rooms are not connected to HVAC for heat and Covid ventilation.

M. Right now, only about 15% of inside air is introduced from the outside. We're looking for 20% without effecting the heating. We are exercising caution for spaces without mechanical ventilation, like Draper and Milne Halls. CDC and NYS have dropped the requirement, but the University has reduced occupancy in these spaces anyway to social distance. There are no plans to install mechanical ventilation in these spaces which would mean gutting the buildings. The buildings are considered safe with individual offices and distancing.

L. Makes sense. Hosting meetings personally is the only problem. Zoom is still a necessity, even between those in the building.

M. We are interested in how folks are meeting in these spaces and the numbers of people.

L. Will try to get some clarity on that.

M. Are the air filtration units giving people confidence? Management will share a document on HVAC.

4. Request for information on campus policies regarding course modalities. We are requesting information, including documentation if available, of all campus policies related to the scheduling of courses by modality. Several members from multiple departments have contacted the Chapter stating that they have been told that the Provost Office has issued a blanket policy stating that all courses that were taught in-person "pre-COVID" must continue to be taught in person. If true this would directly contradict what we were told by management during our September meeting about departments' ability to select course modalities for programmatic reasons and would, in our view, be an abrogation of the University Faculty's control of the curriculum.

L. There's frustration over teaching modalities beyond ADA permissions. What is the actual policy? Conversations have yielded nothing and now the Spring schedule is set. 144 online courses are listed now. Some folks are able to teach online while others are denied even with health issues. Is there a blanket policy? And shouldn't departments have control? Out of 94 requests for online teaching, 3 were granted.

M. The Provost needs to reach out for a meeting with Aaron. To the best of our knowledge, there's no policy on going back to pre-Covid teaching modalities. The pedagogical needs take precedence.

L. The Deans are saying there's a policy when it seems to be arbitrary. Who do we go to?

M. Will meet with the Deans on Thursday and follow-up. Consideration should be put to what programs should be all online, and what individual courses? When there's a real health issue, support will be there.

L. Thanks. It's frustrating not to know the process or where to turn.

M. Supervisors are invited to ask questions. The law and ADA process does take time. And there's a difference between general health fears and concrete health issues. Health issues need documentation.

When determination comes down to the teaching mission, then modality becomes a managerial prerogative, but we are trying to be as accommodating as possible.

L. Has heard from members, saying in-person teaching was required. Labor understands that administration has ultimate say but being top-down would be destructive.

M. Which is why management hasn't come down hard. AS to timing, the ADA requests have been pouring in and couldn't have been all dealt with before the schedule was set.

L. Feels there's not a clear answer but appreciates the conversation.

M. Provost will follow-up.

5. Employee training: We are requesting clarification on which of the required campus trainings are mandated by state law and which are being required by the campus at its own discretion. We are also concerned that the amount of work time required to complete the training has dramatically increased as employees are now required to attest that they have read and comprehend hundreds of pages of policy documents.

M. 'Can't talk about adjuncts. M. doesn't expect employees to be experts on policy but need to understand appropriate behavior at work. For new employees, it may seem daunting but longer term employees don't have to repeat some of the trainings. For 10-12 month employees, 2 hours a month will complete the trainings. Would like to see supervisors take a course on ADA and Family and Medical Leave Act. UAlbany is accepting equivalencies from other institutions on training.

6. Change to negotiated tuition waiver benefit. We were pleased to see the campus offer a new, pilot program eliminating undergraduate fees for UAlbany employees and dependents. However, this represents a change to a contractually negotiated benefit that must be negotiated with the Chapter before it is implemented.

M. understands their mistake.

L. We need to make sure this is just related to UAlbany campus and Fred Kowal needs to supply a letter stating that it's only for this campus. The changes make it affordable and are welcome.

7. Request for information on classroom instruction by faculty status. We are requesting updated information on the breakdown of classroom instruction by faculty status from AY 2016-2017 to AY 2019-2020. Specifically, we are requesting information on:
 - a. Gen. Ed. courses taught by tenure-line, FT lecturer, PT lecturer faculty and GAs.
 - b. Upper division courses (300 level and above) taught by tenure-line, FT lecturer, PT lecturer faculty and GAs.
 - c. Graduate courses (masters and Ph.D.). taught by tenure-line, FT lecturer, PT lecturer

faculty and GAs.

M. will send the data and talk later. There doesn't seem to be major changes from past years. We'll continue to roll out the data, and connections with System will help M. see this data in a SUNY-wide context.

Additional: M. There are approaching deadlines for awards for Finance and Administration. Nominations are encouraged.