



**United University Professions
Albany Chapter**

**Labor-Management Minutes
November, 21 2022**

1. Remarks from President Rodriguez: We look forward to President Rodriguez joining us this meeting and welcome his comments and participation in our discussion.

President Rodriguez highlighted UAlbany achievements including a recent 2.5-million-dollar grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Driving Change Program toward DEI. Three candidates to head Communications and Marketing. 75-million-dollars through capital funding will renovate old high school, plus an added 5.2-million for AI faculty. Expressed interest in maintaining communication with UUP.

2. UUP contract negotiation priorities. We will be presenting over 1,700 cards signed by UAlbany UUP members asking campus senior administration to express their support for our key priorities in their conversations with SUNY leadership. We would also like to draw management's attention to ways in which the Chapter and campus management can work together to pursue some of these priorities which will help with employee recruitment and retention.

L. – Presented 1800 postcards highlighting contract issues. Core priorities include salary raises, health insurance, remote work, child and elder care, contingent issues. Hope for support from SUNY and all campus leaders to move on an improved contract.

M. The lack of a permanent Chancellor impacts SUNY/CUNY relations. But there will be renewed advocacy for SUNY funding.

L. Thank you. Stressed telecommuting which requires no extra money as a contract issue. We've moved forward with this, esp. during summer and holidays.

3. Details on AI Initiative: The Chapter is requesting information on the planned "AI Initiative." Specifically, we are requesting information on:
 - a. The approximate number of total new, tenure-line faculty lines that will come out of the funds allocated by last year's state budget.
 - b. The approximate portion of these lines that will be devoted to the AI initiative.
 - c. Any documentation or details on how these AI lines will be distributed across colleges and

departments and how the AI Initiative will be structured (i.e. as a college, a department, a program, etc.)

M. 5.2-million-dollars will go toward new faculty in AI and enhancing AI across the curriculum, about 27 new lines across ranks. the Deans have spoken to Chairs. Many schools and colleges will be getting lines, but a high demand had to be a requirement.

L. Are arts and humanities getting new lines?

M. Philosophy. New lines fit where there's a link to AI.

4. Role of ODI and HR in academic job search practices: Following up on our previous meeting we would like to further our discussion on changes or additions to academic hiring practices driven by ODI and HR concerns and input.

M. We've been trying to get more diversity in the faculty as part of the strategic plan. In 11 years, there's only been an improvement of 1%. We now feel there needs to be more diversity in the applicant pool. Consistent guidelines are needed and ranking may not be the best approach from search committees. A list of strengths is better, because if the candidate has made it this far, they are qualified.

We need to streamline the process so we don't lose candidates to other institutions.

L. How can departments feel they have the freedom to choose? Faculty (UUP, Senate) buy-in will be necessary to move forward with new initiatives

M. Dept. committees need to know their job is to identify candidates. There needs to be conversation. Direct questions should go to the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

5. Streamlining appointment letter distribution process: As we come to understand the issues that have created unreasonable delay in the distribution of appointment letters for contingent faculty, we would like to discuss streamlining this process in two ways. First, having the letters sent directly from HR to the employee; second, distributing them electronically. We are also interested in hearing what steps management is taking to ensure the timely distribution of appointment letters.

M. HR has purposefully transformed the systems and that needs to continue. This accounts for delays. Once it's running, letters will be out more quickly. The new hire process still needs work and fewer sign-offs would be helpful. Protected SS numbers need a more efficient way of being obtained. We should be getting Adjunct letters out before the semester.

L. Difficult to schedule classes without knowing what adjunct lines are available, and people need to know their pay rate.

M. We'll see modest progress in the Spring with solid work flow in the Fall. We should have one-year contracts for adjuncts.

The remainder of the agenda was tabled until Dec. 12 meeting.