

Labor Management Notes:
8.10.17

UUP: Aaron Major, Paul Stasi, Maureen Seidel

Admin: Cathy Tretheway, Bill Hedberg, Randy Stark, Brian

- 1) We asked about when we might have an opportunity to meet with the new Campus President. We were told that he will be here for Opening Convocation for three days and that Chapter leadership is high on the list of people he'd like to meet in the opening weeks. We agreed that it would work well to arrange to meet in an informal setting when he is here officially. His start date is September 14th and until then Jim Stellar will continue to serve as President.
- 2) Per our request, we received a preliminary list of new hires. We were also informed that management is planning a day for new faculty orientation on Friday September 15th. We were told that we could have some space for tabling, but asked for some time on the orientation agenda.
- 3) We raised a question about a policy of refusing to process travel reimbursements if a travel card is being audited. Management asserted that this practice is consistent with OSC's rules and regulations. We noted that we were unable to find that policy in our research and requested that Dave Mason send the appropriate policy to us.
- 4) We asked management if they had any insight as to a recent Times Union story about an apparent conflict between Campus Police Officers and their Commanders around policing practice, and what the implications might be for campus safety. Management stated that current Chief of Campus Police has long been advocating for community policing, in order to develop a better relationship between officers and the community. Whatever conflict was reported appears to not be due to a change in policy. We suggested that the change might be attributable to a shift in the national conversation around policing and suggested that this is an area where the Chapter and management can work together.
- 5) We raised a concern that new academic hires were being given offer letters that contained "O'Leary Memo" type language which states that the 'normal' teaching load is 3-3 across the campus. Management provided copies of the changes to the language in offer letters and suggested that, in his view, it did not articulate a change in workload, which we disagreed with. We also raised the concern that this seem part of a larger, concerted effort to increase faculty teaching loads across the campus, which seems a way of dealing with higher enrollments without hiring more faculty while, at the same time, putting more pressure on faculty to publish, research and get grant money. We also suggested that this approach is not the way to build a productive teaching and research environment. We also suggested that it hurts morale in the faculty and treats teaching as punitive and suggests the importance of recognizing diversity of research and the persistent problem of reducing it to research dollars. Management asked what we want done and we suggested

that management revert to the old language, which Management said they would bring to back to upper management. We also pointed out that in nearly every case when we learn about an effort to increase teaching loads, it is when a member tells us – we never hear from management directly. This puts us in the position of being antagonists about these issues as it seems to us that there is a concerted effort to put this policy forward without consultation. This move—and the continued attempt to ramp up teaching loads across the campus—will result in endless battles on behalf of individual members. We will fight every one of these if we have to, but it would be better to have an actual conversation beforehand.

- 6) We raised the issue of hearing from some our contingent faculty members that they were not being offered courses next year, moving them under the 2-2 threshold for health care. We want to make sure the campus is making the goal of a 2-2 load clear and suggested that management consider some policies around this rather than just encouragement? For example, there could be some overall policy that requires departments to go through old list of contingents. Management said that a reminder could be sent out to Deans and Chairs for now. Maureen asks whether there was any wrap-up from the contingent concerns committees. Management also said that there are some things that they are ready to start moving on, but they need to go through the Provost's Office and are waiting for the Presidential transition.

After we finished with our agenda items, Management returned to the O'Leary memo, asking why we found it problematic. Management stated that they don't want to create an antagonistic and adversarial relationship but noted that we've made it clear that it doesn't feel non-antagonistic to us. We reminded Management that this document is more than 30 years old and was written in a very different context. In our current moment where the University is under pressure to bring in more students while also facing a tight budget it becomes a way to increase the workload of academic faculty.