

# THE FORUM

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Your UUP Albany Chapter Newsletter

Issue 122



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### Forum On-Line Appendix:

Proposed Changes to Chapter By-Laws—follow the link:  
<http://www.albany.edu/uup/pdfs/AlbanyProposedBylawChanges20120817.pdf>

## The Other UUP: Higher Ed Temps

Jim Collins and Paul Stasi

In 1962, the socialist writer Michael Harrington published "*The other America: Poverty in the United States.*" It documented severe poverty in various parts of America – the Appalachians, South and Southwest, the inner cities – and motivated the anti-poverty policies and programs of the 1960s and 1970s, giving us, among other programs, Medicare and Head Start. Today, poverty and inequality are again major challenges in the U.S. And what has been called 'the assault on the middle class' has, in fact, been occurring for decades in higher education.

Here is a figure to consider: In 1975, nearly 75% of all college instructors were tenure-track, and 25% were part-time or temporary; in 2010, only 25% of college instructors were tenure-track, and 75% were in contingent positions.<sup>1</sup>

Part-time and temporary academics are miserably paid, have poor benefits, and suffer job insecurity and weak career advancement possibilities. This trend and state of affairs should concern us all. We should learn the dimensions of the problem, and we should work collectively to resist and change what is a decades-long process of academic exploitation. This is true nationally and at UAlbany. We will turn to the national situation below, discussing an important new study, but first here are some recent statistics for our institution:

"About 45 percent of the University at Albany's faculty in the fall of 2011 were part-time," according to university spokesman, Karl Luntta. "This number does not include teaching assistants or graduate assistants...In the fall of 2010, there were 625 full-time faculty and 442 part time."<sup>2</sup>

The national trends have been reported in a recent study by the Coalition on the Academic Workforce (CAW), a group of twenty-six higher education associations, including several faculty unions, dedicated to "working on the issues associated with deteriorating faculty working conditions." The CAW has just released "*A Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members,*" an official report on the conditions of part-time faculty in the United States.<sup>3</sup> It begins with this sobering generalization, drawn from federal data:

"... of the nearly 1.8 million faculty members and instructors who made up the 2009 instructional workforce in degree-granting two- and four-year institutions of higher education in the United States, more than 1.3 million (75.5%) were employed in contingent positions off the tenure track, either as part-time or adjunct faculty members, full-time non-tenure track faculty members, or graduate student teaching assistants."

The report fills in this startling statistic with some detail. Building upon a survey sent to 30,000 faculty members and instructors, 20,000 of whom identified themselves as contingent labor, the report provides a portrait of the pay, workforce demographics, and professional aspirations of those 1.3 million faculty and instructors. It is not a pretty picture.

See [Other UUP, page 7.](#)

# President's Corner

Jim Collins  
Acting President, Albany Chapter, UUP  
Anthropology Department

## Introduction

Greetings, and welcome back to a new academic year. With a contract to debate and approve, jobs and programs to defend, and a university to improve, we have many tasks for the year ahead. By the time you are reading this, I will have been Acting President for the Albany UUP Chapter for only a few weeks; accordingly, this report will be more forward-looking than retrospective. Let me begin by thanking the outgoing President, Candace Merbler, for her many years of service to Albany UUP. She will continue as a member of the Executive Committee of the Chapter where her organizational knowledge and experience will be put to good use. Such knowledge and experience, as well as the strength, energy, and ideas of our members will be needed because we face challenges and opportunities in the year ahead.

## Ongoing Efforts

I was elected as Vice President for Academics in 2011 as part of a slate of unionists committed to defending jobs and programs, building internal union democracy, and creating conditions for academic and professional staff to have a bigger role in the university sustained by their labor. We still need such an effort. The conditions that resulted in the downsizing of language programs and the Theatre department, the closure of the Project Renaissance, and the accompanying job losses have not significantly changed. A construction program – however ambitious – is not a program for restoring academic programs. As of this writing, Albany's NY-SUNY2020 proposal, whose program priorities have determined most faculty growth, has not yet been approved by New York State. Together with faculty and members of the Senate, we have called for transparency about the university's 'all funds' operating budget, but that has not yet been granted.

Given this state of affairs, our union remains committed to efforts begun last year, including working with faculty to improve faculty governance and promoting greater transparency in university administration. These tasks remain before us. A senate which is not protective of its rights and responsibilities is a governance body that will be led by administrators and administrative committees that are unelected and unaccountable to rank and file faculty and staff. As we discussed in this newsletter last year, the 'de-activation' of language and theatre programs in 2010-2011 was executed in a way that sidestepped both union-negotiated contractual rights and oversight by elected governance bodies (Forum, Issue 120). Last year we wrote an Open Letter to the Presidential Search Committee, calling for a more open process for selecting our top leadership. In contrast, the search committee became more secretive, a victim of its own commitment to confidentiality, when a list of candidates was reported in the local press.

## A Focus on Mobilizing

Most importantly, however, is that if we are to defend jobs, push for accountability and transparency, and improve the core mission of a university, we need a strong, democratic union. That does not happen by wishing. We in the leadership of our campus chapter are committed to engaging with and mobilizing our members. This involves numerous efforts, including:

1. Building our departmental representative structure: Representatives provide a department-by-department communication link between individual members and the elected union leadership and are crucial to the health of our organization. Our Membership Development Committee will have a faculty and a professional co-chair to direct this effort in 2012-13, but we need your help.

See [Corner](#), page 8.

## Class War: No End in Sight

### Food Insecurity

Source: USDA

**17.9m** Number of US households lacking enough food for all family members at some point during the year.

**700k** Increase in households judged food insecure from previous year (2010)

**14.9%** Portion of all US households food insecure, more than 50 million Americans, or roughly 1 in 6.

**6.8m** Number of food Insecure households with "very low food security," i.e., 1 or more family members were chronically under nourished.

**400k** Increase in number of households with "very low food security" over previous year (2010).

### Wealth Gap Widens

Source: Pew Research Center

**85%** Percentage of middle-class Americans (household income ranging from \$39k-\$118k) stating that it is more difficult to maintain their standard of living now than it was a decade ago.

**51%** Portion of Americans who fall in middle-class as defined above, down from **61%** in 1971.

**45%** Share of US annual income garnered by middle-class, down from **62%** in 1970.

**46%** Annual US income received by wealthier Americans in 2010 compared to **29%** received in 1970.

**\$69.5k** Median annual income of middle-class, a loss of nearly **\$3.5k** since 2000 (**\$73k**).

**28%** Decline in net worth of middle-class households over last decade (\$129k to \$93k).

**45%** Decline in net worth for lower-income families

## Guest Letter from CSEA Brothers and Sisters

Nancy Davis, Secretary, CSEA Local 691

Editor's Note: This is the first in what I hope will be a series of guest columns by representatives of other unionized employees at the University at Albany. This inaugural column was written by Nancy Davis, Secretary of CSEA Local 691, who graciously agreed to provide us with this report. She describes the general situation of the employees who provide the essential clerical and technical services to the campus. In it you will find evidence of the two-pronged attack against the American middle class: shift the cost of the economic collapse onto American workers and their families, and, in the process, weaken their ability to respond politically and collectively through their unions.

I am the current Secretary of CSEA Local 691 at SUNY Albany. I welcome this opportunity to share with UUP our goals and challenges for the past year and a half. The majority of the nearly 760 UAlbany workers represented by us consist of grounds, plant, custodial and shop employees. We also represent all of the clerical and secretarial staff for the University.

The contract struggle with Governor Cuomo and the disappointing outcome delivered devastating setbacks to us. The furloughs have had a significant impact on most of us. Medical coverage is not really adequate. The retirement incentive resulted in a significant loss to our membership. This added to the workload for remaining employees who are now affected on multiple levels. From our union prospective, it isn't possible for us to do enough for them to make up for it. During the contract negotiations we had general membership meetings on all three campuses to inform every one of the concerns that would affect them. We organized and walked the Labor Day parade. We petitioned our legislators by sending a record number of emails and post cards. We protested along with UUP and other unions at the Capital and other local events.

When it comes to our members, I have the greatest respect for all of the staff, but especially those who work out in the heat and the cold and in shops with poor ventilation and little or no air conditioning. We file grievances and do what we can to help CSEA members improve their working environment as quickly as possible. Many of our jobs that were vacated through retirements have been

turned into SL positions further cutting into our membership.

Now CSEA members are losing the opportunity for broader economic advancement. We, along with many other Americans, are being squeezed out from the middle class. The fight must go on, but we need to get our members to believe in their own power to make change. We organize events to bring them together. We bring in vendors who can inform us of benefits that can help improve our positions. We bring in representatives from Region 4 that anyone can talk to about their concerns. And we continue to try to organize the power of the people.

If CSEA Local 691 SUNY employees are able to effect change, we would first like to see the members proud of the job they do and the University they work for. If this is accomplished, half the battle is won. Happier, friendlier employees make a better environment for the students and for the faculty. Let's raise the bar and effect change that will improve the standard of living for these members, allow them the opportunities for advancement, and generate a stronger middle class for the United States. We are always open to working with other unions to this end. Thank you.

## By-Laws Changes: Vote on 10/23

We have begun a process of revising the By-Laws for the Albany Chapter of UUP with the intent of making our organization more open and accessible. The Executive Committee has voted to support the proposed changes. Final approval will be subject to membership discussion and vote at the first **General Membership Meeting on October 23, 12:00-2:00 pm** (location TBD). The proposed By-Laws changes are published on our Chapter website (see URL on page 1).

We will have reports from Chapter Committees about their work and have time for chapter members to respond with questions. The other main agenda item will be discussing and voting on the proposed changes to Albany Chapter By-Laws. Unlike other chapter meetings, this one will be 'brown bag'. Attendees are asked to bring their own lunches. The Chapter will provide water, tea and coffee.

## Lessons from Wisconsin

Paul Stasi, English Department

In February of 2011, we witnessed one of the most remarkable events in recent U.S. Labor history as thousands of citizens took over the capital building in Madison, Wisconsin to protest incoming Republican Governor Scott Walker's draconian, anti-union budget measures. The excitement was palpable. It produced a movement to recall Walker, which was successful. Unfortunately the election itself was not and Walker remains in power. This seems a good time, then, to try to understand how the energy and excitement of the February demonstrations failed to win victory in June.

The simplest answer is that the Democratic candidate was outspent, according to some estimates, by as much as 8:1. In America, money almost always secures electoral victory. One possible response to this is to suggest that Labor hasn't poured enough money into the political system. And yet it's hard to imagine that unions will ever be able to match the contributions of wealthy individuals and powerful corporations. If that's the case, then perhaps we should question the tactic of pouring money into a bankrupt electoral system.

This, at least, is the position of Doug Henwood, the editor and publisher of the Left Business Observer, who argues that Wisconsin proves the futility of channeling grass roots politics into institutionalized electoral battles. Henwood is particularly critical of labor's continued romance with the Democratic party. Unions have, by one estimate, poured some \$700 million into Democratic coffers since 2000, and yet it's not clear what exactly they have to show for it.<sup>1</sup> New York's own nominally Democratic Governor Andrew Cuomo, for instance, began attacking unions before he was even elected.<sup>2</sup> And President Obama was noticeably absent from the Wisconsin Recall election. To be sure, the Republicans, as Walker has proved, would be worse. But it's hard to argue that the "lesser of two evils" argument benefits unions, particularly when Democrats are virtually assured of union support, a fact which deprives unions of the important leverage they would have if their votes actually needed to be courted.

Perhaps even more important is what the failure of the Wisconsin Recall demonstrates about the puzzling anti-union sentiment of today's political climate, a sentiment captured in a startling statistic gleaned from exit polls: 38% of voters who belong to

a union household – meaning they or someone they live with is a union member – voted for Scott Walker.<sup>3</sup> Not only are unions unable to reach the non-union public; they are often unable to reach members of their own families.

Here is where Henwood's argument becomes tricky. Unions themselves, he argues, bear some of the blame for this. Rather than articulating a clear vision for all working class Americans regardless of union affiliation, unions have tended to focus on their own interests, and channeled their activism into electoral politics, i.e., they have behaved no differently than any other special interest jockeying for political favor in return for their contributions.

"Suppose instead," Henwood asks, "that the unions had supported a popular campaign—media, door knocking, phone calling—to agitate, educate, and organize on the importance of the labor movement to the maintenance of living standards? [Supposing] they'd made an argument, broadly and repeatedly, that Walker's agenda was an attack on the wages and benefits of the majority of the population? That it was designed to remove organized opposition to the power of right-wing money in politics? That would have been more fruitful than this major defeat."

Standing *outside* of the actual electoral process, Henwood argues, would allow the labor movement the flexibility to discuss the issues *as issues* rather than as aspects of a pragmatic campaign strategy. The hopeful result is that the debate could be pulled to the left for the benefit of all working-class Americans. "Imagine," Henwood writes, what would have happened if unions had spent their \$700 million "lobbying for single-payer day-in, day-out, everywhere," rather than on a Democratic party that largely ignores their interests?<sup>4</sup>

Not surprisingly, these claims have met with some vociferous responses. The Nation, for instance, ran an excellent forum debating the issue.<sup>5</sup> Though occasionally marred by name-calling, the central feeling of the responses was that we should not be critiquing unions at the precise moment when they are at their weakest; that we should instead keep the critique in-house. But reading through the Forum, it is easy to spot a line of thinking that connects Henwood's argument to the arguments of those who would criticize him. Gordon Lafer, an Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Oregon, for instance, agrees that public opinion has turned against unions, but asks "What's the more likely explanation—that unions actually became

See [Wisconsin, page 9](#).

## Deactivations Two Years On:

### Rationale Still Unclear

Martin Manjak, Professional Delegate

It is two years since the administration “deactivated” a slew of Humanities programs, and questions still linger over the motives, methods, and whether the actions were ultimately justified. A case in point is the French Program. When the administration announced the termination of French language degree programs at Albany in October of 2010, one of the rationales they offered was that the programs were not cost efficient, i.e., there were too many faculty and not enough students to justify continuation of the programs given the budget crisis. However, when the numbers were actually examined, not only were they demonstrated to be invalid, they revealed the fact that the administration overlooked the additional revenue generated by the French program due to its large enrollment of students in the University in the High School program. When the dean was presented with these facts, she withdrew this fiscal justification for the deactivations.

In all, three language programs were eliminated: French, Russian, and Italian. Just how popular were the deactivated programs? We now have some numbers, courtesy of the Modern Language Association’s (MLA) enrollment database, that show that the targeted programs all experienced growth in enrollments from 2006-2009.

Language	2006	2009
Italian	168	189
Russian	96	205
French	291	437

Table 1: Program Enrollments—Grad & Undergrad

Clearly these departments were successful in promoting the study of their languages and cultures. Another way to measure this is by ranking the enrollments in the top five UAlbany language programs from 2006 to 2009.

2006	2009
1. Spanish	1. Spanish
2. French	2. French
3. Italian (tie)	3. Japanese
3. Japanese (tie)	4. Russian
5. Chinese	5. Italian

Table 2: Program Rankings by Enrollment

Three of the most heavily enrolled programs were marked for deactivation, again raising the question of what criteria were used in deciding which programs to eliminate.

In addition to being the second most popular language program at UAlbany, the University’s French program was the most successful of its kind within the entire SUNY system. In 2009, Albany’s 437 French students led system enrollments followed by Buffalo (396), Stony Brook (296), and Binghamton (217).

But raw numbers don’t tell the entire story. They do not express the quality of a program or its reputation. Some indications of these can be gleaned from the number of graduate enrollments, and the peer recognition awarded to program faculty. In Albany’s case, the French program boasted 41 graduate students in 2009. Even more importantly, faculty in both French and Russian received numerous excellence awards in teaching, service, and research. To cite one example. Prof. Eloise Briere received two UAlbany Excellence Awards, and a Chancellor’s award for Excellence in Teaching as recently as 2011. Furthermore, the French program at UAlbany was nationally and internationally acknowledged as an innovator in integrating cultural studies into its language programs.

Given these numbers, faculty honors, program reputation, and the discredited argument that it was economically under-performing, one is left wondering at the rationale for the deactivations, and whether the price the institution paid was worth it.

There is no question that the manner in which the deactivations were carried out was inept. Faculty were left in limbo for months at a time as the administration waffled in the face of negative publicity and tried to repair the damage to the

See [Deactivations, page 9.](#)

## Performance Programs: The Importance of Employee Participation

Each year your supervisor is required by the State/UUP agreement to provide you with a written performance program outlining the duties and responsibilities to be achieved during the coming year. At the end of that year, you are required by the same agreement to be evaluated, in writing, on how well you met those goals.

Supervisors may not be familiar with this process. You can help your supervisor and advocate for yourself by learning what the process involves.

It is the policy of SUNY, contained in the agreement, that employees are evaluated on the duties and responsibilities outlined in their current performance program. You cannot be evaluated without a written performance program. For example, if your performance program was written five years ago and ended four years ago, you can't be evaluated.

Be aware that if you want a promotion in the long run, your performance program should be used to document a permanent and significant increase in your responsibilities. The contract anticipates that duties can change, therefore, a performance program can be amended. For example, if you agree to do two jobs because your colleague left and they are not replacing him, you do yourself an injustice if you fail to get those new duties added to your performance program. You will also want your evaluation to account for the changes you undertook and the success you've achieved in those new duties.

Make sure the time lines for achieving your objectives are reasonable.

If additional duties are added to your performance program, ask for others to be removed, or ask for a salary increase.

It's important to know that a performance program is designed to be a consultative process between supervisor and employee, so you should know what is expected of you. Throughout the year, your supervisor should let you know which goals you are meeting and which need more work so you are not taken by surprise during the evaluation.

As your performance program is being developed:

- Ask questions and request clarification on anything that you are unclear about.
- If you are assigned a new task for which you have no training, ask that training be included.

- Know who your immediate supervisor is. This is the person responsible for writing your program and evaluating you.

Avoid accepting the following:

- Statements of duties that are not described, such as "any duties as assigned." You cannot be evaluated on something you are not specifically told in writing.
- Duties or responsibilities that you have no authority or resources to carry out.
- Duties or responsibilities that are controlled by someone else.

Call us if you are asked to sign a "backdated" performance program, one that says you were retroactively responsible for duties that you were not informed of. Call us if you are retroactively assigned secondary sources, i.e., colleagues whose opinion of your work will factor into whether you get a positive or negative evaluation.

You do need to sign the performance program. Your signature only acknowledges that you received it. You can write "signed under protest" or "signature does not constitute agreement - I will be writing a response," should your supervisor add duties that seem way out of your job title or for which you will not be trained.

You should attach a written statement to the performance program within **10 days** of receipt if you object to any part of it. Call Grievance Chair **Greta Petry at 437-4986** to review a draft of your response.

If changes occur in your duties throughout the year, you can be directed to perform them, but you cannot be evaluated on them.

If you receive an evaluation that has "Unsatisfactory" checked off, you may, upon written request, ask for a review by the Committee on Professional Evaluation. You should also seek a committee review if the characterization summary is "satisfactory" but the content of the evaluation is overwhelmingly unsatisfactory.

To appeal an unsatisfactory evaluation, you must notify the chair of the Committee on Professional Evaluation, your supervisor, and the college president or designee, in writing, within **10 working days** of receipt of the evaluation. Your UUP chapter leaders can guide you through this process.

*Do not let an "unsatisfactory" evaluation go by without contesting it.*

**Source:** UUP Guide for Professional Employees

## Other UUP

### From page 1

Let's start with salary. The report finds that the median pay per course at four-year doctoral or research universities is \$3,400, with lower median rates at other kinds of institutions. At UAlbany the beginning pay rate is \$2,800 per course and has been so for over a decade. Clearly these piece-rate wages are brutally low and, as the report indicates, the vast majority of part-time instructors rely on other sources of income – including food stamps and government benefits – to supplement wages that are far below the poverty line. (To our UA readers who are tenure-track faculty, we suggest the following simple thought experiment:

Calculate your annual pay if paid at these per-course rates, and ask what kind of life you would lead.)

The report also provides data to disprove common assumptions about those who accept adjunct jobs.

- Most are neither “young faculty members taking a first step on the path to full-time employment” nor “older faculty members” taking on a “second, part-time career.” Indeed, more than 70% of part-time faculty are “in their prime earning years, between the ages of 36 and 65.”
- Over three-quarters of them are looking for full-time tenure-track positions.
- Their positions may be contingent, but they are neither part-time nor temporary. “[O]ver 80% of respondents reported teaching part-time for more than three years, and over half for more than six years.”

In brief, adjunct laborers are not adjuncts because they choose to be, or because they are working in some form of apprenticeship. Far from a system of graduate student training or a temporary solution to immediate staffing problems, adjunct work has become a permanent structural feature of the U.S. university economy.

### Why we should care and what we can do:

The increasingly conditional nature of academic labor is a problem that affects us all. It affects our graduate students, who are often prevented from completing their research by heavy teaching loads, and then must face a shredded job market. It affects our undergraduates who are taught by instructors who work in degraded circumstances, with too many students and little institutional support. It affects the

tenure-track faculty, charged with institutional governance and departmental advising, as well as teaching and scholarship, but increasingly shrunk in numbers and less and less able to advocate for academic interests and provide a counterbalance to the power of the administration.

Consider the 1975/2010 statistics with which we opened this article: In the plummeting numbers of aggregate, permanent, full-time faculty, we see that the academic middle class has a gaping hole in its center. It is also a union problem: Most of those 442 part-time instructors of 2011 will have been chapter members; we have not been able to do much to improve their circumstances.<sup>4</sup> And that needs to change. It is here, in our own workplace, that we most squarely come face-to-face with the relentless, decades' long assault on middle-class standards of living and potential working-class prosperity.

This is an issue that will not go away and is not confined simply to adjunct laborers on our campus, or the public university system as a whole. It is, instead, one manifestation of a larger systemic process: The destruction of secure employment with adequate pay and benefits. We must educate both the broader public and ourselves about it, so that we can act to improve the working conditions for all of us. In the coming issues of *The Forum*, we intend to do just that. During the national Campus Equity Week, we will hold various activities and educational events. With a renovated Part-Time Concerns Committee, we will bring together tenure-track and contingent faculty, who will develop a grassroots strategy to improve the pay and working conditions of part-time and contingent faculty, the “Other UUP.” Please join us.

<sup>1</sup> This statistic comes from page two of Marc Bousquet's excellent study *How the University Works* (NYU Press, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> Michael Foote, “Adjunct faculty play big role at colleges.” Daily Gazette, April 1, 2012  
[http://www.dailygazette.com/news/2012/apr/01/01\\_adjunct/?print](http://www.dailygazette.com/news/2012/apr/01/01_adjunct/?print)

<sup>3</sup> The report can be found online here:  
<http://www.academicworkforce.org/survey.html>

<sup>4</sup> The Albany chapter of UUP has been able to negotiate a Guideline for Part-Time Academics, clarify some aspects of due process, and has established the principle of a minimum wage. More significantly, the Statewide UUP was able to negotiate health benefits for academic adjuncts.

## Corner

### From page 2

Find out if your department has a representative. If not, let us know, and work with us to find a representative – maybe yourself, maybe a co-worker who believes in democratic self-governance;

1. Learning about and showing solidarity with our most exploited members: Part-time and Contingent Employees in our bargaining unit are a large part of our academic workforce. They are paid ruinously low wages, have few benefits, and fewer job securities (see "The Other UUP" on page 1). I will work with Jill Hanifan, the chapter officer for contingents, to rebuild a Part-Time Concerns Committee with contingent and tenured faculty to begin what will be a long march for better pay, job security, and working conditions. Look for future newsletter articles and electronic notices on part-time issues and for the campus activities occurring during "**Campus Equity Week**" on **October 22-26**.
2. Practicing solidarity with other unions on campus. Do you know what the other unions are on this campus and whether their interests and activities are similar to ours? Neither do many of us. We will begin a process of getting to know and finding common ground with other unions on campus. Look to this newsletter for articles by members of CSEA, GSEU, PEF, and from unions representing the Food Service Workers and the University Police about what their unions are and do. Look to announcements for joint activities, both social and political.
3. Chapter By-Laws: Within the UUP Albany Chapter, we have begun a process of revising our Chapter By-Laws with the intent of making our organization more open and accessible. The Executive Committee has discussed and voted to support the proposed changes, but there is ongoing debate. Final approval will be subject to membership discussion and vote which will occur at the first General Membership Meeting held this fall (by-laws changes are published on our Chapter website: <http://www.albany.edu/uup/>).
- Holding open, accessible elections for leadership. Our chapter elects its Executive Committee and Officers. In Spring 2013 we will do so for 2013-2015. Look for newsletter articles and

other announcements about how to nominate and run, for Candidates' Forums, and other aspects of a practicing electoral democracy.

- Debating and voting on our employment contract: We have been without a new contract since July 2011. The negotiation process, conducted between Statewide UUP and the NYS Governor's Office of Employee Relations, is opaque to most of us. However, when the statewide Negotiating Team and the Negotiating Committee have a tentative contract, then the contract is sent to all of us and we meet as a chapter to discuss it prior to an actual vote. Stay alert for announcement of that meeting which is for the general membership (you must be a UUP member to vote; if new, and not a member, please join now). If you have questions, raise them through your Department Representative or by writing directly to me.

### Join Us

We are an organization with over 1,850 active members and 250 retiree members. If you are new and have not yet joined, please do so. If you are an adjunct and uncertain about whether you are a member, contact us at [upalb@albany.edu](mailto:upalb@albany.edu). If you don't know who your department representative is, ask; and if you don't have one, let us know and work with us to find representation for your department. If you've fallen for the canard that unions are 'not progressive,' open to diversity, committed to equity, and so forth, rethink that assumption. Your union is what you make it, but you're not alone in that effort.

If you want a more active role in the chapter or the statewide UUP, run as a delegate in this spring's elections; if you want to be an officer, stand for that position in the same elections. Remember, we stand for self-governance, in sharp contrast to a university administration that consciously fashions itself on corporate methods and hierarchy; and we stand for solidarity, with our fellow UUP members, whatever their station or circumstance, and with the working-class majorities in this country and the world.

### Contributions, Letters to the Editor

Members are encouraged to submit articles and letters for publication. Submissions must be in electronic format & sent to [upforum@gmail.com](mailto:upforum@gmail.com).

## Wisconsin

### From page 4

more self-serving in the last five years, and the public correctly perceived this? Or that a massive campaign of corporate advertising and right-wing newscasters encouraged downwardly-mobile Americans to vent their anger on unions?"<sup>1</sup>

Lafer's point is well taken. If unions are to survive they must find a way to appeal to the broader public, to make the case, time and again and in as many public fora as possible, that unions make wages better for *all* workers. Having made this case, we must then follow through on it, by continually holding politicians' feet to the fire – even Democratic ones – when they push anti-union measures. For Henwood is surely right that "we will never have a better society without a reborn labor movement."<sup>6</sup> Perhaps we should be focusing on the movement first, and elections afterwards.

<sup>1</sup><http://www.opensecrets.org/industries/totals.php?cycle=2012&ind=P>

<sup>2</sup>See the New York Times article "Cuomo Vows Offensive Against Labor Unions."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/25/nyregion/25cuomo.html?pagewanted=all>

<sup>3</sup><http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2012/06/05/us/politics/wisconsin-recall-exit-polls.html>

<sup>4</sup><http://lbo-news.com/2012/06/06/walkers-victory-un-sugar-coated/>

<sup>5</sup><http://www.thenation.com/blog/168435/opinionnation-labors-bad-recall>

<sup>6</sup><http://lbo-news.com/2012/06/06/walkers-victory-un-sugar-coated/>

## Deactivations

### From page 5

institution's reputation by restoring minors in the deactivated programs. The University earned a verbal rebuke from SUNY Provost, David Lavallee, for its failure to properly honor faculty governance in its elimination of the language and liberal arts programs, and the administration's actions prompted passage of a bill in the SUNY Faculty Senate requiring that program terminations be made through proper governance channels.

There has even been speculation that the deactivations have created the impression of instability in UA's graduate programs, contributing to the recent shortfall in graduate enrollments.

Certainly no one is arguing that the deactivations enhanced the university's academic reputation.

The shedding of successful programs and honored faculty becomes even more puzzling in light of the recent spate of faculty hiring, hiring which has not resulted in restoration of the lost programs. Whatever the economic benefits realized by the university, it is questionable whether they offset the reputational damage sustained by the campus and the credibility of the administration.

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## UUP Under Siege Downstate: 400 Members Receive Non-Renewal Notices

Downstate Medical Center, a SUNY campus located in Brooklyn, New York, is the only academic medical center in Brooklyn. Providing health care to a diverse community of over 2.3 million people, while at the same time serving as an educational pipeline for future healthcare professionals, SUNY Downstate is a vital part of both its local community and New York City more broadly. Indeed, nearly one in every three doctors in Brooklyn graduated from SUNY Downstate, and eighty percent of its graduates work in New York City.

And yet, SUNY Downstate is now under siege, the victim of a financial restructuring plan that remains opaque. Created by a group appointed by the state's health commissioner and led by Wall Street millionaire Stephen Berger, who led an unsuccessful attempt to privatize the Upstate Medical Center in 2006 that failed due to the efforts of UUP and NYSUT. The plan's details are not entirely clear. What is clear, however, is that a 1,000 union jobs are at stake, with nearly 400 UUP members already receiving notices of non-renewal.

This fight concerns us all and we urge you to inform yourselves about the situation and engage in the struggle to preserve health care services in Brooklyn and the jobs of our union brothers and sisters.

Information can be found at:

[www.savejobsatsunydownstate.org](http://www.savejobsatsunydownstate.org),

Letters to Governor Cuomo can be sent via:

[www.uupinfo.org](http://www.uupinfo.org).

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## Contract Negotiations Update

The Governor presented all NYS state employee unions with the same set of key demands: no across-the-board raises for 3 years, 9 furlough days, and increases in the employee share of health insurance premiums. Most other NYS employee unions, including CSEA and PEF, settled their contracts.

Unlike those unions however, UUP does not have a salary structure that provides incremental (step) increases or longevity increases that would offset some of the hardships imposed by Governor Cuomo's demands. UUP's 15-member Negotiations Team, headed by Chief Negotiator Jamie Dangler from Cortland, continues to negotiate our contract with representatives of the Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER), and to press for a contract that is fair to the diversity of our membership.

The Team reports that UUP and the State have reached understandings on numerous monetary and non-monetary contract items. UUP and the State have agreed to ground rules prohibiting the release of detailed information about ongoing negotiations.

For updates and information on the process in which the Negotiations Team is engaged, including the procedure for contract ratification, UUPers can go to the UUP website - [www.uupinfo.org](http://www.uupinfo.org) - and click on "Contract Negotiations" on the Home page. Chief Negotiation **Jamie Dangler** can be contacted at [contract@uupmail.org](mailto:contract@uupmail.org) if you'd like to submit questions or comments.

## Chapter's New Officers

By Kelly Thompson-LaPerle

I want to inform our UUP Albany Chapter members that with this new semester, we also have several new UUP Chapter Officers to work for your rights and address any concerns that you may have between the union and the university. As the new Acting President, Jim Collins (Anthropology Department) was approved by the UUP Albany Chapter Executive Committee to replace Candy Merbler (University Libraries), the chapter's President for many years who stepped down this summer.

Bret Benjamin (English Department) was approved by the Executive Committee to replace Jim

Collins as the Albany Chapter Acting VP for Academics after Jim took over the President's duties.

Tom Hoey (Telecommunications) was approved by the Executive Committee to replace Philippe Abraham (Career Services) as the Albany Chapter Acting VP for Professionals after Philippe was elected statewide VP for Professionals earlier this year.

Deborah LaFond (University Libraries) was approved by the Executive Committee to replace Carol Jewell (University Libraries) as the Albany Chapter Acting Secretary.

UUP Albany Chapter Officers contact information is as follows:

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**Motivano SmartSavings Online Discount Marketplace** – Shop for sales and discounts on dining, travel and more.

**Bose®** – Special pricing available to NYSUT members and agency fee payers on consumer products.

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