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**United University Professions
Albany Chapter**

Labor-Management Notes

September 13, 2021

Attendance: (management) Havidán Rodriguez, Brian Selchick, Bruce Szelest, Carol Kim, Steven Galime, William Hedberg, Keiffer Peralta, Todd Foreman, (UUP) Aaron Major, Paul Stasi, Patrick Romain, David Banks, Michelle Couture, Elizabeth Strum

M. The meeting began in response to the Open Letter with a general comment about UAlbany's proactive steps as it navigated the pandemic creating guidelines, vaccine mandates and following State guidelines and recommendations of the CDC. There is a 90% vaccination rate and 1600 people per week are tested on campus. Data can be found on the University's Covid Tracker. A point was made that the data there is accurate. There are no blanket denials of ADA or telecommuting requests. That would be illegal. Stressed collective cooperation and communication to solve concerns or possible misperceptions on campus.

L. Acknowledged good Covid numbers and denied any challenge to the Covid tracker dashboard. The Chapter is simply responding to concerns and frustrations voiced by members. The Chapter fully supports in-person learning but also wants to promote accommodation to employees on a case-by-case basis. Some employees have received broad statements of disciplinary action if they don't comply with the campus-wide strategy.

M. An open letter is not the best strategy to communicate individual circumstances. There has been no intent to threaten. A tenured faculty can switch teaching modes. A reminder that just cause is part of the bargaining agreement. There are rules, and there could be instances where individuals are on notice under the rules. A point of fact might come across as a threat.

With regard to accommodations, the ADA Coordinator is required to work under a set of laws. An employee must be able to perform their job, whatever accommodations are established for that individual.

Management appreciated the need for better language in communicating.

1. Dresher awards. *We thank the Provost's Office for supporting our members' applications for Dresher pre-tenure leaves.*

L. Thanks were given for the Dresher Awards received this year.

M. Our Dresher applications and awards are consistently very high, more than other campuses combined.

2. Update on Enrollment and Campus Budget. *We have been happy to hear that enrollment is strong this year and extend our thanks to everyone who worked on recruiting our newest students. We are requesting information regarding the details of campus enrollments, their impact on campus finances. How does the size and composition of the incoming class compare to previous classes (in terms of student demographics, in-state versus out of state, and numbers of international students)? What is the budgetary impact of this years' enrollment numbers?*

M. Enrollments are up for first-year students. Unfortunately, every other category is down. 4.8% of the enrollment target was missed (697 students down). Transfer numbers are very down and retention took a hit. This puts the University at \$9 million under budget on enrollments. The good news is that the residence halls are practically full which was unexpected. This will help to balance the loss. Next year's budget is planned for full residence halls, so this is a one-time win-fall with housing.

L. Will follow-up for more details.

3. Update in Budget Metric implementation. *Several department chairs have reported to us that the proposed Budget Metrics developed over the course of the 20-21 academic year are now being used to allocate resources and budget reductions across academic units. What is the current status of the budget metrics?*

L. Chairs are reporting that 2020-2021 proposed metrics are being used to allocate resources.

M. Budget metrics were in place in May but are not fixed. Find the latest on the Academic Affairs Budget Metrics page on MyUAlbany. We are looking at 11-12% reduction over 5 years which is a much better place to be than where the University was last Feb./March. There are 7 new faculty lines (EHC, School of Public Health, School of Education) which is not a lot, but looking for more in the future.

L. Expressed concern that the large CAS has no new lines.

M. Budget metrics and signature strengths determine strategies for the units.

4. 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. There are no numbers yet on approval or denials of telecommuting. Two offices have put together telecommuting plans so far. 27 requests for childcare/eldercare were made with 24 approved. No appeals yet. Training is available to supervisors on telecommuting and will continue into the spring. Management wants supervisors to own their decisions on telecommuting unit-wise. There is optional training available to employees on telecommuting.

L. Some folks are reading telecommuting as potentially raising workload expectations.

M. The training helps address this concern. It's very flexible to the situation and an employee should have a conversation with their supervisor on the advantages.

L. Telecommuting data will be of interest for members and for the contract negotiations.

M. It's very early days for collecting data.

5. Update on the status of promotion pathways for full-time lecturers. We are requesting information on the state of implementing the promotional pathways for full-time lecturers. Have lecturers who were put forward for promotion in the first round been granted their new titles? Has a second round of review begun.

M. 5 cases have been approved. These promotions are set for this semester. Some applications were delayed for various reasons. 6 cases are in formation. Glyne Griffith (Provost's office) will be overseeing these.

L. Made a point that there are 110 full-time lecturers.

6. Workload concerns. We have been receiving an increasing number of requests for assistance from our members, both academic and professional, who are being assigned additional job duties or otherwise taking on increased workloads. While we will work with Employee Relations to address each individual members' concerns we would like to note here the common thread that unites these requests: the impact of reduced staffing levels. We are urging management to train supervisors on the basic principles that guide the distribution of workload for our members. We believe that with better training and communication we can avoid many of these workload issues.

7. Health and safety concerns with classroom instruction and other large, in-person gatherings. We would like to bring to management's attention our members' continuing concerns regarding health and safety and the lack of flexibility being shown by campus

management to address those concerns.

- a. Management wishes to discuss the current masking policy, make the Chapter aware of certain trends and to solicit the assistance of the Chapter in re-enforcing these policies.*

(most of this was addressed in the opening of the meeting)

M. Asked the chapter to reinforce the messaging around the mask mandate.

L. We can reinforce that message.