



**United University Professions  
Albany Chapter**

**Labor-Management Notes**

Thursday, August 27, 2018

Present:

Labor: A. Major, M. Seidel, P. Stasi, P. Romain, L. Pyles

Management: R. Stark, J. Bonner, B. Hedberg

1. Ombudsman proposal: We re-submitted our proposal for an Ombudsperson, which we first submitted to management in the 2015-2016 academic year, at our April, 2018 labor-management meeting. We request a response to this proposal.
  - At the request of the Provost, Hedberg began taking a look at the process for tenure and promotion reviews. There is frustration with the amount of time it's taking from beginning to end. They are still dealing with cases over the summer. Changes to CPCA have made the work required even more time consuming and difficult. They have identified a bottleneck which was taking too much time – providing a written record of Council's recommendation. Wanting to make that happen more promptly and provide support from Provost's office. They are now mapping out meetings for the Council for the Fall semester and making clear to the Deans what they need from them.
  - Will incorporate Ombudsman proposal with a review of tenure/promotion process to the President. Pres. Jones didn't want to limit Ombudsman to tenure/promotion. He imagined it would be a larger portfolio; would be an alternative to dispute resolution. Not sure what Pres. Rodriguez has in mind. Binghamton has one and has a much larger role than what we were proposing. It would be a senior person with standing and experience and who would be a source of wise counsel. Problems with these cases take up a lot of time.
  - Grad students now have an Ombudsman, but it wasn't really used. Hedberg believes it is moribund.
2. Publishing SIRF scores: We understand that there is a new policy of publishing faculty members' SIRF scores for courses with a 60% SIRF response rate, or higher. We are troubled by this policy as it seems to completely contradict efforts to diminish the importance of the SIRF in the evaluation of classroom faculty. We request information on when, how, and where SIRFs will be published and how students will see them.

- Hedberg reported that this has been going on since Spring 2015 and is available to students on MYUAlbany. Faculty are advised of this each semester. It is only the most recent 3 years of data that is available. Also, there is evidence that response rates on SIRF scores have been increasing.
  - They are still working on developing a more comprehensive peer review process so that there is not an over-reliance on SIRF.
3. Status of part-time and contingent proposals. We are eager to see the two proposals for part-time and contingent faculty (the “guidelines” and the years-of-service payments) implemented. We realize that ratification of the new contract will require some revising of language that we worked on and hope that, assuming the contract is ratified, we can finalize these documents quickly.
- Hedberg will reconvene the working groups and will get updated proposals to UUP. He has already shared the proposals with the deans.
  - These proposals address money, duration of employment and titles. Since budgets are tight, the question is where are we at with the money piece of this? On this note, Hedberg addressed the budget reduction environment in the next 2 years and the need to do this in a way that sustains morale. Stony Brook has a hard freeze but we are just going to slow down the growth of new colleges until we can bring resources into alignment with enrollment. There is recognition that contingents are essential to our capacity to deliver the program. Effort to put more recurring funds in the budgets for adjuncts.
  - UUP wants to encourage unit heads to be attuned to benefit eligibility and how changing course loads can impact contingent benefits eligibility. A little adjustment could be a major blow in terms of benefits.
4. New contract provisions for part-time health benefits: Assuming the contract is ratified it will contain new language on benefit eligibility for part-time academic employees. We are eager to work with management on the implementation of this provision and are asking what, if any, processes are currently in place to determine benefit eligibility under the new guidelines.
- Need to put together workshops to help chairs and deans to understand what the new limits are. Let’s not lose sight of paying more respect to the needs of this essential part of the faculty.
  - Randy – we are waiting for guidance from downtown. Aware of new thresholds but waiting for SUNY central.
  - Heard from a couple of departments re: grad students who are part-time lecturers working in labs who are not meeting the threshold.
5. Taylor Law changes and employee orientations: Changes to the Taylor Law passed last April provides all new members of the UUP bargaining unit 30 minutes of work time to meet with a union representative, and requires management to provide UUP with the contact information for all new hires. How will this information be gathered and

disseminated to UUP? We would also like to know the status of the proposed, mandatory new hire orientation.

- Hedberg will send list of new faculty to Major. Provisions include 30 days to get their contact information. SUNY said they would take care of that for all of the campuses as they take care of the payroll. However, this information must include names, locations, and contact numbers, which payroll information doesn't necessarily provide. Randy said they so have locations now. Unsure that statewide will provide contact numbers.
- Is there a mass mandatory orientation for new hires? Randy said they are looking at October for all new hires (excluding faculty). What are we doing with the academics? There is a new faculty orientation for Friday, Sep. 7. Thinking that over lunch, they could introduce UUP over 10 minutes. It would be a way to give UUP some time. Can send what contact info that Bill has. Hedberg can remind them that this is a feature in the Taylor Law. He will contact Ann Marie. Also, we shouldn't lose sight of the fact that there are academics who are coming on at other times besides the Fall.

6. Status of outside vendor's report on campus ADA compliance: Members of our Chapters Disabilities Rights and Concerns Committee would like to know the status of a report, being conducted by an outside vendor, on campus ADA compliance. Their understanding is that this report has been a long time in coming and that portions of it may have already been presented to the Faculty Senate (or a committee therein).

- This study has been going on for a while. There is a draft report and it is being run by the Construction Fund. Draft was shared on April 4 with a Senate Sub-Committee and Facilities committee. There will be a final version by the end of September. UUP will follow up with the member that raised the issue.

7. New Smoking Policy: We applaud the campus's move to implement its tobacco-free, smoke-free campus policy, but would like to ensure that this policy does not result in unwarranted disciplinary action taken against our members. Can we agree on the following?

*The intent and purpose of this policy is to promote a healthy and positive work environment for all employees and the entire campus community. Its intent is not to discipline employees, but to provide them with resources, assistance and information for the betterment of the campus community. Infractions will be addressed informally by the Office of Human Resources seeking to modify behavior through assistance and education.*

- The smoking policy has been developed. There will be open forums and a comment period. We would incorporate all of the language to include and get all of the bargaining units to comment on it.

8. Data on UUP members applying for promotion and raises: We would like to know how many of our professional members applied for promotions or raises in the 2017-2018

academic year (either directly or through a supervisor), and what the outcome of those applications has been.

- Is there any way to track this? They haven't been tracking it per se but they will start tracking it now. In going back through the data, they've had 6 employee requests and 5 received increases and one is currently under review. Supervisors have also brought requests forward, including reorganization of duties. Also, there have been requests for merit, compression, etc. They are working through a process for that.

9. Additional Items:

- Need to think about IDA awards and getting reviewers. (Drescher's are a different committee.) There may be 2 years worth of funding to deal with. They will need UUP help promoting the program. Will CAS have its travel grant? They are still looking at this issue.
- Hedberg announced that they have just authorized a wave of faculty recruitments on Monday even though it's a bit late in the game.
- Major reported that an Improper Practice filing is going forward with the School of Public Health.
- Also, UUP is filing one for the parking fee increase.