

UUP Albany Chapter Labor Management Meeting Minutes May 27, 2014

Attendees:

Labor: B Benjamin, B Trachtenberg, T Hoey, J Harton, M Seidel
Management: B Hedberg, J Mancuso, C Threthaway, JD Hyde

1. DRP Follow-up

The DRP memo went out. There have been only 2 responses. If contingents will return in fall, HR will not process them as ending employment in summer. HR has received the printed UUP contract. These also went to homes and a copy is online.

2. Provost Search

There is little news on the search committee. The names of committee members have now been publicly announced. The university is again using the search firm Isaacson, Miller. Administration welcomes suggestions of good candidates.

3. Senior Leadership Evaluations

Last month we were told results would be communicated to the units surveyed. President Jones indicated he did not want people to feel unheard and recognized they needed to see survey results. Hedberg had no specific updates, indicating he'd touched base with the provost who stated this is a pilot project. Hedberg said results have not been received yet. Hedberg stated the university is currently engaged in updating performance programs and evaluations for all UUP members and trying to get these completed by the end of the month. UUP reiterated its sense that if members are being asked to evaluate senior administrators, they should see some sort of report to ensure that their feedback has been heard.

4. Faculty Hiring Data

UUP asked for a follow-up on the 2020 hires. Hedberg-stated the university announces new hires every year and he is compiling these announcements over the last four years. Hedberg was concerned that UUP believes 2020 hires are distinct from the other hires, that there are "separate buckets of money," but funds are comingled and difficult to separate. He stated the 2020 process was an opportunity to invite proposals from academic units in response to 2020 funding from the legislature. Hedberg asked the purpose of trying to identify this information. Benjamin responded that the impression is the vast majority of recent faculty hires is from 2020 funds and the nature of the program is that it guides hiring in a particular direction. If the majority of hiring is predicated on your need to fund your own salary by enrollment or grants, over time this skews the nature of the university away from a comprehensive university and towards a more specialized, institution. The president's understanding was that we have hired across a wide range of disciplines. It would be helpful to see the data with percent of faculty hires from the program. Hedberg will forward to Benjamin a link for the first round of 2020 proposals (the second round is to be posted soon). Hedberg and Benjamin will set a time to discuss this further.

Departments and faculty do not seem clear that meeting the 2020 goals is not on the individual hired, but on the department. Trachtenberg asked for clarification. Hedberg agreed the onus is not on the individual (new hires should not be targeted) and said if

departments do not meet their goals resources could be withdrawn, for example the next department vacancy may not be filled. Trachtenberg requested Hedberg send a clarifying memo that departments, not new 2020 hires, are responsible for meeting the 2020 goals.

5. Promotion and Continuing Appointment Data

UUP's perception is there are many cases of women faculty of color who have difficulty with their tenure cases at UAlbany. UAlbany also seems to have trouble hiring and retaining faculty of color. UUP only sees those who come for help, but the numbers are worrisome. More data from UAlbany would help clarify if this is a larger concern. Hedberg stated administration shares the interest in faculty development, but this is much data to collect over the last seven years and each tenure case is idiosyncratic. He stated there is data on faculty satisfaction (COACHE survey) and CLUE data. It was suggested that the Office of Diversity and Inclusion could help. Hedberg will include stakeholders in leadership roles around campus in obtaining information. Benjamin asked how many faculty are tenured annually. Hedberg responded about 25, the number being directly related to hiring (we're currently at a low due to low hiring 2008-2011—this should begin to pick up again, however, the total will be less CNSE cases). Hedberg stated in the past new appointments were announced at the fall faculty meeting, but the president wants to move the schedule up to make announcements at the end of each academic year.

6. Theater Reactivation

The chapter welcomes a range of majors across the university in the arts and humanities. One of the real costs of deactivation was the narrowing of degree offerings. While the idea of reactivating the Theater Program seems hopeful (and it is good news to hear there is the possibility of the French Program returning), there is concern at the process used, the way in which it went through the Senate, and at the rationale offered for reactivation. Dean Wulfert stated, at the last Senate meeting, that Theatre's deactivations was not because of enrollments or pressing fiscal savings to be achieved, but because there were too few faculty. When questioned she also stated the Theater faculty left before deactivation, not because of deactivation. This is not the case). Given this history, UUP is concerned that we are reactivating programs with fewer faculty than when they were deactivated. To what degree is this a model for reactivation? Deactivation and then reactivation by means of hiring contingents and VAPs is de facto removal of tenure line faculty. Hedberg does not see the Theater reactivation as a model/template. Benjamin stated that to continue to run and be successful, programs require resources. Trying to return programs resource-neutral and without meaningful staff support is not an effective academic model, this will just lead to difficulty in the future. Seidel interjected that it could appear that UAlbany avoided retrenchment by pushing people out under the pretense of department closures. Administration should consider how deal with faculty differently--those forced to leave felt a slap in face in return for their years of service.

7. Branding

A rumor has circulated that a new branding campaign is being considered and there is concern with the matter of where scarce resources are devoted. Is UAlbany going to spend another \$250K on this when funds may better be spent on something more directly tied to the

mission of the university? If this is being considered UUP urges fiscal prudence and avoiding the negative publicity of spending limited funds unwisely. Mancuso stated no decision has been made to rebrand, rather there have been conversations about the brand and what message is being conveyed. He stated branding showcases who we are and sells academics. He noted it has been several years since the last branding and that we have a new president. Benjamin stated that the best sort of branding was done by building strong academic programs, the bread and butter of any university.

8. Health and Safety

At the new construction sites directional signage is poor (e.g., for bus riders). It may be helpful to provide information via email directly to registered students with disabilities and to faculty and staff with disabilities. Whatever can be done to make it easier on everyone during construction is appreciated. Mancuso will check signage and see if campus shuttles are accessible for those using wheelchairs and crutches. Chains around the edges of the 1st floor of the podium buildings are held up with plastic zip ties. This will be repaired and chains raised off the ground. Parts have been ordered for the door previously discussed and work should be completed before fall.

9. New Faculty Orientation

New faculty orientation is planned for the Wednesday before classes start. Benjamin and Trachtenberg are invited and plan to attend. Tine Reimers will work time into the program for them to speak. The next day is the faculty retreat where new faculty are also invited. Orientation is designed for new full-time faculty (tenure-track and contingent); it does not address the needs of part-time faculty specifically. Administration discussed opening it to part-time faculty, but opted not to because there are substantial differences between the groups. Benjamin's email prompted Hedberg to talk to Reimers and Roberson about what can be done for part-timers. Such an orientation had been tried in the past with poor attendance: approx 300 hired, maybe 10 came to orientation. Roberson will improve the online FAQs ITLAL provides for part-timers and work on outreach efforts to new and continuing part-time faculty. Benjamin asked for a list, late August, of the contingents so UUP can welcome them and let them know about resources. Mancuso said a list can be provided as of August 15, but cautioned that it will not be completely accurate.

10. Other

Benjamin will send tentative L/M dates for the year shortly. All were amenable to skipping a June meeting and resuming in July.

Meeting adjourned 11:15am. Minutes submitted by J. Harton.