

From the Chapter President

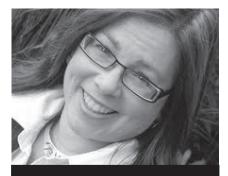
The Retreat from *Public* Support for Public Education

by Benita Roth **Sociology Department**

In my last column, I addressed the creeping privatization that the Start UP NY program represented, and asked the question of what it meant that SUNY campuses, including our own, were being asked to become economic engines as well as first-rate institutions of higher education. One would think the job of educating the next generation of New Yorkers (and some from Connecticut, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, as well as other states and countries) would be enough.

We receive explicit messages from the state that merely educating students is not enough, and indeed, the debate about "the uses of the university," to quote the 1963 title of former University of California's president Clark Kerr, has not and will not be resolved any time soon. Kerr's book was in its fifth edition by the time he died in 2003.

One of Kerr's worries — and he was by no means a radical — was what he saw as a continuous retreat of public support from public education. The state has been shifting the burden of the costs of a college education from the public — in the form of state funding - to students and their families. Consider the recent article, "Why Federal College Ratings Won't Rein in Tuition," by The New York Times' Susan Dynarski. Some of you might remember that a key part of the Obama administration's plan to overhaul higher education in the U.S. was "an at-



Public colleges are collecting about the same revenue per student today as 25 years ago.

tempt to rate colleges according to practical measures like dropout rates, earnings of graduates and affordability."

Binghamton University would likely rank highly on these kinds of measures (and at the other end of the spectrum, for-profit "proprietary" institutions would rank poorly). But according to Dynarski, a rating scheme for institutions of higher education would be unlikely to cut costs for college students. For one thing, public institutions, which educate a full 80% of the college students in this country, don't exist in some kind of perfectly competitive market. Their prices-tuition and

fees—are not set competitively, starting with the fact that public educational systems set different prices for resident and non-resident students. That very practice shows the political nature of pricing in institutions of higher education. Politics determines prices, and consumers cannot directly influence prices the way they might if they stop buying, say, sugary soft drinks.

For me, the most significant part of Dynarski's analysis was the juxtaposition of two different statistics: first, that at public institutions, "tuition has grown faster than inflation for decades. From 1988 to 2013, average tuition at four-year public colleges doubled, even after adjusting for inflation;" second, the fact that despite that doubling of tuition, "(p)ublic colleges are collecting about the same revenue per student today as they were 25 years ago." How can it be that in 1988, educational revenue per full-time student was only \$200 less than it was in 2013 (\$11,300 vs. \$11,500, adjusted for inflation and expressed in 2013 dollars)?

Solving the puzzle means looking at how the ratio of who pays what part of that revenue, and how that ratio has shifted over time. While in 1988, state legislatures ponied up an average of \$8,600 per student, with students and their families kicking in about \$2,700 to take us to the \$11,300 total, in 2013, states were paying only about \$6,100, while students were contributing \$5,400 of the \$11,500 total. And thus Dynarski sums up the perception

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Connection

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The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors or of the Binghamton Chapter and are not necessarily the opinions of United University Professions.

The editor welcomes letters and other comments of interest to the Binghamton Chapter.

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From the Vice President for Professionals

Salary Review Requests Due in January

by Fran Goldman Asian and Asian American Studies

In case you are not aware, the College Review Panel, as noted in Appendix 28 of the Agreement between UUP and the State of New York, reviews requests for salary increases and/or promotions if refused at any level below that of the president. The designated periods for those wishing to apply are January and June. Forms are available on the Human Resources website at www.binghamton.edu/human-resources/current-employees/professional/uup-promo-reclass-salary-increase-requests.html.

This is has been a very busy fall, but one that focused on good things.

In late September, professional members elected Scott Geiger and David Stone to the College Review Panel. They join Murnal Abate, Don Guido, Bob Mess, Renee Sersen and Laurie Seymour, who are currently serving on this committee.

UUP also held an election for members of the College Committee on Professional Evaluation. This is a joint labor/management committee consisting of three elected UUP members and two appointed by management. According to the language in Appendix 28, the Committee on Professional Evaluation "shall, upon the timely request of a professional employee, review a final evaluation report characterized as "unsatisfactory." Professional UUP members elected were Cherie van Putten, Robert Mess and Susan Ryan; management appointed Cornelia Mead and George Bobinski to serve on this committee.

Members of both committees serve for two years.

On October 21, UUP held a lunchtime workshop, "Performance Programs, Evaluations, Salary, Promotions and Permanency," facilitated



by Darryl Wood, our NYSUT labor relations specialist. The response to the workshop exceeded the capacity of the room, and I was thrilled to see many new faces. Because of the enthusiastic response to this

workshop, we are planning to hold another one during the spring semester.

The Individual Development Committee met during the week of November 10 to finalize the application and set deadlines. The IDA program provides up to \$1,000 for UUP-represented employees to use for activities that further their professional development. Part-time employees are definitely encouraged to apply, as part of the allocation (15%) is set aside for their use. The web-based application form can be found at www.binghamton.edu/academics/ provost/ida-application-2014-15.html. Applications are due by end of business on December 15, 2014, and funding decisions will be made by the end of January or first week of February. Activities must take place between July 2, 2014, and July 1, 2015. If you have any questions, please call (74938) or e-mail (frances@binghamton.edu).

It has always seemed strange to me that in our endless discussions about education so little stress is laid on the pleasure of becoming an educated person, the enormous interest it adds to life. To be able to be caught up into the world of thought—that is to be educated.

> -Edith Hamilton, educator and writer (1867-1963)

Teaching as Gift-Giving: An Ethical Dilemma

by Heather DeHaan **History Department**

This past spring, my husband and I participated in a "culture of giftgiving" that was distinctly Caucasian and yet, at the same time, somewhat typical of academe. We spent three months teaching Cold War and U.S. history at a private university in Azerbaijan, all without monetary reward. In lieu of payment, in the tradition of Caucasian gift-giving, we participated in an exchange: the gift of time and talent in return for relationship, an opportunity to connect with members of another community—in this case, students and academics of Azerbaijan.

The exchange of persons paved the way for other transactions, as we received all-important support for our receipt of visas, letters to the archives, and other such "logistical documents." Such exchanges are typical of the academic world, being a key way to encourage the exchange of people and ideas, forging institutional and intellectual ties that enable researchers to expand their intellectual horizons. The exchange of gifts or persons, even hostages, also plays a role in traditional culture, being a form of peacemaking and a call for interaction that benefits both sides involved. Giving our time and pedigrees turned out to be, in every sense, the "gift that keeps on giving."

Yet, as we soon discovered, our teaching—conceived as gift-giving turned out to pose an ethical and professional dilemma. For my husband and myself, teaching for nothing was possible only because of income earned in North America. I was on sabbatical, after all, not unpaid leave. Yet our Azerbaijani counterparts, with no such U.S. job, were paid only slightly better than nothing—a mere \$200 per month. The higher-paid instructors were generally salaried administrators who



HeatherDeHaan

were compelled combine teaching and administrative duties. Others were business professionals eager to retain a connection to the world of learning. Some, eager for strong position

in academe, taught an evening course at more than one university. Because of poor pay, all of these individuals generally forged an economic strategy that relied on other family members for additional income.

In this context of unremunerated "gift-giving," our agreeing to pro bono teaching seemed both right and wrong. To have demanded payment would have been terribly presumptuous—distancing us from many fellow academics with whom we developed a mutually enjoyable and beneficial relationship. We were all, in our own fashion, a part of the reason that the other likewise taught for nothing. Nonetheless, we could not shake the sense that teaching without pay contributed to the system of exploitation.

Such traps are not without parallel here, of course. Adjuncts often "gift" their talents by accepting jobs with remuneration too low to sustain family or long-term career because they, too, enjoy non-monetary returns, particularly a relationship to academe and academics. They, too, enter into a relationship that brings them into a social circle, possibly unlocking the door to new opportunities. But, contrary to the exchange central to gift-giving in many cultures, including in traditional Azerbaijan, this is a sort of "unrequited" gift -something taken again and again. The "gifting" of talent takes place without any mutual commitment, being more an entreaty than a "seal the deal" transaction.

Our experience in Azerbaijan highlights some of the worst aspects of this sort of "gifting" of talent, in part because the exploitation has been greater. In Azerbaijan, where the cost of food, housing, clothing, and water are more expensive than in the U.S., \$200 per month is utterly insufficient—a mockery of the Azerbaijani use of the term "teacher" (müllim) as a particularly respectful form of address. Though most teachers serve with honor, underpay and demoralization have nonetheless fostered corruption—a troubling correlation of "gifts" (payments to instructors) to "grades" (high marks). (The old Soviet practice of ensuring high grades for "connected" students surely also plays a role

The institution at which I taught avoided this problem by hiring external graders for midterms (worth at least 30%) and finals (worth 40%). But, the result was the stubborn resilience of rather Soviet-style factsonly testing-something circumvented only when foreigners (like my husband and myself, with proper salaries) taught, for we were entrusted with our own grading. This system does nothing to foster the professionalism of teachers. Instead, it offers regulation and the degradation of the critical thought and debate that should be central to university life.

The excuses for such low pay. there and here, have similarities. In both places, the fact that many parttime instructors have other jobs or speak of the "reward" inherent in teaching becomes the excuse for paying these individuals far less than the value of the service that they provide. Another justification is the absence of funds—the fact that state subsidies are low and that tuition continued on page 6

Academic and Professional Numbers Increase

by Jim Dix Chemistry Department

The charts below give the trends for the number of full-time and parttime UUP-represented academic faculty and professional staff at Binghamton from 2006 through 2014, displayed for April and for November of a given year. Academic faculty and professional staff are in job titles that directly support the teaching and research missions of Binghamton University.

A significant trend in the data is the sharp increase in the number of full-time academics over the past five semesters. This represents a 15% increase over the pre-recession peak of 557 in November, 2008.

Another significant trend is the increase in the number of full-time professional staff, representing an 8% increase over the peak of 614 in November, 2008.

These data indicate the administration has allocated much of the



new tuition monies to the muchneeded hiring of staff directly involved in teaching and research.

Although the number of professional and academic staff has increased dramatically in the

past five semesters, the mix of academic and professional staff has changed. From November, 2008 to now, the number of part-time academics has remained relatively constant, while the number of part-time professionals has increased. The ratio of total head count of professionals to academics has remained relatively constant (changing from 0.88 to 0.85), but the number of part-time professionals contributing to the total head count has increased relative to the number of full-time professionals. Whether this represents

a deliberate administration policy or an interim phenomenon is not clear at this point.

(Note: the data represent the number of UUP-represented employees on the state payroll, and may differ from administration numbers that may include employees on leave. UUP's numbers represent "boots on the ground." The data points in April and November of a given year were chosen for analysis because, at these time points, fluctuations in employment due to beginning-of-semester changes have stabilized.)

The Echo Debuts

by Jamie Dangler UUP Vice President for Academics

You've read The Voice. Now here's The Echo.

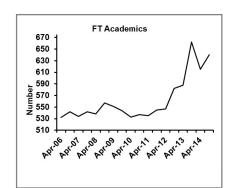
The Echo is the union's new online membership magazine. Think of it as a web companion to The Voice, with stories for and about members—stories that we can't fit into the print edition of The Voice.

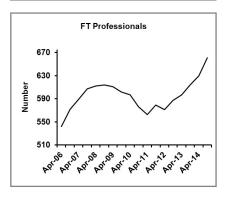
Budget constraints have forced us to cut back on the number of issues of The Voice. So we created The Echo, which allows us to continue bringing you full coverage of what's going on in your union and how your union is working for you.

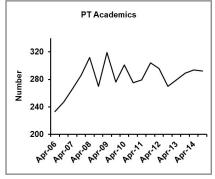
You can read The Echo at http://uupinfo.org/flipbook/Nov2014/index.html. It's also accessible on the UUP website at www.uupinfo.org. The link is in a blue box at the top of the page. You can't miss it.

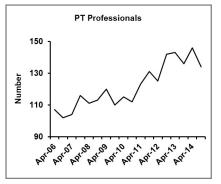
In this issue, you'll read about UUP's participation in the People's Climate March in New York City, the largest climate change demonstration in history.

You'll also read about how UUP's continued on page 8









Drafted Framework for Information Literacy: A Summary

by Anne Larrivee, Reference/Subject Librarian

To set goals for teaching information literacy in higher education, instructors must adhere to some kind of common structure. Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education were set in place in 2000, but in the past few years these standards have come under scrutiny.

Librarians felt that standards were too prescriptive and not able to address all the complexities of the current information ecosystem. In 2013 the Association of College and Research Libraries called upon a task force to redesign the existing structure (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2014). This task force gathered insight from a Delphi study and its own experiences to design what it refers to as a "framework" for information literacy.

This framework applies theories threshold concepts metaliteracy to form its core concepts or frames. Threshold concepts were born out economic theory written by Meyer and Land. They describe threshold concepts as "a portal, opening a new and previously inaccessible way of thinking about something ... a transformed way of understanding, or interpreting, or viewing something without which the learner cannot make progress" (2003, p. 1). There are five characteristics that Meyer and Land (2003) associate with threshold concepts: transformative, irreversible, integrative, bounded and troublesome.

The task force also integrated themes of metaliteracy. Metaliteracy brings in components of emerging technologies and collaborative communities (Association of College and Research Libraries Information Literacy Task Force, 2014). It recognizes that learners call upon metacognitive, cognitive, behavioral and affective domains to comprehend informative world around them.



Taking these two theoretical ideas into account, the task formed six core frames. As of November 2014, the third draft of the framework included the following six frames:

■ Authority is

contextual and constructed

- Information creation as a process
 - Information has value
 - Research as inquiry
 - Scholarship is a conversation
 - Searching is strategic.

These frames provide a structure which instructors can use to design curriculum and plan out sessions. The task force realistically states that all six frames cannot be applied to a single instruction session, rather they should be applied over time and affect the way all instructors (including subject-specific teaching faculty) design their lessons. To further explain these frames the task force has assigned each of them with knowledge practices (abilities) and dispositions. Knowledge practices describe what the learners will be able to do increasingly well over time and dispositions address the typical characteristics of learners who have become competent in these frames. Paying attention to the knowledge practices (what they should be able to do) and dispositions (their attitude, value related to the concept) can help the instructors evaluate the various information literacy skill levels of their students. This framework recognizes that information literacy skills range in a broad spectrum—there are not any easy ways of categorizing learners. The framework differentiates between the realms of novice and expertise; however, these masteries may be difficult to measure. Threshold concepts are founded on the idea that once something is learned it cannot be

unlearned but ways of learning and levels of expertise will vary for each individual. There is not one prescriptive way of teaching every learner, everyone will learn in their own way in their own time.

The information literacy framework does not necessarily introduce new content but rather, reframes the way content is presented. While the framework does recognize the need to acknowledge visual and digital media sources, the way information is accessed, used, and valued remains the same.

Refocusing instructional agendas around the major information literacy concepts will likely reshape learning goals that instructors set for their students. In brief, this new information literacy model will not affect what students learn but may influence how this content is being communicated. The latest draft of this framework was released in November; it can be viewed at http://acrl.ala.org/ilstandards/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Framework-for-IL-for-HE-draft-3.pdf.

If you wish to comment or make suggestions, the task force will be collecting feedback via a Survey-Monkey form until December 12.

References

Association of College and Research Libraries (2014). Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. Retrieved from www.ala.org/acrl/standards/informationliteracycompetency

Association of College and Research Libraries Information Literacy Task Force (2014, November 12). Revised draft Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education. Retrieved from: http://acrl.ala.org/ilstandards/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Framework-for-ILfor-HE-draft-3.pdf

Meyer, J., & Land, R. (2003). Threshold concepts and troublesome knowledge: linkages to ways of thinking and practising within the disciplines. UK: University of Edinburgh.

Negotiations and Discretionary Salary Awards

by Fred Kowal, UUP President

[Note: Ever since our 2011-2016 Agreement with the State of New York was voted upon, there has been discussion—and confusion—about why discretionary monies were shifted from a "discretionary salary increase" that would be added to a member's base salary, to a "discretionary salary award," which instead comes in the form of a one-time lump sum amount. We asked our UUP statewide president, Fred Kowal, to tell us a little bit about the process of UUP's negotiations regarding discretionary monies.

Those who negotiate for UUP are not able to discuss negotiations in detail, as they are bound by confidentiality, so what follows is a general picture only. But it is my hope that Fred's summary of the issues involved in negotiation give our chapter members a bit of insight into the process of coming to an agreement with the State of New York. – Benita Roth]

The state was not willing to put discretionary money on base under the current contract. The state's unwillingness to provide SUNY campus administrations with a discretionary pool for on-base salary increases occurred in the context of significant monetary limitations imposed by the governor on all state employee unions during the last round of collective bargaining.

In the 2011-16 contract, UUP got all the on-base salary increases the state was willing to give in the form of raises for everyone: two 2% raises and three additional on-base increases through the Chancellor's Power of SUNY Awards (\$500 in 2013, \$250 in 2014, and \$500 in 2015, pro-rated for part-time employees). The contract also retains the provision that allows campus presidents to grant upward salary adjustments to individuals at any time (Article 20.14).

In previous contracts, when the state was funding much more in UUP's collective bargaining agreements, discretionary money was added by the state to whatever UUP obtained in across-the-boards for all members. Historically, SUNY supported the addition of discretionary money on base in order to provide campus administrations with salary resources they could use at their total discretion. In negotiations for the 2011-16 contract, the governor's negotiators never proposed nor seriously considered putting discretionary money on base and consistently argued against it.

While we all recognize the significance of the absence of this additional source of on-base salary increases for UUP members, it's important to understand that this occurred in the context of severely

limited salary increases extended to all state employee bargaining units in the last round of negotiations. While during the last distribution of on-base DSI (under the 2007-11 contract) 14,000 UUP members received nothing, others did benefit from their campus discretionary distributions.

For the current contract, UUP fought for almost two years to get the \$500, \$250, \$500 increases in addition to the two 2% increases the state gave every bargaining unit. In the end, that's all we could get. While under previous contracts discretionary money added to base salary was a fairly standard addition to UUP's negotiated salary increases for all, for the 2011-16 contract, the state absolutely and adamantly refused to put discretionary money on base.

Teaching as Gift-Giving

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rates must also be kept low because of the lack of disposable income in the student population. Yet another excuse for low pay centers on what the job market will bear.

All of these excuses bypass the question of the value of the service provided. Surely education—and the provision of such—are worth more than meager adjunct pay would suggest? College brochures certainly seem to suggest this. Every university's self-advertising proclaims this. Yet, the proclamation of value does not translate into fair pay for those who provide this all-essential education. Nor does it translate into commitment. Forgoing the mutuality inherent in the "culture of gift," which is also a culture of exchange, administrators impose systems of oversight instead.

Our "culture of gift" is that of teachers everywhere—the desire to give, to share, to pass on knowledge.

It's the sentiment that makes teaching a privilege and delight—important, meaningful, valuable. It's the reality that made teaching in Azerbaijan a thrill, especially given how appreciative our students there were—even after the grades rolled in. It's the sentiment behind this article, too. And yet, it's also the sentiment that encourages sacrifice to the point of self-detriment. It's a sentiment that is exploited—a gift taken with no real thank-you, no relationship, and no commitment in return.

"Gifted" teaching is exploited. By devaluing teachers in social and fiscal terms, the university's acceptance of "gift" promotes the deprofessionalization of university instruction. When funds exist for fair pay, "gifting" from part-timers to whom no commitment is offered should disappear altogether. Otherwise, an adjunct's teaching is a gift received in bad faith.

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We will announce the winners of these special prize drawings exclusively on the Member Benefits website throughout the month of February.

For more details about this exciting event, visit the Member Benefits website at *memberbenefits.nysut.org* or call **800-626-8101**.



For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.

The Retreat from Public Support for Public Education

continued from page 1 paradox: to students and their families, the costs of college have doubled, while for the institutions themselves, "funding is flat."

For me, the Dynarski article, and many others about the way we publicly finance higher education, reveals the retreat from public support for our public institutions. I've noted the next fact before in this column, but it bears repeating: in New York, the percentage change in funding for higher education from 2010-2011, to 2011-2012, was -7% (www.insidehighered.com/news/2012/01/23/state-funds-higher-education-fell-76-2011-12).

Shifting the burden of public education from the state to students and their families is causing levels of student debt that have lots of people—again, very few of them radicals—concerned.

College students are going to continue to come to BU, because college still represents a good return on investment if we are looking at a college graduate's potential income over a lifetime of work. Most recently, the U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics showed that workers with any amount of college education made more money and were less likely to be unemployed in this tough economy than those without college (w w w . b l s . g o v / e m p / e p $_$

chart 001.htm).

But we have saddled and continue to saddle students with untenable levels of debt. Even the business community, while assuring themselves that the student loan debt bubble will not be bursting and causing another 2008 Great Recession, is plenty worried. (See www.forbes.com/sites/johntharvey/2014/04/28/student-loan-debt-crisis.)

Nonetheless, Congress is not worried enough; Senator Elizabeth Warren's bill that would have allowed student debtors to refinance their loans at a lower interest rate died on the Senate floor last June (washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2014/06/11/elizabethwarrens-bill-to-refinance-student-loans-dies-in-senate-now-what/).

As someone still paying back stu-

dent loans — albeit because I went to a private university as an undergrad and made the decision to go to grad school in an expensive city — I would hope that we, as employees of a public educational institution, keep in mind how we have shifted the cost of a public education to students and their families, and how that shift of the burden constitutes yet another retreat from the *public* funding of public higher education.

Some percentage of us just voted in the midterm elections, where these issues about the costs and funding of public education were barely discussed. It's up to us, as state employees represented by UUP, to keep the conversations going, because frankly, I really hate leaving all the discussion up to *The New York Times*.

The Echo Debuts

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leaders and members worked to get the vote out for NYSUT-endorsed candidates in the election. There's also coverage of UUP's 2014 Fall Delegate Assembly, and news about a new Community Involvement Survey available on the UUP website.

And don't forget to click on the video message from UUP President Fred Kowal. You'll find it on page 2.

So please flip through our digital pages and share this document widely with members on your campus. Please let them know that The Voice now has an Echo. We hope you like what you see.

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