From the Chapter President

Living without (Misplaced) Fear: How UUP Can Help

by Benita Roth
Sociology Department

I’m three years into being Chapter President of Binghamton UUP and I’ve learned a lot about the way the university works, as well as when and where it doesn’t. I’ve taken the opportunity in this column to talk about a host of things—salary compression, Start-UP New York, the privatization of paying for universities, the contribution of adjunct employees to our university, fair share fees and the like. I’ve enjoyed writing for the newsletter and reading the contributions of other members here in these pages.

I haven’t written to date about one of what I see as the more troubling aspects of life in the university community: the culture of fear. Let me be clear from the start: I don’t think that UUP-represented employees as a whole are coming to work each day afraid for their (working) lives. But some of us are coming to work each day afraid for our jobs. And confronting that fear so that UUP-represented employees can take action has proven to be one of the most challenging aspects of my job.

To some extent, fear is a rational response to situations in the university community. Those UUP-represented employees without permanency (for professional workers) or tenure (for academic workers) do have to navigate a complex field of personalities and procedures in order to gain permanency/tenure. And after permanency/tenure, one still navigates the same fields, albeit from a more empowered place. It’s been my observation though that even folks with permanency/tenure are still worried about their jobs. What they fear is a pretty mixed bag, dependent on the particular set of circumstances in their unit/department.

Let me suggest that UUP-represented employees are often—not always, but often—afraid when they need not be. And let me also suggest that UUP is here to help you work through problems you encounter in doing your jobs. We are one of the resources here on campus to help you deal with a tough situation; we also know about other resources that can help. And if there was one bit of advice I could give everyone who is afraid it would be this: come to us at the first sign of trouble—don’t wait. Contact us early—don’t wait until a crisis.

I’ve heard too many people say to me that they were afraid to talk to the union about their situation. As UUP employees, we are protected against retaliation for using our contractual rights. We will help you with work-related issues; that’s why we have a union.

The real fear should be reserved for those who are trying to take away our rights to effectively bargain for those UUP represents. As I have written before in this column, this year’s Supreme Court case of Friedrichs vs. the California State Teachers Association centered on whether public employee unions could collect fair-share fees to represent those in the collective bargaining unit. All indications were that the Court would decide that public sector unions couldn’t collect such fees; then Justice Scalia passed away, and the Court relied on precedent and let stand a lower court ruling that allowed the collection of fees. Many of us in UUP, including me, felt that we had come too close to the edge there and that our future as a union was still at stake.

The threats against public employee unions remain. They come from any number of directions. First, there are those who will continue to push the Supreme Court for a ruling on fair share fees; the Court could, although it is unlikely, agree to hear Friedrichs again when a ninth member is confirmed. So-called “right to work” (i.e., anti-union) organizations have been very clear that they will push several cases (as many as five) that are winding their way through lower
courts toward the Supreme Court; they won’t drop the issue, as they rightly saw themselves as one Justice away from winning (see Education Week’s story at http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/school_law/2016/04/after_friedrichs_whats_next_fo.html).

Second, we have seen state governors like Scott Walker in Wisconsin, spearhead conservative blocs in their states who wish to curtail union rights as part of a putative “pro-business” agenda. Laws that Walker and his allies pushed through in 2015 have recently been challenged; one such law, which would have barred the collecting of fair share fees in the private sector, was recently ruled unconstitutional by circuit court judge in that state (see http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/09/us/wisconsin-law-union-dues-scott-walker.html).

Unfortunately, the laws that were passed against public sector unions in Wisconsin stand regardless of this judge’s ruling, and the judge’s decision is likely to be reversed at higher levels. Unionization rates in Wisconsin, once a “stronghold of labor” are now below the national average.

Does knowing about the larger context and challenges we face as a union contribute to our local culture of fear? I hope not. I see our local culture of fear emerging from failure to understand our contractually negotiated rights; I see the larger scale challenges to our rights to organize as part of a bigger picture that we need to understand as important for our future. In either case, it is our actions that make all the difference. Know your rights on campus and fight for your rights on the state and federal level. If you are currently a fee payer, and have not signed a membership card, sign up at https://uuphost.org/myuup/Membership/RegForm.php; the more members we have, the stronger we are in our current negotiations with New York State. If you don’t give to VOTE-COPE, New York State United Teachers’ (NYSUT’s) non-partisan political action fund, consider doing so; you won’t miss a few dollars from your paycheck and the money helps to support candidates and issues that are important to higher education here in New York state go to http://uupinfo.org/votecope/index.php.

Don’t live in fear—let us know as early as you can if you need our help. And keep an eye on the big picture; we want UUP to be a vigorous campus and SUNY-wide presence so that we can help all of our represented employees contribute to university communities and have healthy working lives.

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**From the Interim Vice President for Academics**

Turkish Academics Under Increasing Attacks Following the Coup Attempt

*by A. Serdar Atav*  
Decker School of Nursing and  
Malcolm Gunter

Last February we reported on a disturbing development in Turkey with respect to academic freedom. Regrettably, we have more bad news.

Let us set the scene for this commentary. One of the many pleasures
of Istanbul is enjoying Turkish cuisine while sitting at an outdoor restaurant along the Bosphorus. So it was this past summer on the evening of July 15 in the Beşiktaş district when suddenly an inordinate number of cell phones began popping up at tables all around us. At first it seemed that there might be an alert of a terrorist attack. Within a minute or two there was a report that the Bosphorus bridge had been shut to traffic. We could see the bridge from our table and realized that it was indeed the case. Then very shortly thereafter the speculation changed to a military coup.

With very little discussion we decided to pay the bill, part ways with our friends, and head for home. Luckily we caught a ferry that was leaving for Üsküdar located across the Bosphorus on the Asian side. From there we caught a cab and hurried home to Kadıköy where we found family glued to the television watching the coup unfold. After an exciting night of turmoil, the bloody coup attempt failed with 265 people killed during the night.

The very next morning there was little to indicate such a significant event had occurred the night before. Street traffic, both pedestrian and vehicular, was quiet for a Saturday, but otherwise things were normal. Already the attempted coup—and what a miserable attempt it was—had been blamed on the Gülen organization by Turkey’s ruling party, the Justice and Development Party (AKP), and its lead spokesman, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

The Gülen organization is a cultish Islamic movement led by Turkish cleric Fethullah Gülen, who now lives in the United States. For many years the AKP and President Erdoğan had been strong allies of Gülen, all benefiting politically and financially from this cooperation. This alliance abruptly ended in December 2013. At that time, the Gülen movement initiated an investigation into a massive corruption scandal that implicated many AKP government officials, including then Prime Minister Erdoğan. The scandal was conveniently suppressed by the ruling AKP who blamed Gülen for attempting to destabilize the government. Subsequently, hundreds of prosecutors, judges and police chiefs were dismissed and/or imprisoned for taking part in the corruption investigation, and many businessmen, teachers, journalists and others were targeted over the next few years for being affiliated with the Gülen movement. In May 2016, Turkey officially designated the Gülenists as terrorists.

It was not surprising, then, that within days of the attempted coup in July, the government, armed with emergency powers due to the coup, produced lists of thousands more people who were suspected Gülenists. More than 80,000 civil servants, many in education, the military and the judiciary, were fired or suspended. Twenty-one thousand teachers associated with Gülen’s private schools lost their professional licenses. Within a week of the coup attempt, 1,617 academic or administrative university personnel were fired, 234 were detained and 8 were arrested. As of the beginning of September, this number reached 2,346. Even more surprising is that all 1,544 university deans in both public and private institutions were ordered to resign. They lost their titles but were still required to continue with their duties until the government makes a final decision.

Even if some of those who were targeted are followers of Gülen, it is highly questionable that they knew anything about the coup. Furthermore, along with the alleged Gülenists, the lists of people who were arrested included many journalists, liberals, progressives, Kurds, and human rights activists. For instance, the arrests of prominent academics like Aslı Erdoğan and Nêcîmye Alpay have created a major international uproar. It is obvious that using the attempted coup as an excuse, Erdoğan’s government is trying to eliminate any and all opposition.

As to the 1,128 Turkish academics who signed the Academics for Peace petition in January (the focus of our last article) that called for the military to end its campaign against the Kurds and who were accused by President Erdoğan of “treason,” they have since faced a variety of repercussions. To date, 93 of them have been fired from their jobs, 15 have been forced to resign or retire and over 500 have been investigated.

The future of academic freedom in Turkey looks bleak. It is a reflection of a greater threat to the future of all fundamental rights and freedoms in Turkey that has long been the only example of a Muslim majority country with a secular democratic tradition.

We had ended our last report on Turkey stating that it is our intellectual and moral duty to be cognizant of the plight of our colleagues in other parts of the world and to show our solidarity with them by signing one of the many statements of support issued by various groups and organizations. Given the current circumstances in Turkey, that duty is even more imperative!

The Role of the Labor Relations Specialist

by Darryl M. Wood
Labor Relations Specialist

There are two major areas I deal with as the Labor Relations Specialist (LRS) at my four chapters, Binghamton, Cortland, Delhi, and Oneonta. They are the formal, contractual, areas of interpreting and enforcing the Agreement between NYS and UUP as well as the informal, advisory, nature of working with Chapter leaders and members at those four campuses.

In the formal area, I investigate allegations of wrong-doing, provide advice and information on possible responses, and represent members in Grievances. I also work closely with elected officers, recommending courses of action and noting consequences...
of their decisions. They make final decisions based upon my comments. As part of this process, I also lead workshops and other types of training for both elected leaders and members. The informal part of my responsibilities involves discussing alternatives for action when there is no clear contractual violation. Many times members are treated unfairly, even badly, by their supervisors or the university, but there is nothing in the Agreement that provides a remedy for that behavior. In those instances, other offices, either on or off campus, may provide relief. Or, counseling on alternative responses may resolve those conflicts. In all instances, it is up to the member to determine their own course of action. I can only advise and provide information.

In all areas, I work closely with elected leaders, ensuring they have the best information and advice available. I want them to be successful and I want the rights of all UUP members to be protected. It is only when that happens that Binghamton can be successful.

The Professionals’ Role on Campus

by Fran Goldman
Asian and Asian American Studies

With the temperatures beginning to get cooler, we all recognize that fall is over and winter is now upon us. With the changing of seasons, the new group of students and faculty this semester have gotten acclimated to the Binghamton campus, culture, and academic life. For the professional employee, this is an ongoing process since most of us work 12 months of the year making sure that the campus continues to function in the day-to-day activities that provide the services that help keep everything running.

UUP’s role in this process is an ongoing one that for fall included holding elections for the College Review Panel and the College Committee on Professional Evaluation. In this vein, I would like to congratulate the newly elected members to the College Review Panel, Renee Andrews and Scott Geiger and Tracie Conklin, Bob Mess, and Sara Wozniak to the College Committee on Professional Evaluation. The latter committee also has two continuing Management members, Cornelia Meade and George Bobinski. The role of both of these committees are laid out in Appendix 28 of the Agreement and provide a means for professional staff to have a salary request or promotion reviewed by a panel of their peers if denied below that of the President and also to have an unsatisfactory evaluation reviewed by both labor and management with recommendations sent to the President.

The fall semester also provides a time when Professional staff can be recognized for their service throughout the year as part of the Presidential Discretionary Payments. These funds were bargained for in the last Agreement and although they do not go to base and are paid as a lump-sum, they are a means to recognize the outstanding contributions of Professional staff to Binghamton. These payments must be made before the end of the year.

The guidelines and deadlines for the Individual Development Awards have been announced. These funds are from the NYS/UUP Joint Labor-Management Committees’ monies negotiated in the last Agreement. This year the period is shorter with activities that transpired between July 2, 2016 through March 3, 2017. This is a means for Professional staff to apply to attend conferences and workshops or even take classes which may not normally be available to them. I would therefore, encourage all to apply if their professional activity falls under the guidelines.

Over the past few months I have had several inquiries about permanent appointment and the process by which it is achieved. While this process seems to be more straightforward for academic members, there is not as much knowledge about how this happens for Professional staff. To help clarify issues in this regard, there was a workshop held in November on how to achieve permanent appointment.

Please remember that if you have questions or concerns related to your employment at Binghamton, please email me (frances@binghamton.edu) or call (777-4938).
Feedback on Teaching: Sharpening your Skills through Course Observation

by Steve Lisman
Psychology

When I applied for a position as assistant professor of psychology at Binghamton University in 1973 there was no request for my “philosophy of teaching,” nor, in fact, any major concern that I had never taught a course while I was a graduate student. When I arrived on campus that fall, no one gathered the incoming faculty to introduce them to the community, to the demands of balancing research, teaching, and service. My, how things have changed! Here at Binghamton new faculty are annually provided an orientation comprising numerous resources in the form of brief meetings, presentation, readings, discussions, etc.

Within many departments, senior faculty members often provide formal mentorship to newer colleagues. In contrast to 43 years ago, when the received wisdom was “focus on your research; that’s all that really matters,” new faculty members are urged not only to consider their teaching skills along with their research, but they are also urged to take advantage of resources that have been developed to help them accomplish this. And that is all to the good, because nowadays, when the time arrives for consideration for promotion, faculty teaching is evaluated in some detail. Input is gathered from each semester’s accumulated student ratings, faculty are observed by peers, syllabi examined, and a written statement about one’s teaching philosophy and progress is expected. But long before personnel decisions are made, faculty are able to take advantage of numerous workshops on aspects of teaching large lectures, small seminars, new classroom technology, etc., provided by the Center for Learning and Teaching. This campus gem comprises a staff dedicated to providing curriculum consultation, resources for enhancing teaching skills, even a “studio” for taking advantage of new technologies for instruction during any semester (http://binghamton.edu/clt).

Feedback on Teaching at Binghamton University

For anyone interested in improving their teaching, how does one go about it? Sure, all the resources that I just noted above are there for all of us. But probably the oldest strategy is simply to have someone watch you teach and offer you feedback. It’s been the way of the world in just about every endeavor, I would argue, not just teaching. But on our university campus, such a simple, straightforward undertaking has been anything but simple or straightforward. That’s because observation of one’s teaching on our campus has traditionally been linked with personnel evaluation. Senior colleagues do typically provide feedback during this process, but it is feedback that is part of a formal evaluation. If it is part of a third-year review, it becomes a baseline of sorts against which one’s mandated review for tenure is often measured. Yet, at many other universities, but particularly 4-year colleges, one can receive teaching observation and feedback outside the realm of personnel decisions. In fact, these procedures are most often structured to be confidential and the feedback frequently includes some form of follow-up. Isn’t it time that faculty at Binghamton have the same opportunity? Most of us know when we’re struggling with a class or of a colleague who despite their effort, teaches a class that students avoid. Wouldn’t it be a boon to be able to be observed in confidence, to receive feedback, to consult about issues related to everything from syllabus development to classroom management to generating classes in which the students are engaged without the anxiety and concern that all such undertakings will wind up being a topic of the discussion about your bid for promotion?

Formation of a Teaching Observation Service

At the time of my retirement in 2014, I found myself considering exactly these questions. I had informally been consulting with colleagues about their teaching for a number of years, accumulating many hours observing in their classes and providing detailed feedback. I had done the same over the telephone, in pondering methods for varying the way colleagues teach a subject to different audiences. And I recently had the experience of a colleague sitting in on one of my large lecture classes with his nephew, providing a rare, unbidden opportunity for my request to him for detailed feedback. After pondering about what might be interesting and challenging to undertake during retirement (in addition to teaching one course each year during a 3-year Bartle appointment), I met with James Pitaressi, Director of the Center for Learning and Teaching (CLT), and Eric Machan Howd, Director of Instructional Design at the CLT, with my proposal. I suggested a service that I could provide to allow Binghamton instructors to request confidential observation and feedback of their teaching.

The timing was good. Eric had recently developed and begun to imple-
Initial Observations and Further Support for Teaching Feedback

I have observed and provided oral and written feedback to instructors in biology, psychology, and geology, and in classes that comprise large lectures, small classrooms and even one presented solely via video/on-line. In collaboration with Eric, I and those whose classrooms I have observed have presented a workshop at the CLT to publicize the availability of this service. During that workshop, we made available the written feedback (with the agreement of those instructors) and learned from the participants in the audience about other ideas that could further enhance our service. Most critically, we learned that the instructors who had been observed, despite their initial trepidation, found the subsequent discussion and feedback to have been very helpful. As one faculty member commented, “No one has ever observed my teaching or provided this level of attention and detail to my efforts. I wish that I had had this sooner.”

Our hope in preparing this description of this new service on campus is both to publicize its availability to instructors at any level as well as to foster a culture of expectation that good teaching can and should be encouraged on our campus. In the course of the past year, it’s come to our attention that several departments offer peer-to-peer classroom observation, or consider it as part of a department mentoring process. We applaud those arrangements and submit that the CLT consultation and observation service can either complement those departmental plans, or provide a more confidential experience for any instructor. Because it is still early in the development of this service, questions about the benefits of an observer from outside of one’s discipline, the availability of follow-up at some interval after the observation, as well as other ideas are under consideration and will be part of what we hope will ultimately be an expansion of these services. Meanwhile, we welcome your requests for consultation and observation, as well as your ideas. Please contact the Center for Learning and Teaching main office to get started: 607-777-5040 or clt@binghamton.edu.

Is “Adjunct” a Bad Word?

*Article Courtesy of* The Connection

**Career Tools**

by

Marta Segal Block

At the 2014 MLA conference, several attendees wore red letter A’s pinned to their chests. The attendees weren’t signifying their role as Hawthorne scholars; rather, they were trying to call attention to the plight of adjuncts in academia. That year, the one MLA session on the needs and concerns of what the organization termed “contingent faculty” was held at the unpopular time of 8 a.m. on Saturday morning. It may be that those wearing “the scarlet letter” had a point.

Although much has been written about the ethics and economics of using adjunct faculty, not a lot of research has been done on the terminology used to describe this role—and how those who teach part-time feel about it.

The use of adjuncts, or part-time faculty, has grown substantially over the past 30 years. According to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), in 1975, 30.2 percent of those teaching at the college or university level taught part time. By 2005, that number had risen to 48 percent. According to Hans-Joerg Tiede of the AAUP, the explosion of non-tenure track and part-time positions poses a serious threat to both academic freedom and the institution of tenure.

Despite the popular perception that most adjunct faculty would prefer to be full-time faculty, the same AAUP report showed that only 35 percent of those teaching part-time were actually looking for full-time academic employment. Sixty-five percent of adjuncts either held other full-time employment or wanted only part-time work.
How can art improve the experience of a college campus? Art allows us to have an emotional and physical experience, using an aesthetic connection. It can offer a new perspective of a place and in culture while highlighting new technology and providing context for historic technologies. Whether or not we are conscious about taking time to experience art, the effects of art around us affect both our campus identity and the creative energy we put towards our roles on campus.

Often times, the purpose of art in public is to enhance the aesthetics of an environment. ‘Public Art’ can differ from public exhibition, permanent installations and ornamental attractions if the piece was built for a specific public space. The now world famous chrome bean-shaped sculpture, ‘Cloud Gate,’ acts as a centerpiece to downtown Chicago. Anish Kapoor’s mirror finish 110-ton steel sculpture reflects the city’s monumental physical achievements and intellectual heritage. While installations such as ‘Cloud Gate,’ can craft an abstract industrial view of a space, Eduardo Kobra’s mural in Chelsea, New York reimagines a local cultural memory; a reinterpretation of Alfred Einsenstaedt’s photograph of a couple kissing in Times Square on Victory over Japan Day in 1945. The mural compliments the neighborhood’s cultural vibrancy, as well as the historical context of which it is celebrated.

When there are new visual stimuli such as public art, there are new possibilities of finding connections with the campus. The arts offer a common language in connecting the many cultures, subcultures and individuals that exist in a college campus community. Images, murals, and unique sculptural installations are proven to motivate social and intellectual dialogue among the community. Malcolm Miles, in his book *Art, Space and the City,* writes that public art is, “…a form of street life, a means to articulate the implicit values of a city when its users occupy the place of determining what the city is.” On a college campus, the art in a public space reflects pride and promotes a sense of identity. While communicating the basic functions of the campus such as learning and research, it can in turn, also define the intellectual spirit of a campus.

Within our seemingly geocentric environment, the time spent outside of appointments are often spent getting to and from them. These 5-15 minute intervals of time can be some of the most stimulating experiences of our day. Our brain has a chance to take control and interpret the connection of both a mental and physical experience. Mundane experiences such as noticing the asymmetry of lines on the sidewalk, or the unexpected symmetry in nature, can even for a moment, transport us using associations and memory. These are the same cognitive functions that draw us to art.

Most campuses are comprised of living spaces, classrooms, libraries, social spaces, museums, natural areas… you name it. What all of these spaces have in common are that they provide opportunity to experience perspective and culture. Using hallways, walkways, and otherwise vacant corners of active public areas, art is the perfect tool that can be used to revitalize and reinterpret public environments. Brown University’s percent-for-art program delegates one percent of their construction budget to support public art on campus. It provides a chance to commission art as well as opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration between departments using research and technology.

Though among us are students, faculty, staff, and visitors whom have varying focuses ranging from support to research, connection with our physical environment is essential. It is helpful to know that our environment is able to support us practically but also creatively. Research conducted by the Society for College and University Planning shows that students often drop out, transfer, or halt their higher education when they do not feel connected to their environment. Americans for the Arts also provides data...
that proves that students who are in some way involved in the arts throughout the day tend to have higher academic performances and lower dropout rates.

With more art on the university campus, there is also more opportunity for growth creatively, socially, and as an academic community. Americans for the Arts research credits creativity among the top three personality traits most important for career success. Critical thinking skills foster the ability to innovate and problem solve. While public art to some can be written off as decoration, the right piece can exist in a space for years without the burden of having to be understood. Its form can be rediscovered, its subject can bring new context and will bring new conversation to an already progressive academic culture.
Becoming a Tobacco-Free Campus

by Katie Ellis

Binghamton University plans to become tobacco free. A policy will go into effect Aug. 1, 2017, to ban use of all tobacco products on University property, and two committees have been working for months to help the campus—and tobacco users—prepare.

“We have about 30 people on the primary Tobacco-Free Initiative Campus Committee and 11 including myself on the Policy Development and Campus Communications subcommittee,” said JoAnn Navarro, vice president for operations and chair of the policy committee. “There are about 20 on the Education and Smoking Cessation Programming subcommittee, chaired by Johann Fiore-Conte, assistant vice president for health and wellness.”

“The committees have representation from all of the unions, students, every division, the Professional Staff Senate and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee,” said Fiore-Conte. “In addition, we have members from the Broome County Department of Health, the Employee Assistance Program, Sodexo, the Healthy Campus Initiative and the Research Foundation as well as from the Graduate Student Organization, the Student Association and the Office of International Student and Scholar Services.”

Each subcommittee meets separately, but the two also come together jointly every other month.

There are two basic reasons the campus is moving to a tobacco-free environment, said Navarro. “One is that SUNY—and perhaps New York state—will require it at some point in time. Many locations in the community have made this transition and it makes sense that we do so as well,” said Fiore-Conte.

“Initially, we’ve been involved in developing the policy (https://www.binghamton.edu/tobacco-free/tobacco-policy.pdf), which included gathering feedback from the campus,” Navarro said. “Our FAQs (https://www.binghamton.edu/tobacco-free/faq.html) and resources (https://www.binghamton.edu/bhealthy/resources/smoking.html) are on the website, and we’ve placed signage throughout the campus on doors and smoker’s poles. We are not dictating that people have to quit using tobacco products, but we are saying that they cannot use them while on campus property.”

Activity is now ramping up to educate different stakeholder groups. Navarro and Fiore-Conte attended the CSEA membership meeting in November, and the policy was on the agenda for the upcoming Building Administrator meeting. Ada Robinson-Perez, associate director of the Employee Assistance Program, has already met with each shift in Physical Facilities, and cessation classes that include free access to nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) have begun, with the first set held in October (https://www.binghamton.edu/bhealthy/resources/smoking.html).

Responses are also in from the Tobacco-Free Assessment survey conducted in the fall. Results are expected to provide the campus with a clearer understanding of how many people use tobacco products on campus, where they use them and how frequently. The data gathered from the survey will help drive decisions on what resources the campus can and should provide for those who use tobacco products—whether they wish to totally quit or choose instead to find a way to avoid use of tobacco products when they are on campus.

“If people want to quit smoking, what kinds of things would help them?” Fiore-Conte asked. “The survey responses are helping us further develop resources that can help, including behavior modification classes and cessation programming, NRT and even assisted us with our plans for the Great American Smoke Out held on Nov. 17, in collaboration with student groups including Colleges Against Cancer and our REACH peers. The students are really starting to get engaged.”

Enforcement of the policy is a major question on people’s mind, but Navarro said it’s simple: “Enforcement will be no different than for our current smoking policy. We’ll ask people to kindly remind their colleagues that the campus is tobacco free if they are comfortable doing so,” she said. “And, if they’re not, they can see a supervisor. We hope to use Human Resources and the Office of Student Conduct as a last effort for situations that become truly egregious.”

Human Resources has placing a statement about the policy on all employment postings and employment documentation, Navarro added. “And we’re continuing our educational outreach, developing a training program for supervisors and working with offices on campus that liaison with vendors so we make sure that everyone who comes onto campus will know.”

The training for supervisors, to begin in the spring, will address what to do when supervisors encounter an employee smoking or when another employee comes to them and says someone is smoking. “We want to help supervisors in these situations so they can deal with them in a compassionate way,” Navarro said. “Hopefully, this will raise the level of conversation and avoid further issues.”
The 2011-2016 collective bargaining agreement between New York state and UUP expired July 1, 2016. But under the Triborough Amendment of the Public Employees Fair Employment Act (the “Taylor Law”), almost all benefits provided by the expired contract continue until a successor agreement is ratified. The exceptions are those benefits that expire on specific “sunset” dates. Generally, this means that while certain specific benefits have ended until a new contract is negotiated, most contract benefits, including such things as current compensation; health benefits and leave provisions; grievance and due-process provisions; appointment, evaluation and promotion procedures; and notice of nonrenewal and retrenchment protections continue.

Where We Stand on Specific Contract Items—Highlights

The following highlights the status of major contract issues of significance to UUP members.

**SALARY PROVISIONS—ARTICLE 20**

**Across-the-Board Salary Increases**

Members will continue to receive their current salaries. There will be no across-the-board salary increases until they are provided for in a new contract.

**Discretionary Salary Awards**

Under the terms of the 2011-2016 agreement, one more round of Discretionary Salary Awards will be distributed by Dec. 31, 2016.

**Salary Provisions that Continue under Triborough**

— Location Stipend (Downstate & Mid-Hudson Adjustment)
— Inconvenience Pay
— On-Call/Recall Pay
— Service Awards:
  • For full-time employees: A one-time $500 payment shall be added to basic annual salary at:
    — Continuing appointment
    — Permanent appointment
    — Second five-year term Appendix A appointment
    — Completion of seven years in Lecturer, Appendix C (Fundraising), and Appendix B-4 Division III Sports titles.
  • For part-time employees: A $500 lump-sum bonus payment (not added to basic annual salary) after eight years of consecutive service at the campus at which they are currently employed, and every eight years thereafter.

**MEDICAL, VISION, DENTAL, LIFE INSURANCE BENEFITS—ARTICLES 39 & 40**

All New York state health benefits provisions and all programs administered by the UUP Benefit Trust Fund (vision, dental and life insurance) continue.

**Productivity Enhancement Program—Appendix A-26**

2016 was the last available year for the “PEP” program. This program allowed employees who accrue vacation leave to exchange two or three days of vacation time for a credit toward the cost of their health insurance premium. PEP will not be available again unless negotiated in a successor contract.

**JOINT LABOR-MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE GRANT PROGRAMS—ARTICLES 42-45**

Programs such as Individual Development Awards, Drescher Leaves, Calendar Year Employee Leaves, and Campus Grants will have no additional funding after expiration of the contract. However, under the 2011-2016 agreement, UUP and the state agreed to an allocation of money for these programs during the 2016-2017 academic year. Grant application processes are in place for the fall 2016 semester.

**WORK-LIFE SERVICES PROGRAMS (FAMILY BENEFITS & EAP)—ARTICLES 46 & 47**

The following NYS Employee Work-Life Services programs continue:

• Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
• Grants and technical assistance for worksite child care centers
• Pre-retirement planning information
• Pre-Tax Savings Programs: NYS-Ride, Health Care Spending Account, Dependent Care Advantage Account

**DCAA Employer Contribution**

The $300-$800 annual employer contribution to Dependent Care Advantage Accounts expires with the 2011-2016 agreement, even though the DCAA pre-tax savings program will continue.

About 85 percent of Binghamton University employees utilize one of the University’s employee health plans, which all offer coverage for smoking cessation. See what options are available under these plans on the Tobacco-Free Initiative website.

The Decker School of Nursing is developing a smoking cessation clinic that will augment University plans; it is preparing for a spring 2017 opening. For more information about the policy and what resources are available for quitting or cutting down use of tobacco products, contact the Tobacco-Free Initiative via e-mail (healthycampus@binghamton.edu).
DEFICIT REDUCTION PROGRAM—ARTICLE 53

The state’s Deficit Reduction Program for NYS employees has ended. Deductions from UUP employees’ paychecks, which occurred over two academic years (2013-2014 and 2014-2015), are now being repaid. Repayment of seven days’ pay began in July 2016 and will continue over a total of 39 pay periods.

LEAVE DONATION PROGRAM—APPENDIX A-45

This program continues, allowing UUP members who accrue vacation leave to donate leave credits to any UUP bargaining unit member (or other state bargaining unit or M/C employee) who has exhausted leave benefits and is in need of leave due to illness.

VOLUNTARY REDUCTION IN WORK SCHEDULE PROGRAM—APPENDIX A-46

This program continues, allowing employees to voluntarily trade income for time off. It provides a way for UUP members to bank leave credits for use at a later time and can help with planned family care or other events that would otherwise require an unpaid leave, thereby protecting health insurance coverage.

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State UUP website
The State UUP website is located at www.uupinfo.org. It contains information about members’ benefits and other UUP related topics.

Deficit Reduction Program Repayment
There have been several questions about the state’s Deficit Reduction repayment to UUP members. For UUP members currently on the payroll, the first DRP repayment appeared in the June 29 paycheck. There has been confusion about the term “FINAL 08 DRP REPAYMENT” on pay stubs. This term is a NYS Office of the Comptroller Code intended to reflect that the DRP is now in its FINAL repayment phase. It is not indicative of a single, final repayment. Full repayment will continue to occur on a pro-rata basis in each pay check across 39 pay periods.

UUP Contract Negotiations
UUP is committed to communicating with the union membership about contract negotiation—to the greatest extent possible—as negotiations proceed.

This is your contract and we want members to be informed, involved and active throughout the process.

To facilitate this communication, we have created a new Members-Only portal. There is the link to the portal: https://uuphost.org/myuup/MembersOnly/check.php

A link to the portal is also accessible via the UUP website; click on the “UUP Negotiations Information” box in the top right corner of the page.

Conceptual proposals from UUP to the state, exchanged July 15, during our first bargaining session with the state, are now posted in the new Members-Only section.

The Member-Only section is password-protected; use the last five digits of your employee ID as your unique password to enter the site.

Your employee ID can be found in the center of your pay stub, listed as “NYS EMPLID.”

PLEASE DO NOT PUBLICALLY SHARE OR POST INFORMATION FOUND IN THE MEMBER-ONLY SECTION; THIS INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL AND INTENDED FOR UUP MEMBERS ONLY.
Support for LIU’s Locked-Out Unionists

*Article Courtesy of* The Connection

UUP stood behind the nearly 700 union members at Long Island University-Brooklyn who were locked out in a contract dispute. The administration abruptly locked out the faculty and cut off their health insurance just days before the fall semester began. Non-union temporary instructors were hired to teach classes.

UUP President Fred Kowal issued a public statement supporting the Long Island University Faculty Federation—an AFT local—and condemned the lockout as “an unprecedented, outrageous and despicable ploy by the administration.”

Chapter members rallied to support our union brethren by signing an online petition urging the administration to end the lockout and resume negotiations. They also used social media to send a message of solidarity.

The 12-day lockout ended with the faculty union at Long Island University announcing an agreement had been made.