

# STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK – COLLEGE AT CORTLAND

## LABOR-MANAGEMENT MEETING

July 22, 2008

### MEETING NOTES

#### ATTENDING:

Administration Representatives: Erik Bitterbaum, William Shaut, Joanne Barry, Mark Prus  
UUP Representatives – Larry Ashley, Jamie Dangler, John Driscoll, Elizabeth Owens, Dennis Selzner,  
Boodie McGinnis (scribe)

#### 1. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Bitterbaum reported that Cortland's new Vice-President for Student Affairs, Greg Sharer, will be attending Labor-Management meetings in the future.

#### 2. BUDGET

- Shaut reported that, for the 2008-2009 fiscal year, we will have a reduction of \$776,000 from 2007-2008 budget, not including salary increases. He has just completed a three-year budget projection as required by the State Department of Budget (DOB). This detailed required reporting of the cash balance in each and every account, as well as projections of how we would respond to a mid-year cut this next year, another reduction the following year, and continued restricted access to reserve funds. Shaut noted that, by the end of the third year (2011), Cortland would need an increase of \$14 million dollars to cover salary increases and utilities, so projecting how to cover the campus's needs with reduced funds was a challenging exercise.
- Shaut explained that SUNY does not have sufficient allocation for us to access ALL of our reserves, but we have some allocation to enable us to use some of our reserves. Additionally, we have reduced allocations (authority to spend cash) to all IFRs in order to increase the available allocation to access our reserves.
- Bitterbaum reported that the state is considering a "modest rational tuition increase" policy of 2-4% a year. It is his understanding the Governor Paterson recognizes the difficulties posed by having long periods of flat tuition followed by dramatic spikes, so he (Bitterbaum) hopes fervently that a plan for reasonable, modest, and ongoing tuition increase will be implemented.
- Shaut explained that, to save money at the campus level, effort is underway to move some of the more expensive DFR (dormitory) employees to state lines. The campus has to pay 45% in fringe benefits for employees on DFR lines, while the state picks up the fringes for those on state lines.
- Bitterbaum noted that Cortland expects to be able to manage this next year without any layoffs. There will be some attrition due to retirements, but there are no plans for other layoffs this next year.
- Shaut noted that utility costs are a major concern, and explained briefly the complexities of our utility contracts. With dramatic rises in utility costs and our campus's plans to increase spaces significantly in the next few years (new Education building, student life center, and other projects in the works), utilities will continue to be an ongoing financial challenge.
- Ashley asked for response from the administration about various rumors and concerns raised this summer by UUP members:
  - **Potential move to a campuswide 4-4 course load** – Prus and Bitterbaum confirmed this issue is off the table at this time and not being considered for the coming academic year.
  - **Adjunct faculty** – The administration has no plans at this time to reduce the number of adjuncts or lay off adjuncts due to budget cuts. The budget for temporary services, from which adjuncts are paid, is being reduced from \$4.6 million to \$4.2 million for the next year, but the budget reduction will be achieved by reducing the number of visiting faculty. There may in fact be more courses taught by adjuncts this next year due to the reduction in visiting faculty.
  - **Sabbaticals** – Sabbaticals already approved for the 2008-2009 academic year will not be impacted.

- **Travel** – International travel has been restricted, and U.S. travel will be restricted to who are presenting.
- **Department Budgets** – Will not be increased, but will not be reduced over the next year.
- **Class Size** – “Mild” increases are being made to some class limits, taking into account curricular needs and specific disciplines. Ashley expressed concern about potential workload increase as a result of increase in class numbers, but Bitterbaum and Prus said the increases should not be dramatic and should not be problematic. So far, only one department has complained about projected increases, and will be meeting with Prus to discuss concerns in the near future. Selzner cautioned that future significant increase in class size will impact the quality of the student experience as well as faculty workload.
- **Compensation for graduate coordinators, etc.** – The proposed plan for compensating faculty with administrative responsibilities (graduate coordinators, program coordinators, etc), per communication of 6/22/08, will not be impacted and will go into effect as of 9/1/08.
- **Part-Time Salaries** – The planned 2% increase in starting part-time salaries (\$2550 for 3-credit course) will be implemented in Fall 2008.
- **Logo/Letterhead/Marketing Campaign** – Departments and individuals may now plan to use up all existing inventory (letterhead, business, cards, etc) with old logos before ordering inventory with the new logo. This is a change from communication earlier in the year when the budget situation looked brighter.
- Bitterbaum thanked UUP for its past advocacy and urged UUP to continue to press the state to improve SUNY funding. Ashley noted that Governor Paterson, at the recent NYSUT conference, made promises to improve funding for higher education, and said that UUP is committed to holding the Governor to his promises. UUP President Phil Smith hopes to have a personal meeting with the Governor in the near future.