

Subject: UUP New Paltz Chapter Labor-Management Meeting Notes

2:00pm April 6th, 2012

Administration Attendees: President Christian, VP DiStefano, Chief of Staff Wright, HR Director Blades, HR Associate Director Papa

UUP Attendees: President Brown, VP Smith, VP Miller, NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist Capowski, Secretary Hanley.

1. Service credit for union work. UUP has repeatedly asked that union work be credited toward service to the College and the University, as is typically the case at our peer institutions throughout SUNY. We have documented that UUP work counts as service at Brockport, Buffalo State, Cobleskill, Cortland, Delhi, Empire, Geneseo, Maritime, Morrisville, Plattsburgh, Potsdam and Purchase. No reasons have been cited as to why union work should not count as service at SUNY New Paltz. Further delays in simply clarifying that union work is included among the wide variety of college and university service options is both mystifying and counterproductive to a good working relationship with UUP.

Noting this issue was once again on the agenda, President Brown reaffirmed his desire to see the administration adopt a position on union service similar to those taken at some of our sister institutions. Referring to the discussions at a previous meeting, President Christian recalled recommending that the union take this issue up with Faculty Governance. He then offered to take the issue to them if we were not going to do so. VP Miller asked if the administration would support crediting union service if Faculty Governance approved of the idea; Christian stated that it would. Miller expressed the opinion that taking the matter up with Faculty Governance was a reasonable approach and offered to take the lead on this. A general discussion of the issue ensued. Ultimately, the union decided to pursue the issue with the Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion (RTP) and Salary Increase (SI) committees of Faculty Governance.

2. Preservation of tenure lines. Has the Administration changed its approach to creating new lectureships? In the past, it has spoken about creating lectureships as a way to reduce the overall number of adjuncts, but there are indications that certain departments are moving to permanently change some formerly tenure-track lines into lectureships. Is College policy evolving toward replacing a certain number of tenure-track lines with lectureships?

As to the question of changing its approach, Christian stated “short term yes – long term no.” Christian acknowledged there had been some ambiguity in the administration’s position(s) regarding full time vs. full time tenure track faculty. To clarify, Christian pointed out that the administration is thinking of a possible temporary shift towards hiring lecturers. However, its long term focus remains on hiring full time, tenure track faculty. Brown then asked if the administration would be replacing adjuncts with lecturers. Christian stated that though this is not being done intentionally or strategically, he saw that as a direction that would be beneficial to the students. Brown agreed, stating that while the union does not want to see tenure track lines

replaced by lecturers, we would love to see adjuncts have the opportunity to move up to lectureships.

3. Allocation of 15% of new resources. The Administration has initiated a process to determine how additional revenue from increased tuition should be allocated. At its meeting on March 14, 2012, the UUP Chapter Executive Committee unanimously passed a Resolution to Address the Growing Pay-Gap for Adjuncts at SUNY New Paltz, copies of which were forwarded to the Administration that same day. The resolution asks that “at least 15% of the additional \$1.6 million revenue be systematically allocated to adjunct compensation, either across-the-board or based on length of service at SUNY New Paltz.” This is the same amount allocated to adjuncts in the Individual Development Awards Program, the largest NYS-UUP Joint Labor-Management Program. Such a move would be a significant step toward closing the ever-increasing pay gap between adjuncts and all other academic employees at the College. Providing greater support to those faculty members with whom undergraduates are most likely to come into contact during their initial college years will thus also benefit our students and improve retention.

Brown confirmed that a request for funding had been submitted on the required budget form per Interim Provost Torsney’s suggestion. Copies of the completed form had been delivered to the offices of both the President and Interim Provost. VP DiStefano asked if the funds for Individual Development Awards were provided by New York State. LRS Capowski indicated that funding does come from the State; Brown believed the awards were funded jointly by the State and the union. Miller asked DiStefano if she thought devoting some percentage of this additional tuition revenue towards closing the pay gap would be an inappropriate use of student-provided funds. DiStefano responded that, as SUNY Chancellor Zimpher had decreed this tuition money must be used to improve student outcomes, any prospective use of these funds would simply have to be weighed on that basis. DiStefano indicated the administration is reluctant to enter into this [redress of adjunct pay gap] discussion until they see what happens with the current contract negotiations between UUP and the State. She expressed the hope that this pay inequity issue would be addressed and resolved through those negotiations.

4. Accommodations for rising fuel costs. Would the Administration be willing to work with UUP to explore ways of helping employees, mostly professionals, meet the rising cost of coming to work? These might include flexible hours, incentives for carpooling, such as premium parking spaces, 4-day weeks, job-sharing, etc. New York State Executive Order 68 authorizes and encourages State agencies to establish alternate work schedules (e.g., flextime, 4-day workweek, etc.). Procedural guidelines for submitting alternative work schedule proposals are contained in Budget Bulletin G-1008, 5/1/78. Cortland, Cobleskill and Brockport have extensive experience in this regard: <http://www2.cortland.edu/dotAsset/113288.pdf>. The Human Resources page on the Cortland website (<http://www2.cortland.edu/offices/hr/Policies-and-Procedures/>) has other documents related to the policy, including a form to apply for an alternative work schedule. For Cobleskill, see: <http://www.cobleskill.edu/about/administrative-offices/human-resources/alternateWorkSchedule.pdf> (AWS application form).

DiStefano stated that this issue was not new to the campus. Further, having given a lot of thought to it in the past, she was of the opinion that it is also a very complex issue. While not dismissing the possibility of revisiting the issue, DiStefano did note that the possibility of doing so is subject to workload considerations. Unfortunately, present workload considerations as well as the complexity of the issue itself preclude pursuing it at this time.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ed Hanley
Chapter Secretary