

Subject: UUP New Paltz Chapter Part-Time Labor-Management Meeting Notes
10:00am November 30, 2011

Administration Attendees: Interim Provost Torsney, HR Director Blades, HR Associate Director Papa

UUP Attendees: President Brown, Alan Dunefsky, Danielle Schuka, Labor Relations Specialist Capowski, Secretary Hanley

Agenda Items

1. How might the College publicly recognize the enormous and invaluable contributions of contingent employees at SUNY New Paltz?

President Brown opened the discussion by suggesting an in-house effort similar to the recent COACHE survey be undertaken to solicit input from contingent employees. Interim Provost Torsney concurred and recommended the union work with Asst. VP Andrews to craft a survey. Brown then asked Torsney for her thoughts on how else recognition might be afforded. Torsney noted that awards, discretionary salary increases, and inclusion in department activities are all means of doing so. She in turn asked Brown what he would want to see. Brown suggested highlighting the central role played by contingent employees in the College's efforts to retain students – especially freshmen. Further, enhancing contingent employees' visibility on the College's website would also help. While not disputing the merit of these suggestions, Torsney did point out that the College is in fact actively working to reduce the number of adjuncts.

2. Under what circumstances could the College support UUP's efforts to ensure that part-time adjuncts are compensated equitably, so that they receive compensation comparable to lecturers per course?

Noting that lecturers and adjuncts do essentially the same thing – teach – Brown stated that lecturers are paid on average 35% more than adjuncts. Brown asked if the administration could envision a situation where adjuncts would be paid the same as lecturers. Torsney replied “yes - when they become lecturers.” Brown then asked if those adjuncts unable to become lecturers would ever be paid more. Director Blades stated it was impossible to rule out “ever.” Torsney concurred, but also noted that “things are tight” at present.

3. How could the College strengthen academic freedom, educational quality and stability of the workforce by increasing job security?

When Brown offered that longer contracts could provide the increased job security sought, Torsney acknowledged the administration was indeed going to look into that possibility. Director Blades noted that longer contracts are in fact not cost neutral, though the cost consists of reduced flexibility rather than a dollar amount. She also noted that offering longer contracts would require the support of an evaluation process that does not yet exist. However, HR is looking into this.

4. What obstacles are there to eliminating the arbitrary minimum and maximum number of courses that may be taught by part-time adjunct and full-time contingent faculty?

When Brown stated the union no longer advocates a two course cap, Torsney replied she was not aware of that. Papa was also under the impression that the union still wanted the two course cap. Brown reiterated that the union has no objection whatsoever to adjuncts teaching more than two courses. Further, people should not be forced to teach either more courses - or fewer courses - than they want to teach. Per Brown, the two course cap was previously sought to protect tenured lines. When former President Poskanzer agreed not to increase the percentage of courses taught by adjuncts, the union rescinded its position on the two course cap. Apparently, information about the union's revised stance on the issue has not been properly passed on.

5. How might the College establish hiring practices that reward the competency and years of service of contingent employees?

Torsney indicated a peer review process would be a major step forward in this direction. Brown asked Torsney what such a peer review would lead to. Torsney replied "being rehired." When Brown asked Torsney if she could envision a process whereby evaluation and longevity lead somewhere, she declined to speculate on the matter.

6. Old business/updates (all issues addressed by Torsney)

Office space/facilities: office space is still an issue. Further, the situation with respect to availability of office space is going to get even tighter.

Adjunct attendance at department meetings: Deans have been reminded to be inclusive.

How was 2005 adjunct salary increase funded? Former Provost Lavalley was able to take advantage of favorable circumstances that existed at the time to make the changes that led to the salary increase. As no similar circumstances presently exist, it is not possible to effect another salary increase in the manner previously used.

Streamlining the Lecturer reappointment process: former Interim Provost Garrick Duhaney and Yvonne Aspengren should schedule another meeting so they can finally bring this process to a successful conclusion.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ed Hanley
Chapter Secretary