

Labor-Management Agenda UUP and SUNY New Paltz December 16, 2011

1. **UUP service.** Union service by our members, whether as chapter officers or as members of UUP committees, should count as service to both the University and the wider community. This is typically the case throughout SUNY, but there appears to be some confusion and inconsistency here at New Paltz. How does the Administration plan to ensure that vice-presidents, deans, department chairs, and directors recognize and count UUP activity as valid service to the University and wider community?
2. **Women's Studies.** Since its inception in 1974, our Women's Studies Program has become a flagship among similar programs throughout the University. In the past thirty years, the number of students in WS-based courses has quadrupled to nearly 800. Now that the only full-time faculty member based in WS is approaching retirement, UUP is concerned that the Program's viability would be severely jeopardized if this line were permanently lost. Last year's external program reviewers strongly recommended "*the timely hiring of a full-time faculty located in the Women's Studies Program, with a doctorate in Women's Studies and expertise in Feminist Theory.*" When does the Administration intend to implement this recommendation?
3. **Petition for Educational Quality, Fairness and Equity.** What response does the Administration have to the Petition for Educational Quality, Fairness and Equity that was delivered on November 29 with over 2,000 signatures by faculty, staff and students?
4. **Mentoring Program.** Would the Administration please clarify its position in regard to partnering with UUP and jointly developing a mentoring program for academics, professionals and part-timers? After initial meetings that seemed to be productive, the willingness and commitment on the part of the Administration to move forward now appear to be in question.
5. **Double-Contingency.** Adjunct contracts that the chapter has examined include a "double-contingency clause," stating that contracts for part-timers are contingent on enrollments in their own classes (which is consistent with Article 30 of the *Agreement* and Article XI of the *Policies* of the SUNY Board of Trustees), but *also* contingent on enrollments in courses being taught by full-time faculty in the department. We are requesting that the Administration retain only the contract contingency that is in accord with the *Agreement* and the *Policies* of the SUNY Board of Trustees.
6. **Workload.** During previous Labor-Management discussions on how to avoid excessive workload, mention has been made that that there often comes a point when employees have to "just say no" to certain work requests. How can the Administration communicate this policy to our members, and what steps can be taken to ensure that it is actually implemented? Would the Administration be willing to conduct a workshop, alone or together with UUP, on how employees can best carry out their professional obligation without being compelled to take on unlimited additional work assignments?

Subject: UUP New Paltz Chapter Labor-Management Meeting Notes
4:00pm December 16, 2011

Administration Attendees: President Christian, VP DiStefano, Interim Provost Torsney, Chief of Staff Wright, HR Director Blades

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

1. UUP service. Union service by our members, whether as chapter officers or as members of UUP committees, should count as service to both the University and the wider community. This is typically the case throughout SUNY, but there appears to be some confusion and inconsistency here at New Paltz. How does the Administration plan to ensure that vice-presidents, deans, department chairs, and directors recognize and count UUP activity as valid service to the University and wider community?

Citing examples of activities by union members which could count as service to the University, President Brown touched on the inconsistency in how these activities are viewed and credited as service in the various departments and schools here on campus. Interim Provost Torsney, unaware that other SUNY schools credit union service in this manner, asked for examples of where and how this is done. President Christian too asked what the precedent was on other campuses, indicating he would need some sense of how this works elsewhere in order to facilitate further discussion on this issue. Labor Relations Specialist Capowski stated that SUNY Purchase was one school where union service was so credited. He offered to make inquiries at the other campuses he serves in order to determine their local policies as well.

2. Women's Studies. Since its inception in 1974, our Women's Studies Program has become a flagship among similar programs throughout the University. In the past thirty years, the number of students in WS-based courses has quadrupled to nearly 800. Now that the only full-time faculty member based in WS is approaching retirement, UUP is concerned that the Program's viability would be severely jeopardized if this line were permanently lost. Last year's external program reviewers strongly recommended "the timely hiring of a full-time faculty located in the Women's Studies Program, with a doctorate in Women's Studies and expertise in Feminist Theory." When does the Administration intend to implement this recommendation?

Torsney pointed out that this particular recommendation, arising out of the review in question, is just that – a recommendation. She stated that Women's Studies is a very robust program; it is interdisciplinary, but it is thriving. Further, she asserted that the trend today is toward such interdisciplinary models. Torsney explained that a request for a full time hire had been received, but it had been denied because there were more compelling needs elsewhere that had to be satisfied. Vice President DiStefano concurred, pointing out that other requests [in other areas] had also been denied due to the economy of the institution. Torsney also noted that academic planning is not a union matter. Christian suggested the situation in Women's Studies can also be viewed as a faculty matter, not simply an Administrative issue. The matter could be rolled back

to the faculty for their further consideration to help determine the right and best path to support Women's Studies.

3. Petition for Educational Quality, Fairness and Equity. What response does the Administration have to the Petition for Educational Quality, Fairness and Equity that was delivered on November 29 with over 2,000 signatures by faculty, staff and students.

Christian handed Brown a formal, written response (attached) to the petition, the text of which had already been sent in a letter to the editor of the Times Herald Record and via email to all faculty and staff. A brief discussion followed. Presidents Christian and Brown reiterated their views on the issues presented in both the petition and the response, but there was little progress towards bridging the gap in their divergent positions.

4. Mentoring Program. Would the Administration please clarify its position in regard to partnering with UUP and jointly developing a mentoring program for academics, professionals and part-timers? After initial meetings that seemed to be productive, the willingness and commitment on the part of the Administration to move forward now appear to be in question.

Torsney stated that she had indeed been favorably inclined toward such a joint effort. However, because she is new to her position, she did not realize that there are many mentoring efforts already underway across the campus. Thus, mentoring relationships already exist in many areas of the College. DiStefano observed that, as the administration is looking to eliminate duplication of effort, it would not be inclined to duplicate something that is already being done. Noting that there are too many opportunities and priorities already, Christian stated that the question to be looked into is why mentoring is not occurring in all areas. In view of the earlier administration support, VP Miller then asked if it would be correct to consider the initiative simply deferred for now rather than turned down. Per Christian, that was correct.

5. Double-Contingency. Adjunct contracts that the chapter has examined include a "double-contingency clause," stating that contracts for part-timers are contingent on enrollments in their own classes (which is consistent with Article 30 of the Agreement and Article XI of the Policies of the SUNY Board of Trustees), but also contingent on enrollments in courses being taught by full-time faculty in the department. We are requesting that the Administration retain only the contract contingency that is in accord with the Agreement and the Policies of the SUNY Board of Trustees.

Per Director Blades, this issue will be addressed in the Part-Time Labor-Management forum.

6. Workload. During previous Labor-Management discussions on how to avoid excessive workload, mention has been made that that there often comes a point when employees have to "just say no" to certain work requests. How can the Administration communicate this policy to our members, and what steps can be taken to ensure that it is actually implemented? Would the Administration be willing to conduct a workshop, alone or together with UUP, on how employees can best carry out their professional obligation without being compelled to take on unlimited additional work assignments?

Noting the possible career limiting implications of just saying "no" to one's supervisor, DiStefano explained that what is actually envisioned with respect to issues of excessive workload are conversations between employees and their supervisors. Employees confronted with workload issues **MUST** have recourse to take the matter up with their supervisors. It is the supervisor's responsibility to then say "no" on the employee's behalf if warranted. If employees are unable to discuss such matters with their supervisors – for whatever reason – they do have the option to then take those matters to Human Resources. As for conducting a workshop on this subject, the focus is presently on developing and presenting workshops on performance programs and evaluations. Thus, developing and presenting a workshop on this subject is not possible at this time.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ed Hanley
Chapter Secretary