

Labor-Management Meeting Notes, February 20, 2013

By Jeff Miller, Vice President for Academics

Administration Attendees: HR Director Dawn Blades, President Don Christian, Provost Phillip Mauceri, HR Assoc. Dir. Jodi Papa, Asst. VP John Shupe, Assoc. VP Shelly Wright

UUP Attendees: Chapter President Peter D.G. Brown, NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist William Capowski, VP for Academics Jeff Miller, VP for Professionals Linda Smith

1. SUNY and Campus Budgets. With the proposed new model for allocating taxpayer support to SUNY campuses now off the table for the present, what are the prospects and implications for the College as the University begins to align State support with enrollment growth? What are the implications for SUNY New Paltz from any proposed additional performance-based funding?

President Christian began by noting that funding for SUNY New Paltz has always been driven by enrollment numbers. But because the proposed performance-based distribution has been put on hold, it would be premature to say how New Paltz will fare under any new distributional scheme. Additionally, the metrics for any performance-based program remain unclear. Will increased funds be given to schools with higher graduation rates, or to schools with low-graduation rates to help improve outcomes there?

New Paltz is currently looking internally to secure and enhance funding by moving graduate education classes toward hybrid, online, and evening courses to retain and enhance enrollment.

2. Union Service. At our Labor-Management meeting on December 17, 2012, UUP and the College Administration agreed that union work is a form of service falling under Article XII, Title C, §5 of the SUNY Policies of the Board of Trustees, which include, but are not limited to “such things as college and University public service, committee work, and involvement in college or University related student or community activities.” Since there is some lack of clarity and occasional resistance to acknowledging union work as service, we requested that the acceptance of union work as service be clearly confirmed in writing. The Provost’s memo of January 30, 2013, to Deans, Directors and Department Chairs on the subject of Faculty Utilization/Workload Policies would have been an appropriate document in which to confirm this understanding. UUP requests that this understanding be formally documented in an MOU or some other appropriate document.

Both President Christian and Provost Mauceri affirmed once again that UUP service is one among many different things that can count toward the service component of tenure, promotion, reappointment, and salary increases. Despite UUP’s repeated request that it do so, the College administration declined to go further and put something in writing, reasoning that other examples of service are not explicitly specified anywhere.

3. Winter Safety. Our members’ health and safety is seriously jeopardized during the winter months, when the likelihood of slipping, falling and other accidents is greatly increased. Since the beginning of the semester, UUP has received complaints from

members that snow and ice removal during recent winter storms has been inadequate and needs to be improved. As parking is moved to the periphery of the campus, employees must walk significantly greater distances to reach their offices and classrooms. What measures can the College undertake to improve its snow and ice removal efforts to better insure the health and safety of our members during winter weather conditions? The Health and Safety Committee meets very infrequently; issues such as ice and snow might be better addressed by this committee if it met more frequently.

John Shupe noted that snow and ice accumulation is closely monitored across campus, that Facilities Management devotes considerable resources to the safety of the campus community, and that it takes some 24-48 hours to remove snowfall from the campus's five miles of sidewalk and 2-3 miles of roadway. Priority in snow clearance is always given to fire and police access, then to disabled students before other areas are cleared. He noted that if the weather forecast calls for ice or freezing rain, the policy is to leave snow on the ground, because it is safer to walk across snow than ice, and black ice is often hard to see.

If the campus community has concerns about snow removal, the Health and Safety Committee is a good place to bring them up. The next meeting for the Health and Safety Committee meeting is March 20th. Additionally, the campus community can consult the Facilities Management Website, where a snow-removal protocol can be found (www.newpaltz.edu/facilities). Individuals can also call 257-3301 to report a problem directly.

4. Course Load for Lecturers. At previous meetings last year, we discussed the course load for lecturers, which UUP asserts is not only unusual within SUNY and excessive, but harmful to faculty and students alike. We were told that lecturers only rarely teach a 5-5 course load. UUP requested data from the College Administration on the actual course load of our current lecturers. We are still waiting and would appreciate receiving this data on the actual number of courses being taught by lecturers at SUNY New Paltz during the 2012/2013 academic year.

Provost Mauceri responded by stating that the problem of lecturer course load is part of the larger issue of course delivery. We need to balance our curricula to ensure course availability, and this impacts how much flexibility and choice we have in our course offerings. Both Christian and Mauceri noted that better curriculum planning and reduction of "curricular glut" are important factors to consider.

In terms of lecturers (or other faculty members), chairs and deans are free to arrange course releases where they see fit, but there has also been a general college-wide effort to reduce course releases.

Both Christian and Mauceri expressed concern that a lower lecturer teaching load would lead to a blurring of the line dividing tenure-track faculty members from lecturers.

5. Leaves. Following previous discussions involving the need for a more helpful presentation of employee leave options on the College's website, we are grateful that Human Resources now has a useful compilation of various leave options on its website

(<http://www.newpaltz.edu/hr/leave.html>). As previously discussed, UUP suggests that a link also be included on this website to our Family Leave/Work-Life Services Guide (<http://uupinfo.org/reports/reportpdf/FLWLSguide012611Updated012012.pdf>), which contains clear, concise and useful information not readily available elsewhere.

Dawn Blades reported that the Office of Human Resources is reluctant to provide a direct link to the UUP leaves policy document, because they have not reviewed it, and it is not run or authorized by the Governor's Office of Employee Relations. Human Resources is comfortable with the current presentation leave policies on the SUNY New Paltz Human Resources website.

6. The meeting concluded with a brief discussion of the *Tentative Agreement* between UUP and the State. Chapter President Brown asked how the College administration planned to process discretionary awards for past or future years. President Christian replied that no plans had yet been made, pending approval of the new contract.