

Contingent Concerns Labor-Management Meeting Notes, March 19, 2013

By Beth Wilson, Contingent Concerns Committee Co-Chair

In attendance:

For UUP: Chapter President Peter D.G. Brown, Contingent Concerns Committee Co-Chair Beth E. Wilson

For the Administration: Provost Phillip Mauceri, Executive Assistant to Provost Deborah Gould, Human Resources Director Dawn Blades, Assoc. HR Dir. Jodi Papa

1. Follow-up on adjunct office(s) in Wooster Science Building, and other plans to provide supported space for adjuncts on campus.

The Provost reported a conversation with John Shupe about the Wooster renovation plans, to the effect that there were plans for adjunct office space allotted by individual department needs. After questions from UUP regarding the fate of the formerly shared office space, or whether the only adjunct space in Wooster will be in the individual departments, Mauceri said that he would follow up with Shupe for more specific details to follow.

Wilson raised the more general issue of having some shared adjunct space available, whether in Wooster or somewhere else on campus, and that such a space/spaces should be planned for as the College moves forward with plans for new buildings and renovations of existing spaces.

2. Follow-up on fees charged to part-time UUP employees taking advantage of the Space Available Tuition Waiver program.

Blades said that the administration is still looking into the situation. Wilson presented anecdotal information from UUP members who had participated in the program. They often had paid several hundred dollars in fees in order to take a tuition-free course, and asked why these fees seem to be charged only to part-time employees, but not to full-timers. In addition, some who paid the technology fee found that after their course registration was processed, their computer accounts were changed to student status—which cut them off from necessary online access to teach their courses. Discussion then focused on the problem of clarifying how individuals are classified when they are simultaneously employees and students. Brown noted that care needed to be taken to make certain that they retain their primary identity as employees.

3. Does the administration have a projection of how many adjuncts will be hired in the coming academic year? Will there be fewer adjuncts as a result of new full-time hires?

Mauceri stated that the administration would not know total numbers until sometime closer to the end of classes, when the final decisions will be made regarding new lines. It is dependent on how the statewide budget and the internal SUNY allocations are made.

4. Following up on #3, what would be the net effect for individuals if the College maintained the same total amount for its adjunct teaching budget, but distributed the funds across the smaller number of part-time teachers resulting from the new full-time hires?

Mauceri expressed sympathy for the concept, but said that he did not want to address the needs of one group without taking into account the issues related to full-time salary compression and other factors.

Brown pursued the erosion of adjunct salaries over time, pointing out that in 1970, an adjunct was paid \$1,000 per three-credit course and the College President was paid \$32,000, a 32:1 proportion. Today, the proportion is more like 70:1. Similarly, the gap between full- and part-time teaching faculty has grown over time. How can we address this growing inequity? How can adjuncts effectively bargain for their salaries?

Mauceri responded that it is not within his purview to tell adjuncts what to do, but that the administration is never going to have a process outside of the percentage increases that are in the contract. New Paltz is already near the top of the regional market in terms of the going per-course adjunct rates. Now, if the adjuncts were being paid below a rate stipulated in the statewide contract, we would then raise them. In the meantime, Provost Lavallee established the policy, when he raised the base rate a number of years ago, that the base rate paid to adjuncts would thereafter be tied to any contractual increases, and that remains the College's official policy.

5. Has there been progress in identifying adjuncts who could/should receive academic year appointments for 2013-14? Has the administration been informing/encouraging department chairs to offer year-long appointments were possible?

Gould said that the contracts were in process, and that they were trying to issue academic year appointments where they can. The administration anticipates that there will be a larger number of such contracts offered than in recent years.

The question of the mandatory trainings was then raised, with UUP asking if there would be options for part-timers to do the training. Blades reported that statewide there have been mixed results so far—that two different campuses were audited by the State to ensure compliance with the training mandate. In one case a campus using an online alternative was approved, but in another case this was disallowed by a different auditor. At this time, Hampton Chauncey is working to have a version of the mandatory training made available online, via Blackboard. Such availability will be subject to audit, so there is no way of knowing whether it will remain an option over time. The mandate from the State is that every State employee must complete the training at least once every year.