

PUUP General Membership meeting
Wednesday, March 3, 2021
4 p.m. via Zoom

Attending: Kim Hartshorn, Gerianne Downs, Erin Campbell, Dan Gordon, Jacob Avery, Kathy Briggs, Ray Guydosh, Janet Puhalla, Sarah Henley, Gina Doty, Maureen Squires, Catherine Kaleida, Matt Salvatore, Wendy Braje, Don Maier, Faith Leach, Bob Richter, Oscar Flores, Michelle Bonati, Connie Oxford, Michelle Ouellette, Eli Remillard, George Flynn, Josh Beatty, Amanda Suriel, Sarah Bechtel, Felicia Krieg, Janis Krug, Ashley Davidson, Sarah Cunningham, Cori Jackson, Jim Folsom, Jordyn Iorizzo, Emma Bartscherer, Jamie Winters, Danielle Attanasio, Katherine Dunham, Karen Volkman, Carol Bleaux, Shawn Murphy, Jessica Santos, Alison Puliatte, Michael Walters, Wanda Haby, Magdalena Hertel, Shawna Kelty, Dan Gordon, Cindy McCarty, Julia Davis, Del Hart, Barry Brown, Mark Kaiser, Mustafa Demir, Kevin McCullen, Allison Beebie, Ray Carman, Cheryl Datkun, Mila Su, Sandra Rezak, Karin Killough, Autumn Bennett, Erika Guay, Michael Caraballo, Bernie Grabczewski, Bill Pfaff, Pamela Lavin, Cheryl Cole, Ben Wright, Walter Early, Rosy Hearn, Jerry Isaak, Amy Daniels, Cassie Joseph, Monica Ciobanu, Reid Lesswing, Stephen Moffat, Andrew Krug, Brooke Layhee, Erin Peters, Troy Joseph, Michael Howard, Taylor Manor, Deborah Altamirano, Kayla LaPorte, Paul Deal, Anonymous, Michelle Howard, Levi Martinez, Kolleen Duley, Michele Carpentier, Peter Ensel, Kameliia Petrova, Terrance Vance, Ben Medeiros, Doris Rible-Lacey, Virginia Siskavich, Michael Morales, Deb Brunner, Felicia Herzog, Amy Gervich, 518-570-5189, Rohit Rampal

Accept the proposed agenda:

Kirsten Isgro moved to accept; Wendy Gordon second

1. SUNY Budget

Kim reported the budget news out of Albany is not very good. Cuts proposed by the governor amount to five percent across the board, but that is still in negotiations and UUP is engaged in advocacy to amend the budget for higher education and education in general as much as possible.

Everything is awaiting the federal relief plan and how it will manifest itself in the state. The federal plan has been mentioned being as high as \$38 billion to NYS; governor's budget was based on a minimum of \$15 billion and still had the five percent cut for SUNY. But it looks like the state may be getting more than \$15 billion; however, the state is hurting across the board at all levels.

Next year will be tight. President Enyedi indicated the college, through savings, managed to accumulate about \$12 million in its reserves; they are anticipating it will need to be used quickly. State had not been allocating funds for many months during COVID. Allocations are paying some of that back.

2. Budget Vote

Oscar discussed expenses for 2020-2021 and projected 2021-2022 expenses with expenditures estimated at \$15,098. Submitting these numbers to Albany.

Kim explained the 1 percent union dues" UUP has to pay affiliates such as AFT and NYSUT. We keep about half of the dues we collect kept for UUP expenses. What we get for the affiliate dues statewide and national representation: Access to their political action committee funds and

funding for various other elements, including legal representation in labor disputes and our labor relations specialists who work with individual campuses. Running a union takes some money, the 1 percent is not collected directly by the chapter; and it goes to a variety of things.

Oscar: expenses for affiliate meetings. We project from previous budget 5,000. So far we don't have any expenses. If COVID improves, project we could spend \$4,000. We don't have any expenses for meetings yet.

Motion to accept budget made by Shawna Kelty; seconded by Rohit Rampal. By survey, of possible 103 attending, 97 percent voted yes; 1 percent voted no; two percent abstained.

3. Professional and Academic Issues:

Kirsten Isgro asked if there is any indication that there are administrative cuts being made, suggesting that they would go a long way to making up the 7 percent reduction the campus is facing. Kim said he does not believe there is anyone currently on the golden parachute. He mentioned how other campuses are all feeling spent and at the end of their rope and some are operating in a deficit. In L/M, he asked if there is no penalty for operating in a deficit, why would be avoiding it to such an extent. The answer is if we avoid the cuts, we become a target.

Kim discussed DSI and compression letters, which will be coming out Friday, March 5, and explained how difficult DSI is for the membership and campus. When the union negotiates the contract, it's for the entire membership, statewide. What the union would like is a 3 percent raise, but in order to get that, the state has demanded they get an appropriation at a discretionary level. The individual member receiving what might call DSI and has been accustomed to seeing that increase distributed through some kind of a merit criteria, but there is no requirement that a campus distribute that on basis of any kind of criteria. The president could give it to whomever he or she wants.

There is no contractual restrictions as to how it's spent. The union, and the chapter, for years has essentially been on the side of trying to distribute it as across the board as much as possible. Compressions are a real issue; the union has worked at statewide level trying to establish what areas membership are seriously compressed. They have put all of the DSI toward compression; from a union point of view it is difficult to complain about that because compression is an across the board issue. It means there will be people who do not get any additional money beyond the 2 percent raise.

Maureen Squires brought up how last year there was created a bubble for those members hired in the last 10 years who received nothing. Kim explained that the number who didn't qualify was low, about a dozen people did not receive anything, but we won't know until those letters go out if there will be any members who get nothing this year. He asked members who are identified as below the threshold to respond to him via his private email.

Kim: those people went through four zero percent raises. Hard to understand how they were not compressed. That has been in the discussion. We've made it clear that we'll have a lot of explaining to do if they're left out again.

There is no knowing when we will get our annual raise. We are accumulating retro-pay from July or September depending on appointment; when paid, Kim said we don't know. Would like to think they won't get into a situation where they're 4 percent behind.

4. Chapter elections and leadership

Ballots coming out in a few weeks; will be many empty lines on the ballots for elections: President, vice president for professionals, contingent officer, professional delegate to the exec board, are all open. Gerianne as secretary has termed out, so secretary is open. Gerianne is willing to be the professional delegate to exec board but needs to be a write-in. Exec board would like to put together a slate of people who are willing to serve. It takes a minimum of five write-ins to be a viable candidate. Kim urged people to step up, saying those who have never served could become delegates, a good place to start. We can seat 7 academics and 4 professionals at the Delegate Assemblies. But we can have many elected delegates.

5. Pool testing counseling letters

Kim said it is the union's understanding that management pulled back counseling letters for members who did not or missed pool testing. Letters had been sent but we felt they were inappropriate and told management at the last L/M meeting Feb. 17. A counseling letter is not discipline but a step toward contractual discipline. We need to know what they have in mind and what kind of discipline they have in mind. They don't want to discipline anyone over this. They said they would pull the letters, which asked department chairs and supervisors to cut and paste language and then sign them.

Matt Salvatore said he received a survey at beginning. Kim said a set of questions went out for some folks who for some reason showed up for missing a pooled test. HR isn't concerned about it. It was a mistake. Kirsten said there seems to be a ton of confusion for those who teach 100 percent remotely who have been notified that they were missing testing. Kim said he'd check into it.

Shawna said she received counseling letters for two separate events. Counseling letters going to chairs for faculty who missed a test last fall and she's had to navigate that. They're asking her to fill out a form that said this person hadn't done the pool testing and wanted a letter in their file. She said it was in the last couple of weeks; it seems punitive. Sandra Rezak said she was told to put her name on the letter. She said she was bothered by the tone of the letter and being told to put her name on it.

Kim reiterated that this was brought up at the last L/M meeting and we were led to believe they backed off on it. He asked members to let him know if they are being asked to do this.

6. Vaccine issues

Erin spoke to members about the 1B designation for COVID vaccinations. Those teaching in person became eligible for vaccine in February; the union's position is for everyone working in higher education to be made eligible, especially those in enrollment and student success, who come in contact with students daily. UUP statewide president Fred Kowal has asked members to sign a petition in solidarity for those members not included.

7. Kim reported that retirement incentives not on horizon for UUP. The state knows SUNY would love a retirement incentive. May happen, but we have no indication that one is coming. Kim reminded members that if they are looking into phased retirement to talk with HR very closely. Labor relations specialist Kathy Briggs said that if anyone is considering a phased retirement

option, the appointment to the lesser position should be a term appointment, which gives you some notice protection.

8. Other business

Oscar reminded folks if they have any questions about the UUP budget or want a copy to send him an email.

Motion to adjourn was made by Deb Brunner; second by Carol Bleaux at 5:23 p.m.