

UUP New Paltz Chapter Part-Time Labor-Management Meeting Notes

11:00am May 2, 2012

Administration Attendees: Interim Provost Torsney, HR Director Blades, HR Associate Director Papa, Executive Assistant to the Provost Gould

UUP Attendees: Peter Brown, Beth Wilson, Alan Dunefsky, NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist Capowski, Secretary Hanley

Agenda Items

1. Do you have projections for the overall numbers of part-timers and lecturers who will be teaching in Fall 2012? How do these staffing levels compare to 2011-12?

Interim Provost Torsney stated that projections were not yet available as the process of determining what course enrollments look like remains underway. Projections aside, Wilson asked if there was any reason to expect a big fluctuation in the number of part-timers and lecturers teaching in the Fall. Torsney replied that the overall picture seems pretty stable.

2. Regarding “double contingency” language (which held that adjuncts would be subject not only to reaching certain enrollment levels for their own classes, but also that they could be ‘bumped’ in order to make room in case a full-time professor’s course did not fill): previously in labor-management meetings, it was agreed that this language would be removed from future contracts. Could you please confirm that this language does not appear in any Summer or Fall 2012 contracts?

Torsney confirmed that the contract language in question had indeed been removed. Wilson followed up by noting that at least one department now appears to be holding off making course assignments. She asked if this might somehow be related to the removal of the double-contingency language. Torsney opined that this was neither a matter of policy nor necessarily an isolated incident. She ventured that departments may be proceeding more cautiously with respect to course assignments because that particular contract language *has* been removed. She also speculated that departments with more stable enrollments have probably proceeded normally and sent out Appointment Request Forms (ARF) already. Other departments may be taking a “wait and see” attitude. Wilson then asked if there would be any overall deadline for making decisions re: course assignments. Torsney stated that deadlines would likely vary by department. Brown observed that, if tenure track faculty members courses do not fill up, it is not necessary to give them courses that would have been assigned to adjuncts as there are alternatives for tenure track faculty; advising for example. Per Torsney, such decisions would vary by department; there would be no directive on the matter from the Provost’s office.

3. Could you provide a count of the total number of adjuncts who have submitted DSI applications for 2011? We would like to know the level of response that has

resulted from the extended deadline, and from the workshop that we organized to encourage greater participation.

According to Torsney, twenty-nine applications had been submitted. Brown asked how that compared with the number of applications from tenure track faculty. Torsney pointed out that, having not been asked for that information ahead of time, she did not have those figures immediately available. LRS Capowski asked if there was anything the union could do to help increase the number of applicants. Brown noted that increasing the amount of money available for the awards would help. Wilson then asked the current status of the DSI applications. Per Torsney, the applications were at the Provost's office awaiting review. She would try to review them before stepping down as Interim Provost in order to give some feedback to the incoming Provost. However, if she (Torsney) had already left office, the new Provost would handle the process on his own.

At this point, Capowski asked to follow up on agenda item 2 above to further clarify the situation regarding course assignments. Specifically, had appointment letters simply not yet been issued or had they had been issued without courses assignments reflected? He ventured that the latter might suggest an intention to assign under-enrolled courses to adjuncts as those courses were identified. Torsney stated there was no such intent as assigning adjuncts courses they were not familiar with would affect the quality of instruction in the event the courses filled and were taught as scheduled.

4. Concerning adjunct per-course pay rates: is there any possibility of increasing the base, incoming rate to reflect increased cost of living, especially the cost of fuel (essential for adjuncts, many of whom commute from some distance away)? Even while UUP and the State are conducting negotiations for a new contract, there is no impediment for the New Paltz administration to increase the per-course rate. We do not know how long the current statewide negotiations may go on, and in the meantime many adjuncts are having a harder and harder time making ends meet. It would be a gesture of goodwill if the Administration could recognize the value of their service, and ameliorate at least part of the cost of having these faculty members simply get to work.

Wilson opened the discussion by pointing out that, given local economic conditions in general and fuel prices in particular, even a minor increase in the per-course pay rate would be most welcome. Torsney stated that the question of adjunct compensation had already been answered in a previous (full time) Labor-Management meeting. Per Torsney, it is the administration's position that adjunct compensation is an issue that needs to be addressed in the ongoing contract negotiations between UUP and New York State. HR Director Blades concurred, pointing out that until the contract was settled the administration would not consider the issue locally. Wilson noted that, even if the issue is successfully addressed in negotiations, there was nothing to prevent the administration from unilaterally going "over and above" anything that might eventually be stipulated in a new contract. This was confirmed by Capowski. Torsney observed that New Paltz is in the upper end of the pay spectrum already. Wilson suggested that, rather than reflecting how well adjuncts are paid here at New Paltz, this simply reflects how poorly they are

paid elsewhere. As the discussion ended, Torsney acknowledged the various good points made by the union but reiterated that the issue had already been addressed and was not open for further consideration at this time.

The meeting adjourned at 11:42am.

Respectfully submitted,

Ed Hanley
Chapter Secretary