



# Alfred UUP News

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## Academics' Workload Survey

Statewide UUP has made available an Academics' Workload Survey to UUP chapters and it has been deployed at Alfred. Comments from the survey appear on pages 2 through 7 of this newsletter. Because of comments made when the survey appeared and comments made in response to a question on the survey about the UUP chapter, it is appropriate to provide a brief explanation of what UUP can and can't do.

- UUP is prohibited from striking or advocating stay-aways. The Taylor Law (the Public Employees Fair Employment Act) makes such actions illegal for public service employees in New York State. Work stoppages on the part of public service employees are made punishable with fines and jail time.
- The Taylor Law established the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) as an agency providing mediation and binding arbitration. UUP has filed class-action grievances and improper practice charges with the PERB concerning the non-payment of contractual salary increases and other contractual issues related to the New York State budget issues related to the pandemic.
- UUP members at Alfred and other SUNY campuses have engaged in demonstrations. As the UUP website reports, "UUP uses public demonstrations and publicity when contract negotiations stall. UUP also uses these measures to make members of the state Legislature, SUNY management, and the general public aware of issues of concern to it, particularly cuts in the portion of the state budget allocated to SUNY." The photo below was taken in front of the Huntington Administration Building in the the late 1990s during a demonstration at Alfred State asking New York to continue contract negotiations. The efficacy of demonstrations with few participants, though meaningful, is open to question. Those interested in participating in such actions may contact Joe Petrick.
- Some survey respondents commented on a confidence vote. Such votes, such as the one taken in August 2020 by SUNY University Faculty Senate, the SUNY Faculty Council of Community Colleges, and the SUNY Student Assembly against the SUNY Board of Trustees because of the appointment of Jim Malatras as SUNY Chancellor, demonstrated dissatisfaction with the appointment and lack of process under which it was made. It did not however result in any action on the part of the  
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## Academics' Workload Survey Comments

A new survey was constructed by UUP Academics to gather information on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on workload, working conditions, and other aspects of Academics' professional lives and work-life balance. The survey is intended for all UUP Academics, both part-time and full-time, contingent and non-contingent. It takes 20-30 minutes to complete, depending on the level of detail you choose to provide. The intent is for our chapter to use the survey to increase awareness and educate ourselves about ways to address workload problems, identify pressing issues that need attention, and develop initiatives for campus level change. If you have questions about the survey or are an academic needing the link to the survey, please contact Joe Petrick at [petricja@alfredstate.edu](mailto:petricja@alfredstate.edu).

What follows are comments about early response comments about workload. Comments that provide information about the author (department, accommodation requests, etc.) have been redacted. Comments on UUP are included. Responses not specific to workload (i.e. COVID testing, technology issues, etc.) have been omitted and will be reported later. Edits have been made to the comments below. The Alfred Chapter of UUP will continue reporting on the Academics' Workload Survey, as well as the survey that had been conducted of professional staff in fall 2020.

### **Q3 Did you have a choice of teaching modality (online, hybrid, in- person)**

Teaching online requires literally a separate planning/prep in addition to planning for in-person classes.

The way that Alfred State handled the COVID pandemic is shameful. The way faculty was treated was outright disgusting. It's no surprise that there has been significant faculty turnover since COVID, because the administration has treated faculty like useless garbage. We should know that it's nearly impossible to attract and retain qualified faculty to teach at Alfred State College, that makes the administration's maltreatment of the faculty more abominable.

With limited time in person, the extra time is supposed to be done remotely but from campus. Working remotely from home was denied for the extra time.

It was my understanding that we were to be in person - period. I would have preferred a hybrid option.

Teach in person but was told they would not be making accommodations for Spring which turned out not to be true since others are still teaching remotely.

We were given no choice unless we could prove we had a comorbidity tantamount to being bitten by a shark, being struck by lightning, and learning fluent Phoenician in one day. The safety of our families was never considered in how we were treated. From March until the summer, this put many of us in the position of not having any contact with at risk family members.

### **Q6 Do you think workload has generally increased on your campus over the last few years? If so, please identify what you think are contributing factors.**

Assessment expectations have increased workloads recruiting expectations have increased workloads.

Adjuncts carry much of the load at ASC and receive little or no training on any technology. The Hovercam is a beast to use with unclear instructions taped to some stations. Without training, it is impossible to troubleshoot. Some of my colleagues have gotten 'some' training, and they are having difficulties. The HELP Desk is nearly useless.

Learning all the different software for advising and for teaching students when quarantined. Students cheating when doing remote testing.

Even after bringing all of what is happening here to the attention of SUNY Central Administration by passing on a vote of no confidence in this place from the ASC Faculty Senate, there has only been the sound of crickets coming from anyone above us.

We have had a colleague on medical leave so we have had to teach those classes in the midst of having 1 less faculty member.

Alfred State College is an institution of higher education, but it became clear that the administration was completely out of their league when COVID developed. Instead of rallying the faculty and pulling together, the administration actively worked to repress and divide the faculty.

Rewriting lessons and restructuring classes to serve quarantined students and to teach remotely when needed. I prefer to teach in person, especially labs.

My area of expertise does not lend itself to remote teaching/learning. Hands-on and in-person labs are necessary to meet program learning outcomes.

#### **Q7 Please provide details about how your own workload has changed**

Obviously COVID-19 impacted workload the most: all my previously-developed activities and labs had to be overhauled to be adapted to online courses last Spring 2020. I have also had an increase in workload adapting teaching strategies in Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 since my teaching had previously relied on a lot of student interaction and group work. However, I do not feel that these items are much outside what I would expect to have to do. My main job is teaching and so having to redevelop teaching materials is expected and natural. However, extra expectations regarding assessment and recruitment over the last few years I feel more acutely since these are not necessarily my areas of expertise. I also feel like the way these issues are handled cause some of the stress. For example, a department with a low enrollment program is made to feel responsible for that low enrollment and pressured to recruit or possibly suffer the consequences of the program being dissolved. I find this to be an unfair expectation for faculty. My job is to teach the most amazing classes, advise students and keep degree programs in my field current. I do not feel qualified to recruit.

Changing to remote learning after spring break last year meant learning a lot about Blackboard very quickly. My biggest increase in stress and workload this semester is related to the forced synchronous hours in the late afternoon and evening because of the DOH requirement that students not be in the classroom for more than 55 minutes. We were not asked how we would like to make up the missing contact hours; we were not consulted about what days or times these required sessions were scheduled, and we were not given any guidance or support when we expressed concerns about using our own internet connections, which in my case are not up to the task. This means that on Thursdays, I arrive on campus between 7:00 and 8:00 in the morning and do not leave until 7:00 at night. It's a really long day. The students are not happy about meeting once a week at 5:00 or 6:00 in the evening, and many of them choose not to come to these sessions. When they do come, we often experience connectivity issues. I have tried to show the same movie four times in four different ways with no success. The students do not turn on their microphones or cameras, so I'm literally talking to myself for 52 minutes. I think well-planned, asynchronous activities would be a better solution to the problem - for me and the students. I have advocated for additional faculty lines in my department as chair for several years. Requests were consistently denied even though data showed the need and all faculty in my department are working extra service classes every semester. The awarding of new faculty lines seems arbitrary and based on anecdotal information rather than hard data.

Since teaching remotely, the school administration has micromanaged our time and not treated us faculty like the professionals we are. They have made demands to our time and increased our workloads, falsely claiming that we are less likely to be motivated to put in time to do our jobs while working remotely. In fact, I have found that I am putting much more time in since teaching remotely than I was when teaching in person. I work literally from 8am to 12am or longer each day, and I often put in 8 hours or more on weekends grading, prepping, researching, and responding to student inquiries and emails, and even holding Teams meetings to help/tutor students. I am very conscientious of my time and thus I strive to make sure that I am putting in plenty of time while working remotely from home. I have found that I am working 70-80 hours per week for these past two semesters while working remotely. The school can be assured that it is getting MUCH MORE than its money's worth with the number of hours I am clocking during my 7-day work weeks. I find that I have far LESS time for personal activities and sleep since working remotely due to the constant pressures from the school. (continued next page)

The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of United University Professions or the Alfred Chapter of UUP

Our department was lacking enough full-time faculty to cover all the required courses prior to the pandemic. Repeated requests for additional help were denied by campus administration.

Now with the hiring freeze we are at least 2 or 3 full time faculty positions short of covering classes. We CAN-NOT rely on adjuncts or part-time faculty to cover many of these classes due to program Accrediting body requirements. Administration at this campus favors some department request for additional faculty over others seemingly without data.

Adjuncts could now be temporary lecturers; however, ASC prefers to penny-pinch and restrict assignments to 3 courses and frowns upon an adjunct teaching for more than one department which could offer an adjunct 3 or 4 classes. In fact, the Dean actively lobbies against the practice. We work hard and give all of brains and expertise to our teaching assignments - not a percentage. I feel the administration is biased against us and doesn't appreciate us.

It has been too much for me to handle and I'm thinking that maybe academia isn't for me. I work all day, go home and work all night, and then more is put on us. It's suffocating.

The split classes resulting from the 55-minute, in-person lecture rule have increased my planning efforts and extended my time on campus on teaching days.

I have been continually asked to do more with less - less supplies and less support. I have been asked to flip to all virtual classes (including labs) literally overnight due to quarantines that could have been prevented by less insistence on in-person classes when not necessary. The quality of students' educational experiences has been lessened due to poor planning on administration's part. There are times when I'm expected to be on campus to sit in my office for virtual meetings, never having in-person interactions all day (unless I see someone in the bathroom). This makes no practical sense to me. A lot of lip service is paid to how we are handling the stress of the pandemic, with no actual support given.

The instruction has remained unchanged, but the hours I spend dealing with tedium given by senior administration is exhausting. Most of the time their communication is inept and unprepared; and yet, they expect all of us to be prepared to teach everyday with accuracy and precision.

We have had members of the department retire or change positions to other departments, and their positions have not been refilled. Many remaining faculty in our department consistently work an overloaded schedule. I have 4 preps of 5 classes. Four of those classes are back to back. It is a struggle to take care of personal needs throughout the day and it sometimes affects my health. COVID has put a great demand on the availability and flexibility of attendance/missing class. This has been great for some but is turning into a crutch for many students to not get out of bed. Streaming and recording lessons, monitoring make-up lessons and keeping track of excused vs. unexcused absences takes extra time that I sometimes do not have. I also am trouble shooting/emailing students in the evenings because of technical or personal issues they are facing due to our new situation. Also, because I am working towards continuing appointment, I am involved in 7 committees, three of these were developed due to the new types of needs on campus because of COVID and the others were needed to work myself towards tenure. I struggle to find time in my 35-hour work week to complete my tasks to be a good teacher and member of campus community, many items need to be taken home and this affects my home-life with my family and small children. I love my job, this campus and teaching. I just feel stretched thin every day to the point where I know I simply am not able to perform to the level I know I can for the best interests of my students- they get the best I can do right now.

Due to cuts in faculty and ISA quarantine is an issue no one to fill in so other faculty have to pick up the extra teaching loads. Labs are the toughest to cover.

Online classes used to be capped at 20 and now are capped at 25 which adds more workload. The requirements for social distancing have demanded smaller face to face classes and split of classes to lessen time spent confined in classroom to less than 55 minutes which has doubled workload.

I am teaching a lot more, but I love it. I am getting to teach classes that I might have not otherwise been given due to a colleague's medical leave.

Requiring courses taught two days a week to make up some time during a specific online time is deplorable. It is outside of normal working hours, inconvenient for students who have part time employment, and unnecessary. Valid instruction can be offered online at the convenience of everyone.

The workload is not equal to the pay. The workload and expectations continue to increase as well as the demand to be flexible to meet our students' needs. We have jumped through every hoop and obstacle to ensure our student's success. This means providing them with numerous opportunities, new activities, new platforms, and any original idea that can bring a hands-on curriculum to life. Often, this is now expected to be available both for in person as well as remotely to accommodate students. The issue with this is the fact that it requires a lot of additional time to prep while trying to maintain our normal duties as well as additional duties added due to our workload. I believe the combination of these issues as well as lack of support is going to burn out educators very quickly.

I have truly never felt more stressed, overworked, and unwell at any point in my life or career at Alfred State College until now. It is truly that abhorrent.

We have a shortage of faculty (overall, but specifically ten track faculty) in our dept. I'm new (fall 2020) but was given 20 advisees a few months after starting, even though I was told I wouldn't have to advise in my first year. There is more work online (meetings, office hours, etc) which is very draining. Work feels more difficult and more stressful because I am forced to work in person or risk getting in trouble. I feel that I wasn't afforded the help and time that I needed to adjust as a new ten track faculty, which has been incredibly difficult.

Faculty on our campus were not given the option to teaching remotely online. Only a few of us were given permission to teach remotely and only because we had health/medical accommodations. Also, we were not given the option to teach asynchronous - we all were required to teach synchronously using poorly coordinated and often not working Hovercams - having students required to sit in a classroom on campus all fall semester with their professor teaching remotely coming in via technology that worked at times and other times did not. Our campus responded very poorly from an academic standpoint to learning and teaching - we forced students and faculty to teach and learn in ways that were not agreed upon, put much unneeded stress on faculty and students - all so that the campus administration could brag that they had students in classrooms in seats when they did not want to be there and faculty could have taught in much more appropriate and technology-based approaches that worked for faculty and staff - total disregard for faculty and student needs and desires.

Having students in quarantine has increased my workload slightly, ensuring they can access the PowerPoints and recorded sessions. Another increase in workload is having to go over class material with students who were taken out of class for COVID testing, so basically giving the same class several times.

Due to restrictions in the amount of time we can teach face-to-face, I now must teach online (synchronous) two evenings a week. I did not have a choice. After driving to campus (two hours round trip), teaching my classes, advising, committee work, this is exhausting. Some of my students are not available due to work etc. I requested to cover these hours asynchronously and was denied. This additional workload is not affecting all faculty, only those of us who teach Tuesday/Thursday.

The mandatory in-person instruction, coupled with virtual accommodations for students in quarantine, effectively means that faculty who want to include ALL students need to redesign all courses for hybrid learning. This may work for lecture classes but is not at all effective for discussion-based or workshop instruction. Faculty were not given a choice of modalities to draw on discipline-specific pedagogical research. Frankly, live video-streaming classes are ineffective and almost have no precedent or associated best practices, especially in a region plagued by the digital divide.

Rewriting lessons and restructuring classes to serve quarantined students and to teach remotely when required. Far more book-keeping related to attendance and quarantined students. Dealing with fully online students and fully on campus students in the same class. Keeping students compliant about face mask usage is an additional stress.

5/5 demand has been in place before COVID, but now demands for remote learning in evening to make-up lost class time. No compensation or consideration of off time provided to faculty.

We had a worker leave recently and the administration just took all those students and (continued next page)

divided them between the rest of us. We were not given a chance to have a say, we were not given a UP8 to give us compensation. we were just told to deal with it and get it done. The lack of respect is unparalleled within the administration towards the faculty.

Class times have been split from 2 days a week to 3 days a week with an online section. Class times are now later than they ever have been before; I'm often not getting home until 6:30 or 7.

I have rewritten all my courses to accommodate a new teaching modality that is more appropriate for this environment.

It is much more work to teach remotely and work with students on projects, writing, et cetera. Some of the do not have internet, or spotty service. My own home internet is not 100% reliable.

Equipment is unreliable on campus. The HELP Desk is often unresponsive or doesn't respond in time to assist in the classroom. There are classrooms in the Agricultural building that do not have wifi.

Under COVID conditions teaching remotely is severely limited. Exercises I do in class cannot be done due to social distancing. Because students are in class and not online, I cannot use breakout sessions for group discussion. When I try to interact during a question/answer period, I cannot hear the students, because of masks and distance from the front of the room. The camera does not show all the students. The delivery of instruction is limited to lecture for the most part.

The only problems I've had with teaching remotely was the administration's unwillingness to allow it to happen without a fight. Having to teach remotely myself to students forced to sit in a classroom and stare at a Hovercam screen was ridiculous. Now that my students are remote WITH me, my classes are exceptionally productive and effective-- dare I say, they may even be better than in-person classes pre-COVID. I have absolutely no difficulties getting my students to engage with the material and each other online.

This administration has demanded that all faculty and students return to campus with no real and safe plan to have everyone to return to campus. Furthermore, what little and haphazard plan the administration did have involved very few (perhaps 5) of the 400 faculty in the planning process. Communication was sparse, delayed, and questions by faculty were discouraged and harshly dealt with (we were basically told not to "question authority"). The administration has decided to be the sole decider (through the HR department) as to the validity of trusted licensed medical professionals regarding the health concerns of faculty, staff, and students. This administration has engaged in retaliation towards those of us who spoke out about and questioned the reopening plans for Fall2020. Indeed many of us made a "vote of no confidence" in this administration last August, and now many of us (particularly un-tenured professors, such as myself) have been retaliated against by being denied or harshly pushed back against in our requests (backed by the sound science of our licensed medical professionals) to teach remotely due to serious medical concerns. It is likely that many of us un-tenured professors will be denied tenure due to this.

**Q50 Please provide suggestions to UUP. What issues & concerns should UUP be engaged in addressing?**

A UUP meeting suggested they were going to do something about faculty being scheduled for night classes, nothing ever happened. Faculty are forced to teach night classes and are not compensated for teaching outside of normal hours.

I wish UUP would fully and thoroughly address the many things this campus's administration has done wrong and how they have retaliated against faculty who have spoken up about the often ridiculous and simple, and dangerous reopening plans. UUP should also be investigating every campus's reopening plans going forward and providing far more input into those plans. Faculty and staff should be ENCOURAGED to question authority and raise concerns, and not be treated as if they are "troublemakers" and outcast for raising those questions and concerns.

The whole mishandling of this. The lying, the non-transparency, the bullying of faculty, mistreatment of students, etc... The administration has done everything they can to make everyone's life miserable this year and caused numerous people, including myself, to catch Covid and pass it on to their families and put others at risk.

Be more active in addressing faculty concerns. The union is stagnant and many faculty are displeased with cam-

pus leadership and statewide. I am aware of quite a few faculty who are looking to withdraw their union membership due to the fact that nothing ever gets done.

Hold senior administration accountable for violence committed against their faculty, staff, and students.

Helping the faculty when the administration is acting out of their bounds. I know of good faculty members who were forced out of employment at the beginning of this year because they requested to have two out of their five classes to be online. They were railroaded out and the union didn't help a bit. That was very discouraging.

I feel like my union doesn't really matter on campus. Often told that we basically must deal with what administration wants and that we can't really do much about it. I always wonder if paying my dues is worth it, though the insurance is great to have.

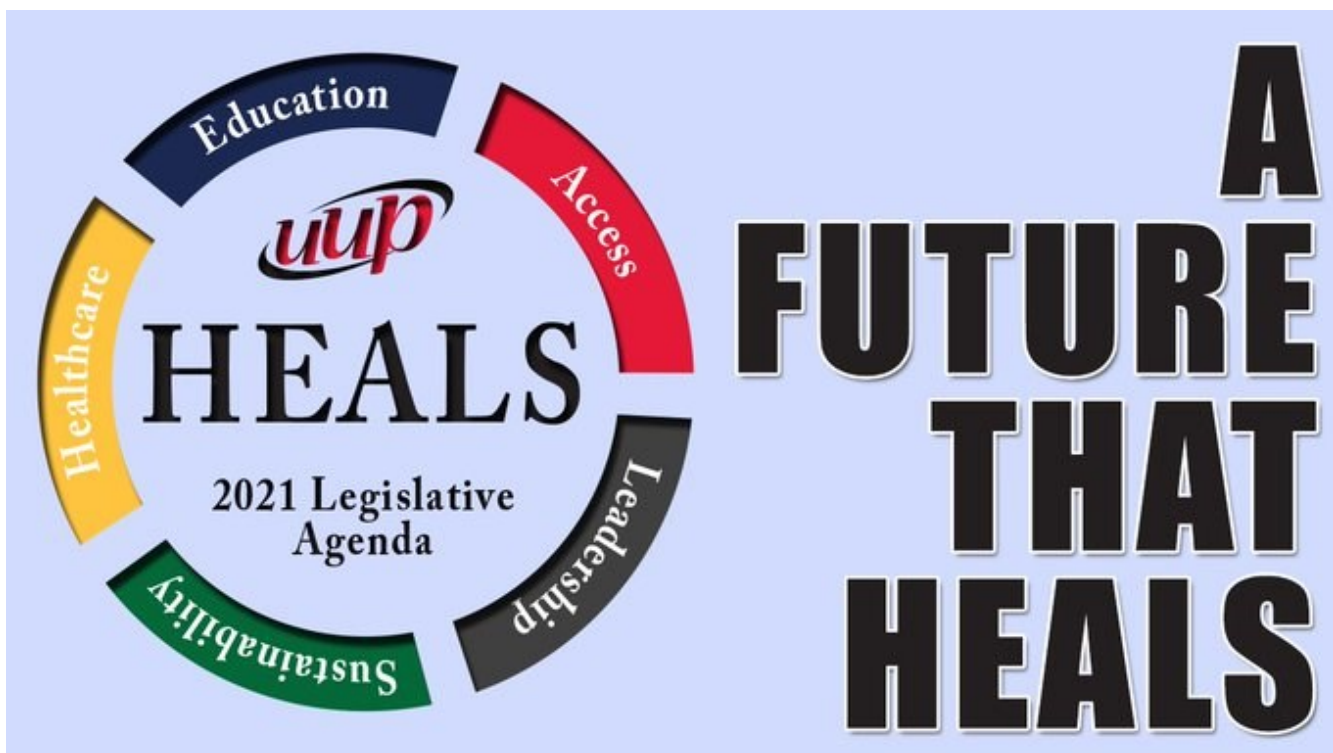
Actively fight for the rights of faculty and faculty governance on this campus.

(continued from page 1)

SUNY Board of Trustees or Governor Cuomo.

- The current contract expires in June of 2022 and UUP will negotiate on behalf of all bargaining unit members. Before every contract negotiation members at all chapters are asked for input on the contract. Some input (for example conditions of buildings and infrastructure) are not directly related to the contract and are dealt with in labor-management meetings. The contract establishes minimum salaries for academic ranks and professional salary levels, some benefits, and job protection guarantees.
- UUP advocates for SUNY at the state and federal levels. Currently it is involved in a letter campaign to Congress and is advocating for revenue raisers so that the SUNY System can continue operating during the pandemic. The current legislative agenda is available at <https://uupinfo.org/legislation/pdf/UUP21StateLegAgenda.pdf>. Anyone interested in these efforts is welcome to reach out to the chapter.

We appreciate the concern expressed in the comments to the last question of the survey. If you are interested in discussing your perceptions about the Alfred Chapter of UUP we would be glad to talk with you. Even better, if you are interested in participating with the union please let us know. We'd much like to hear from you!



Chapter Officers		
Joseph Petrick	Chapter President	587-4311
Elaine Burns	Chapter Assistant	587-4186
William Schultze	VP for Professionals	587-4033
Linda Panter	VP for Academics	
James Buell	Treasurer	
Jennifer Guthrie	Membership Development Officer	
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Earl Packard	Delegate	
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Jamie Guilian	Labor Relations Specialist	

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Alfred UUP Chapter Office  
EJ Brown Hall  
Alfred State College  
Alfred, NY 14802

