



The Cortland Cause

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From the President

The Big Lie

Due to a request received pursuant to the Freedom of Information Law (Article Six of the New York State Public Officers Law) by the United University Professions (UUP) and anticipated further FOIL requests, the Department is obligated to make the certification exam pass rate data and candidate placement rate data publicly available now. (John D’Agati, Deputy Commissioner, Office of Higher Education, 11/18/2014, Memo to the Field)

As promised by John D’Agati in his memo, the following morning teacher certification test scores and placement data for each campus were available on the New York State Education Department’s website.

The information in the Memo to the Field is incorrect, however, and the record must be set straight. The reasons for SED to publicly release campus data were *not* the result of a FOIL request from the United University Professions (UUP). At no time did UUP file a FOIL request seeking the public release of data connected to edTPA or placement data

for individual schools. Plus, FOIL requests do not require release of data to the general public. According to a UUP press release (11/20/2014), UUP did file a FOIL request on July 30, 2014, for data as part of its participation in SED’s edTPA Task Force. This Task Force was established by SED at the direction of the Board of Regents to review and refine the edTPA. UUP only filed its FOIL request after SED refused to release information regarding edTPA score results to its own task force.

In addition to scores from all of the SED teacher certification exams, SED released data on the number of teacher education graduates employed in public schools in New York. However, UUP *never* requested placement data from SED (UUP Press release, 11/20/ 2014). Because SED’s placement data are so flawed, it is surprising SED would make it available on any basis to anyone. SED’s placement data are only based on how many of an institution’s graduates are teaching in New York public schools. Private schools, parochial schools, and out of state schools are not included. Graduates working in education related jobs that are

William Buxton, President Literacy



not teaching jobs are not included. So graduates who are directing a private child care center or are working for a software company producing educational programs are not counted in the SED data. The claim that SED is “obligated to make the certification exam pass rate data and candidate placement rate data publicly available now” (D’Agati, 11/18/2014) is simply false.

If UUP is not interested in the individual scores of specific campus programs, what sort of information is UUP seeking? UUP is interested in looking at collated data across the state in a variety of forms. Are there differences between the scores from the different edTPA handbooks for specific certifications? Are there differences in scores based on socio-economic or racial backgrounds? Are there differences in scores for students taking the edTPA in urban and rural schools? UUP is interested in how these scores accumulate across the entire state.

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The Big Lie continued

There are critical questions from test data that need to be asked and answered. We know from existing data that large differences exist between “white” and “non-white” (SED terms) test-takers for the ALST, EAS, and Content Specialty tests. Are there high correlations between the four required certification tests? If so, it would indicate they are measuring similar skills and represent double jeopardy for students seeking teacher certification. Supporters of edTPA claim it is necessary as a test of the practice of teaching, not book knowledge of teaching. However, testimony that is emerging from those who took and passed the edTPA indicates that it is primarily a writing examination, not an examination of teaching skills. These concerns question the validity and reliability of the edTPA; they should be examined by SED’s own task force before the scores are released to the public.

As UUP President Fred Kowal said, “Presenting this college-specific data publicly and implying it as being conclusive is misleading. This is a wrongheaded, and in the end, a destructive depiction of the high quality of our teaching programs” (UUP Press Release, 11/20/14).

It is time for SUNY to join with UUP in fighting the continual attacks on teacher education programs in New York. It is distressing that in the past two years, the voices of the SUNY Chancellor, SUNY Presidents, Provosts, and Deans have been silent in the face of unrelenting attacks on their teacher education programs. I seldom use this forum as chapter president to publicly urge individuals to action. Because of the gravity of the situation, I am making an exception this time. I ask our local administrators from the President to Provost, Deans and the Associate Deans, to stand with UUP in speaking out against this latest attack on teacher education by the State Education Department.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

**Athena Vunk-Moynihan,
Registrar’s Office**

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP Program) is a confidential service to help all state employees, their families, and retirees. This peer assistance program is jointly sponsored by labor and management.

The EAP Committee here at SUNY Cortland consists of eleven members from all areas of the college. There are two members from CSEA, five members from UUP, two members from M/C, one member from PEF, and one ASC representative who does not belong to a union. Our EAP Coordinators are two members of CSEA.

The purpose of the EAP Committee is to promote and ensure the EAP Program’s continued usefulness to employees, their families, and their employer. The EAP Committee uses grant money to purchase promotional items for distribution, sponsor two food drives for local charities, support the college’s wellness program, sponsor informational seminars for the campus, support the PAWS for Stress program, the Tobacco Clean Up program, and to design and implement the weigh in Wednesdays program that continues to be well received as it continues to grow. The Committee also supervises the Coordinators, who provide a confidential assess and refer consultation with an employee who may be in need. The coordinators report back to the committee regarding the needs of the program based on issues that arise.

In order to be sure the entire program and our promotional events are going to benefit faculty, we have been seeking a faculty member who would be willing to serve on the committee. Please contact Athena Vunk-Moynihan if you are interested in joining the EAP Committee at Athena.vunk@cortland.edu. The EAP link for further information is <http://www2.cortland.edu/offices/eap/>.

Karla Alwes,
Editor



From the Editor

Correction: In the last issue of *The Cortland Cause*, political science major Catherine Faughnan was incorrectly identified as a history major. The newsletter apologizes for the error.---editor

On Wednesday, October 22nd, the Cortland Chapter of UUP, under the leadership of Jaclyn Pittsley, UUP Officer of Contingents, held an awards luncheon for the contingent faculty of SUNY Cortland. It was an impressive afternoon, and the speakers included non tenure-track faculty from different disciplines on campus. The speakers, some of whom have allowed the newsletter to publish their remarks, were faculty who have been at SUNY Cortland for numerous years, as well as those who are relatively new to the campus.

There is at least irony involved in such a ceremony that recognizes the dedication of the large percentage of part-time and other contingent faculty at SUNY Cortland. All that each faculty member is, and all that each has to offer to the profession, play a compelling part in both the dedication and the irony that surrounds it.

Dedication: As the reader will see, from the presentations published below, the speakers at the ceremony are colleagues who have provided much to the collegiality of the campus, as well as to our students and to the arena of academic and union excellence. Irony: The widely-recognized elephant in the classroom, on this campus as well as others, is the fact that contingent faculty continue to typically teach more classes than tenure-track faculty do, often at different institutions, and receive less money for doing so. At all institutions.

The dedication of the best educators is long-suffering, but the educators themselves should never suffer in a profession that is dedicated to the beauty of teaching and learning ways to help alleviate human suffering.

The speakers at the UUP event were: Gregg Weatherby; Sally Dear-Healey; Violette Humsi; Bill Lee; Charles DeMotte. The presentations of Weatherby, Dear-Healey, and Humsi are published below:

**Violette Humsi,
Modern Languages**

This is really not a speech per se and I will try to make it short.

I am here to simply express my gratitude for this event, for all you do and for being acknowledged here for what I do and what in fact I enjoy. I love my job and I enjoy my students and the people I work with have been extremely kind and helpful.

In a way, this job landed itself in my lap when the people in my department (MDL) found my name on the Syracuse University website. I was called, interviewed and I got the job. I then wondered what I was getting myself into, driving from Syracuse to Cortland back and forth three times a week. I doubted my decision but the money was the attraction. It wasn't a lot of money but let's face it, I love money!

Time went by and I met the most wonderful group of colleagues in my department. Everyone is friendly, helpful and they go out of their way to share all sort of material and helpful resources. At different times, someone's always trying to host gatherings for the entire department staff like Tim (Gerhard) did just a year ago. Except for the two bad snowy days last year, I never complained about the drive; in fact to this day I sometimes stop to admire the view and take a picture or two.

What I want to say once again is that I'm grateful for this job, for this opportunity, for being here today.

Thank you all.

**Gregg Weatherby,
English**

Thank you. It is an honor to be asked to speak at this, the Third Annual Part-Time Service Award banquet.

My first reaction on getting this invitation and being told I was being honored as a part-time employee was that there must be some mistake. You see, I am not actually a part-timer. I teach a maximum course load here at SUNY Cortland of 3 and 3; some full-time tenure track faculty teach a course load of 3 and 2. If I teach more sections than a full-time faculty member, by what strange calculus should I be considered part time? Maybe it's some kind of new quantum mechanics, but that doesn't make any sense to me. So, you see, I am not a part-timer. In fact, I am more than incredulous that I am considered by anyone to be a part-timer. This year I will teach at two institutions a total of 15 sections—all composition. Fifteen sections. That's three times the course load of some full-time faculty, and nearly twice the course load of a full-time lecturer here at SUNY Cortland. I am not a part-timer.

And even though I teach a course load of two to three times what a full-time faculty member carries, I am paid less than half per course than a FT lecturer, and far, far below the UUP member median salary of \$70,000. In fact, in order to make the equivalent of a Full-time lecturer's salary (who teaches 4 and 4—or 8 sections a year), I have to teach 14 to 15 sections a year—nearly twice as many sections. That's 6 in the fall, six in the spring, and two in the summer, and I still won't make \$40,000 a year.

Last year I earned so little that I was eligible for food stamps.

What logic is there in this situation? How can it possibly be justified? What happened to the college's commitment to equality? That commitment to equality should include equal pay for equal work.

We have an income inequality issue right here on campus. We have a poverty issue right here on campus.

What message are we sending our students about the value of education? What message are we sending the society at large? What message are we sending to our adjuncts?

I predict that this issue will soon become a factor which college students and their parents will consider when choosing a college. Would you want to send your child to an institution that pays its instructors so little that they need to be on public assistance? It has even been suggested that the accrediting bodies should consider the issue of adjuncts and adjunct pay. Does it really need to come to that before the college and SUNY decide to do what is clearly the right thing?

I am not a part-timer. And I am not alone. I am a member of a group of itinerant professionals, who must cobble together full-time employment, every semester, however we can. "Cobble" is a better word than "beg," but that is also what we sometimes have to do.

We are not part-timers. We are the migrant workers of academe. We are the working poor, right here on campus. And like the rest of the working poor, we often go from crisis to crisis. If the car needs repair, it's a crisis. An illness? A crisis. High winter heat bills? A crisis. Low enrollment or reduction in course load—a crisis. And like other migrant workers, we are vulnerable and exploited; grossly underpaid for the services that we perform. We are often isolated professionally. We are often treated as inferiors, and often do not even get the support services that we need to do our jobs. We are victims of a two-tier system that has no logic. A two-tier system so ingrained that it is taken for granted not only by the college and many of our colleagues, but by the union as well.

Let me tell you a story to illustrate my point:

Every semester, year after year, I have needed to contact IT about my office computer, a tool, I think we can all agree, is vital to the performance of our work. The equipment I am issued seems to need replacing every semester. At the beginning of this semester, my computer did not work at all.

Fed up after semester after semester of this, I asked the IT person why it was that I kept getting crap for a computer? Was it because I was an adjunct? The answer, astoundingly, was YES. It is even in writing. It is policy, that part timers are given “trickle down technology” “that does not carry a manufacturer’s warranty,” and “the campus technology services does not guarantee it.” “The equipment may or may not support new or upgraded software applications.” “Reassigned technology is older technology that has been heavily used...it is likely to have operating problems and failures, will be slower than new technology.” I finally got an older Mac to use. And IT has spent hours working on it over several different days on several different occasions—all times when I could not use the computer in my office and had to fight for computer time in the English dept. office. I still can’t download my class lists.

“Trickle down” indeed. More like trickled on.

This is a policy that is in writing in a document from our IT department entitled “Reassigned Technology Equipment Policy.” How is this allowed to happen? Don’t our adjuncts deserve better? Don’t our students?

The running title of this luncheon is Union Matters. So don’t get me wrong, I am a strong union supporter. I am among a group of colleagues at TC3 attempting to organize a union there. Unions have traditionally been the advocates for the marginalized, the exploited, the most vulnerable. But what I realized is that, although we already have a union here at Cortland, it hasn’t resolved some very major issues that have existed for a very long time. Adjuncts have not had a significant raise in base salary in the years that I have been here. (McDonalds and Walmart give raises more frequently.) We are grossly underpaid. We are the working poor. And we are not part-timers.

Many of us feel that the union doesn’t represent us, even though we make up over 30% of the membership. I am a cancer survivor, and one of the concepts that cancer disabuses you of is the idea that there is lots of time. We, as a union, need to address the inequities in salary NOW. I consider this a moral imperative. We need to stop being complicit in this exploitive two-tiered system. Adjuncts need to be more adequately represented in the governance of the union. We especially need peer representation consistent with our numbers—and-- this is vitally important-- on the negotiating teams. Because that’s where the rubber meets the road.

We need to move more people into FTL positions, and we need to bring adjunct pay into parity with what the FTLs are paid per course. We need to do this now.

I believe that numbers make us strong, but to marginalize 30% of the membership is simply wrong. It is unethical. Please consider what I have said today. Most of this is not new. What is new, is a growing movement among adjuncts. We will not be marginalized. We will not be underpaid. We will not be disrespected. The union needs to take concrete action, NOW. Not just with more buttons, or posters, or eloquently written statements—but with courage, and most importantly with action.

It is no longer acceptable for the UUP to be a two-tiered union.

It is not acceptable for a union, to which I pay dues, to support this unjust two-tiered system that exploits and marginalizes thirty percent of its members. Members who are highly competent professionals. Members who are often highly respected in their fields. Members who write, publish, advocate. Members who do field work and actively participate in the life of the college. Members who work harder, longer hours than many so-called full-timers. We are not part-timers, and we deserve a professional, equitable, and livable wage.

It is not sufficient for the union to just support the highest earners and the status quo. If it continues to do so, the tide of unrest will turn into a new movement. If the UUP cannot resolve this issue, if it is not willing to fight whatever battles are necessary to secure equitable pay for adjuncts, perhaps adjuncts need a union of their own. The issue has already been raised on other campuses. Without solidarity, this may happen. Treat us as professionals. Treat us as equals. Treat us as union brothers and sisters.

We are not part-timers.

Thank you.

Sally Dear-Healey, Visiting
Assistant professor,
Sociology/Anthropology

In her recent article in the Chronicle of Higher Education (10/14/14) entitled *The Adjunct Crisis is Everyone's Problem*, Sarah Kendzior states that "Academia was not an industry in which one works for pay, but one in which you must pay to work." Had I not experienced this firsthand myself, I wouldn't have believed it! More perplexing is the counterintuitive nature of it all. While I realize that there are different expectations for tenure-track faculty members, the fact is they get paid significantly more in compensation. And while advising, service work, and research are no doubt important, so are class prep, holding office hours, responding to student emails, grading, etc. - duties and responsibilities that contingent faculty pay does *not* compensate for. There is also something terribly amiss when our own students, graduating with a Bachelor's Degrees, make the same - and often significantly more - money than those of us with Masters and Ph.D.'s. As evidence, The Houston Chronicle recently ran an article entitled *The Average Adjunct Pay at Community Colleges*, by Tony Guerra, who reported that "community college adjunct faculty members might earn \$10 to \$15 hourly." Faculty at four-year schools don't fare much better, if at all.

Kendzior argues that new Ph.D.'s, and I might add basically anyone without the security and benefits of a tenure-track position, are "expected to move around the country in temporary postdocs or visiting professor jobs until finding tenure-track positions (or) stay where they are and work as adjuncts with no job security and an average wage of \$2,700 per course." However, what Kendzior fails to mention is the number of people who are expected to commute to multiple institutions and teach multiple classes, as well as teach online classes or work another part-time job, simply to support themselves and their families.

My own experience reflects this phenomenon. In a recent adjunct stint at SUNY Oneonta I made \$2,600 a course (that number had not changed since 2006) and commuted 276.36 miles a week. At the same time I was adjuncting at Syracuse University, where I was paid \$4500 per course and commuted 325.80 miles a week. The math is pretty simple. I was driving a total of 602.16 miles a week. My gas expenditure each week was approximately 24.08 gallons, which at an average of \$3.89/gallon, equaled \$93.67/week in gas. To make matters worse, when it came time to do my taxes I was appalled to find out that even though my driving was for business purposes, I was not allowed to claim it on taxes as "business miles driven." If I had, the reimbursement would have been a mere \$337.20.

If I took only one class at SUNY Oneonta into account, for a 15 week semester I would make \$173 per week before taxes/deductions (2600/15) and pay \$43 in gas/week. That means, after deductions, I would clear just over \$100 week for teaching two, and sometimes three times a week. Teaching two classes a semester at Oneonta for an academic year put me at an annual income of \$10,400 - \$1,270 below the 2014 poverty guidelines (for an individual). Not so for those in tenure-track positions according to a 2013 article in *The Nation* entitled *The Pink Collar Workforce of Academia* which reported that "A recent analysis conducted by the Coalition on the Academic Workforce found that the pay for adjunct faculty lagged far behind that of their tenured peers, averaging just \$21, 600 while tenure-track positions averaged \$66,000 a year" (<http://www.thenation.com/article/175214/academias-pink-collar-workforce#>).

While I really did enjoy teaching at both schools, I quickly discovered that despite all my efforts and hard work I did not have enough money to pay my bills, time to search for and apply for other jobs, or conduct research and write articles with the hopes of publishing in journals which given the number of jobs available and current low acceptance rates for journals (reported to be under 5% in some top journals in some disciplines seemed like a mismanaged or idealistic use of time. Given that I was prepping for and teaching 12 classes a week, grading, and spending over 9 hours a week in my car - literally an entire day lost to travel - sleep was my top priority!

Clearly the "labor exploitation" experience of contingent faculty is not a new topic. In the early 1980s, approximately 20% of courses were taught by non-tenure track faculty. By 1998, that number rose to 43%, and in 2013 the estimate was around 70%. Moreover, while the 2009 National Center for Education Statistics reported that women make up 51% of all adjunct faculty, the Coalition on the Academic Workforce put the proportion of women at 61%. By way of comparison, the AAUP estimated that full-time tenured faculty are 59% male. As Eileen E. Schell, the author of the 1998 sociological work *Gypsy, Academics and Mother-Teachers: Gender, Contingent Labor, and Writing Instruction* said, the reputation for adjunct teaching as a women's profession was so strong that adjuncts were dubbed "the housewives of higher education."

The situation is especially grim in the STEM professions (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), where only about 15% of American scientists are expected to find tenure-track jobs. Things aren't getting better; they are getting worse – much worse.

At a COCAL (Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor) conference in NYC this last summer I had the privilege of being part of an international grassroots coalition of activists from the United States, Canada, and Mexico who work to improve the conditions of contingent faculty – adjunct, part-time, non-tenured, and graduate students who also teach. While a host of critical issues were discussed, an overarching concern expressed by those present was the effect on students. The sad truth is that many institutions fail to provide contingent faculty with the basic support and resources (offices, phones, computers, etc.) they need to effectively do their jobs. And while some contingents might be respected by their colleagues and considered an integral part of the department, that is less common than we would hope.

As the Vice President of the NYS AAUP (American Association of University Professors), the Chair of the NYS AAUP Committee on the Status of Women in the Academic Profession, an elected delegate (District VIII) and member of Committee W (Women's Issues) at AAUP National, I strongly encourage you to stay informed, know your rights, and take action to make positive changes. As it was so aptly stated during the closing remarks at the COCAL Conference, "Life is too short not to fight a few good fights!"

Five Facts on Workplace Bullying

Dan Harms,
VP for Academics,
Library

The following ideas come from a review article on bullying, cited at the bottom.

Bullying can cover a wide range of behaviors. Making jokes about a colleague or co-worker? Giving someone the silent treatment? Piling work on one individual? Singling out an employee to be monitored, with no concerns about performance? All of these can constitute bullying.

For targets of bullying, personality type is not necessarily important. Introverts and extroverts can be targeted alike. Some will be targeted because they are more vulnerable, and others might be targeted because they stand out or speak up when they see problems.

Bullying can serve as a cover for discrimination. One study run in the United Kingdom found that ethnic minorities were targeted for bullying four times as often as whites. In some cases, findings have indicated that age is a factor in selecting targets for bullying.

Bullying can have a huge impact on the workplace. Its effects can be profound, leading to depression, anxiety, illness, lack of sleep, and even suicide. As such, it can easily lead to poor performance, absences, a lack of job satisfaction, and employee turnover. Even for employees who are not directly bullied, this can lead to more work, more uncertainty, and a toxic atmosphere.

Stopping bullying means changing organizational culture. A consultative leadership structure, an emphasis on institutional ethics, and an organization with a system of rules and policies are instrumental in creating an environment where bullying is minimized.

Samnani, Al-Karim, and Parbudyal Singh. "20 Years of Workplace Bullying Research: A Review of the Antecedents and Consequences of Bullying in the Workplace." *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 17, no. 6 (November 2012): 581–89. doi:10.1016/j.avb.2012.08.004.



The History Department and GE-5

Now that the campus is on the verge of a referendum that has the potential to change the basic structure of the GE program, we, the members of the History Department, would like to offer some thoughts and comments for everyone's consideration as the vote nears.

We first want to express our thanks to all of the faculty and staff who have participated in the process. The contributions and suggestions from the entire campus have been consistently thoughtful, constructive, and articulate, and we genuinely appreciate the efforts everyone has made in order to improve our students' college experience. In particular, we would like to commend the members of the GE Committee, who have worked tirelessly over the past two years to advance the process and to make sure that the final reform proposal reflected a true consensus.

Yet we remain concerned about this proposal, for two reasons.

First, we believe that despite the best intentions of everyone involved, the entire process was overtaken early by an inordinate emphasis on "flexibility" and credit-reduction. This disproportionate focus on cutting credits from the program pushed aside the equally urgent objective of re-thinking and re-fashioning the content of GE curriculum, and thereby re-*valuing* the role of a liberal arts foundation in our students' education.

Second, with respect to the decision to designate GE-5 as an elective category in the final proposal, we deplore what we regard as a fundamental misreading, by many, of why our department believes that all our students necessarily benefit from studying western civilization. For us, the value of understanding the west and its place in history is not about celebrating ourselves as a culture or advancing U. S. self-interest.

The teaching of western civilization, of course, is burdened with a problematic past. College-level western civilization courses had their origins in the "War Issues" course, which campuses taught during World War I in affiliation with the government's Student Army Training Corps. The course educated students on the causes of the war and revealed the debts Americans owed to European cultural and political heritage. These courses suggested that the wars against Germany and, later, the Cold War, were wars in defense of western civilization. Instructors often depicted a triumphant march of rationalism, science, and liberty in the west (Gary B. Nash, et al., *History on Trial*, 2000).

However, the History Department at SUNY Cortland long ago rebelled against this Eurocentric (and often racist) narrative at the heart of western civilization courses. In fact, retired Africanist Don Wright and others in the History Department led the way in New York State in developing a world history course crucial to the training of social studies teachers. The course de-centered the west, and it introduced students to the history of non-western societies. The department also joined other historians around the country in reconceiving the two-semester "Western Civilization" survey course. The first half of Western Civilization introduces students to many regions outside of Europe, including North Africa and Persia. Without the second half of the Western Civilization survey, students would learn less about the European slave trade and the Holocaust, and would thereby lack awareness of the powerful connections between capitalism, imperialism, and racism. A class on western civilization can provide a semester long opportunity to critique the very notion of Eurocentric history, to raise questions about assumptions of western particularity, and to emphasize how developments in "the west" depended on a whole range of global contingencies and historical conjunctures. Most importantly, it can challenge students to write new narratives of world history that challenge the unreconstructed narratives often told by prominent leaders of U. S. society.

While classes across our campus introduce students to different societies and cultures around the world, non-U. S. courses in the historical discipline offer a unique opportunity to consider how global cultures change over time and interact with each other, and how the forces of trade, migration, and transnational encounters can produce often unintended connections and results. The Western Civilization survey can examine the damage done by western societies as they exploited the far reaches of the planet, even as it explores how other non-European societies influenced key characteristics of "western society." It can also emphasize the agency of nonwestern societies in shaping the reception and spread of western ideas and goods.

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The courses on western civilization in Cortland's GE-5 category, as they are currently conceived and taught, are thus essential to the sustained and critical self-examination that we all hope to nurture in our students as they work towards their degrees. Truthfully understanding and honestly appraising one's own historical and cultural identity is at the core of a successful liberal arts education. A crucial component of our college's mission is to graduate well-educated, well-rounded individuals who are capable of engaged global citizenship and who possess the habit of thoughtful introspection. The History Department believes that the study of western civilization remains indispensable to that task.

Randi Storch, Amy Schutt, Girish Bhat, Scott Moranda, Brett Troyan, Luo Xu, Ben de Lee, Gigi Peterson, Kevin Sheets, Laura Gathagan, Judy Van Buskirk.



IT'S YOUR NEWSLETTER!

We welcome articles and letters submitted by members of the SUNY Cortland Community.

Please share your thoughts with us— we want to hear from you!

Opinions expressed in *The Cortland Cause* are those of the individuals and are neither endorsed by nor represent the views of UUP.

Please note: The Cortland Cause will generally not print anonymous submissions.

We reserve the right to edit submissions for grammar, space limitations, accuracy, etc.

Send contributions to the Chapter Office, uup@cutland.edu
and to the editor, Karla Alwes, karla.alwes@cutland.edu

The Academic Gold Standard

Robert J. Spitzer,
Political Science

Contemporary colleges and universities are about many things, many resources, and competition among institutions for students is greater than ever. New buildings, resources, facilities and services all contribute to make institutions of higher learning more complete as well as more competitive. Yet in the hoopla that is college life, we need to remind ourselves that our central mission, our reason for existence, is to teach students. And that activity is most well and fully realized by full-time faculty. This does not simply mean bodies in classrooms with instructors at the front of each room. We are a university, and that means we pursue scholarship, for all the reasons that differentiate a four year college from a community college or a high school. Full-time faculty also advise students, serve on committees, and engage in multifarious other service activities that are essential to the life of the institution, the profession, and the community. We need to be reminded of this because institutional resources on campuses across the country are increasingly siphoned off to other activities other than the core mission of teaching.

In 1975, universities nationwide employed almost 450,000 full-time faculty and almost 270,000 administrators and staff. By 2009, full-time faculty had increased by 63 percent, to 728,977, but administrators and staff had increased by a whopping 231 percent, to 890,540. Many reasons explain this "rampant administrative blight," to quote Benjamin Ginsberg, author of *The Fall of the Faculty*, but the net result is that university budget priorities have shifted from the academic gold standard of tenure-based faculty teaching and research to other activities and burgeoning education bureaucracies that may or may not advance the priority goals embodied in higher learning. Let's also note that this trend is neither inexorable nor inflexible. Some institutions have done a better job at keeping their budgetary eye on the academic football than others. So, what about Cortland?

The accompanying table is a five year comparison of Cortland's Personal Service Regular (PSR) spending – that is, how much Cortland spends on its personnel, the largest single cost of most any large organization. The numbers compare 2009-2010 with 2013-2014, in dollars and in the percentage change during this period of time. For full-time teaching faculty, I have broken the data down by the three schools, and also combined them (all data is from the Office of Finance and Management).

For me, there are four primary takeaways:

1. Taking the total SUNY PSR budget increase (that is, money Cortland gets from SUNY) of 7.8% and the Provost Grand Total Budget (which actually incorporates the eight budget lines listed above it) of 8.6% as baselines, the full time faculty hires increase across five years of 4.5% is well below the percent increases in both.
2. For faculty hiring, the 4.5% increase barely reflects the pay increases we have received in the last five years, so it is, at best, a flat budget for full-time faculty hiring.
3. The 4.5% spending increase in full-time faculty is dwarfed by spending increases in most of the rest of the major personnel units of the college, especially the top three categories listed at the end of the table: Institutional Advancement, 45% increase; Curriculum/Academic Affairs, 39.9% increase; and Information Resources, 38.8% increase. (Note that the specific offices that comprise these areas are listed in small print under each budget category title.)
4. It might be a mistake to overgeneralize from this five year data. After all, prior trends might reflect different priorities. In addition, the total dollar amounts could be misleading, in that when new faculty are hired, they usually replace senior faculty who have left or retired, and whose salaries are higher than those of the people who replace them. However, a look at the number of full-time tenure track faculty over the last 20 years shows little change (after years of faculty erosion in the late 1970s and 1980s). In 1981, Cortland employed 260 full-time faculty. In 1991, the college had 226 full-time faculty; in 2005 it was 233 (these data from an analysis appearing in the UUP Newsletter, January-February 2007); and in 2014 it was 248 (this latter from the administration). In the last 20 years, student enrollment at Cortland has increased by roughly 1000 students. Given these numbers, full-time tenure track hires could, and I would argue should, rank higher in personnel spending priorities.

Continued on page 11

All personnel are important, all work has value, and every large institution inevitably has many moving parts. But we are a university, and teaching students, in the context of a genuine scholarly environment, is the reason for our existence. No clearer yardstick of a higher education institution's credibility exists than the extent to which it relies on full-time faculty to bear the brunt of its core mission. The simplest way to visualize this is with a simple thought experiment: imagine a college where all the teaching is carried by full-time faculty (recognizing that, in the real world, every institution has at least some adjunct faculty, although this proportion is smaller at the nation's most eminent universities, and the reverse at those held in low regard). Now imagine the same institution where all the teaching is done by people whose only activity is teaching, or where all of the teaching is covered by adjunct faculty. (And note that this is no criticism of our adjunct faculty colleagues, who make an essential contribution to this and other institutions, and do so while being underpaid.) Given a choice, to which type of institution would you prefer to send your child to college?

Put simply, full-time tenured/tenure track faculty represent the gold standard of any institution of higher learning. Little wonder that it is a core criterion composing college rankings. Suppose Cortland, as an institution, committed itself to raising the percent budget increase for full-time faculty hires from the existing 4.5% to, say, 9% in the next five years? I'd call it modest, feasible, achievable, and a concrete affirmation of SUNY Cortland's reason for existence.

Personal Service Regular (PSR) Comparisons, 2009-2014

<u>PERSONNEL EXPENDITURE CATEGORIES</u>	<u>2009-2010</u>	<u>2013-2014</u>	<u>Percent change</u>
Total President	\$476,396	\$508,752	6.8%
TOTAL PROVOST: 2013 PSR Costs: Multicultural/Gender Studies (\$51K), Environmental Ctr., Belize Project, Clark Ctr., Intl. Stu. Learning Community, Cont. Ed., Honors Prog., Assessment, Academic Dev., Research Coordination, Intl. Progs. Ofc. (\$286K), Fac. Dev. (\$18L), Civic Engagement (\$58K), Outdoor Ed. (\$295K), Athletics (\$1.2 mill.), Chief Acad. Ofc. (\$281K), Res. Admin. (\$217K)	2,336,093	2,400,030	2.7%
Professional Studies	5,432,763	5,986,618	10.2%
Education	3,304,044	3,213,510	-2.7%
Arts and Sciences	12,734,265	13,234,978	3.9%
3 SCHOOLS COMBINED	21,471,072	22,435,106	4.5%
Enrollment Management: 2013 PSR: Assoc. Provost Enr. Mgt. (\$159K), Admissions (\$866K), Financial Aid (\$463K)	1,592,074	1,488,100	-6.5%
Curric. & Acad. Affairs: 2013 PSR: Advisement/1 st Yr. (\$523K), Assoc. Provost Curric. (\$197K), Registrar (\$574K), Institl. Res. (\$191K)	1,061,280	1,484,782	39.9%

Table continued on page 12

PERSONNEL EXPENDITURE CATEGORIES	2009-2010	2013-2014	Percent change
Information Resources: 2013 PSR: Info. Systems (\$248K), Distance Learning (\$45K), Class Tech (\$274K), Instructional Training (\$96K), Library (\$1.8 million), Computer Svcs. (\$626K), Adminis. Computer (\$471K), Sys. Adm. Web (\$472K), Telephone/Telegraph (\$245K)	3,046,972	4,228,538	38.8%
PROVOST GRAND TOTAL (above 8 categories)	29,507,491	32,036,556	8.6%
STUDENT AFFAIRS 2013 PSR: Acad. Svcs. (\$336K), Rec. Sports (\$229K), Stu. Affs. Adm. (\$210K), Sports Facilities (\$137K), Stu. Counseling (\$230K), EOP (\$122K), Career Place. (\$323K), Multicultural Stu. Svcs. (\$100K), Stu. Hlh. (\$66K), Stu. Union (\$268K), Stu. Activities (\$93K), Judic. (\$9K), Security (\$1.5 million), Duplicating (\$71K)	3,468,059	3,719,251	7.2%
Finance & Management	198,169	240,567	21.4%
Business Office	1,297,158	1,442,806	11.2%
Facilities	5,539,403	5,295,516	-4.4%
Human Resources	527,246	581,065	10.2%
FINANCE & MGT. TOTAL	7,561,976	7,559,954	-.03%
INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT: 2013 PSR: Assoc. VP Comm. (\$183K), VP Dev. (\$694K), Alum. Rels. (\$254K), Marketing (\$1.7K), Publications (\$292K), Pub. Relats. (\$282K)	1,177,158	1,706,361	45%
PSR GRAND TOTAL	42,621,596	45,958,579	7.8%

Rank ordering by percent increase (excluding those budget lines below \$1 million):

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Institutional Advancement: | 45% | 7. Student Affairs: | 7.2% |
| 2. Curric/Acad. Affairs: | 39.9% | 8. <i>Three schools (combined):</i> | 4.5% |
| 3. Information Resources: | 38.8% | 9. Provost: | 2.7% |
| 4. Business office: | 11.2% | 10. Finance/Management: | -.03% |
| 5. Provost Grand Total: | 8.6% | 11. Facilities: | -4.4% |
| 6. PSR Grand Total: | 7.8% | 12. Enrollment Management: | -6.5% |

Source: Office of Finance and Management.

Report: “Live in Cortland”

Randi Storch, History

Just over a year ago, Erik announced the Live in Cortland initiative during our fall open meeting. Since that time, the committee has completed a successful survey, held focus group meetings, conducted research on similar initiatives around the country and submitted a final report.

As a result of our findings, Erik asked us to continue our work and to begin to implement our recommendations. What follows is a short report on our recommendations and the steps we are taking to see them come to fruition.

Much of our attention centers around the transition new employees undergo when relocating to work at SUNY Cortland. Anyone who has experienced this understands how stressful and complicated it can be to pick up and move to a new community *and* begin a new job.

We found that offices and departments do an excellent job selling SUNY Cortland to potential employees. As a college, however, we haven't given much consideration to orienting our potential employees to the larger Cortland community. Too often new employees are presented with negative stereotypes of the Cortland community and little to no resources to ease their transition. To address these issues, our committee is focused on housing, education, and socialization.

Our survey and focus groups revealed that most new hires initially want to live as close to work as possible, and want to do so through renting an apartment or a house. A high percentage of those who manage to find a place to rent in Cortland, choose to stay in Cortland for the long term. The problem for many, however, is that quality rental properties are difficult to find.

To address this issue, the committee is working with colleagues in Information Resources to develop a way to use myReddragon portal to make quality rental properties known to our fellow colleagues. We have contacted local financial institutions to develop programs and packages to make first-time home ownership easier and home renovation more affordable. We are also collaborating with our colleagues in facilities to think about College-owned spaces that might be able to be converted to temporary, new employee housing.

Currently we provide little information to our search committees and potential employees about our community. We plan to rectify this situation by developing a Web page for new employees, creating talking points for hiring committees, designing a Cortland community print piece, and providing optional driving tours to help search committees orient job candidates to our community.

Last, but not least, we are gathering best practices from those departments and offices that have given some thought to socializing new faculty and staff into their new position and community. We hope to build on the excellent on-boarding work started by Mary Saracene and share these ideas and practices with the larger college community.

If you have questions about the work of our committee or would like to help in any way, please contact Randi Storch, committee chair, at 607-753-2054 or talk to one of our committee members.

Committee Members:

Joanne Barry
Kathleen Burke
Jose Feliciano
Chris Kuretich
Tracy Rammacher
Randi Storch
Brian Tobin
Carol Van Der Karr

Protecting your family for the future



It's important that your family members are financially protected throughout their lives. Have you stopped to consider what would happen to your spouse and/or children if you were to suddenly pass away?

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Save the dates

Union Matter Chapter Meetings

Feb. 11, Mar. 10, Apr. 8

Executive Board Meetings Schedule

Dec. 4, Jan. 23, Feb. 5 & 19, Mar. 5, Apr. 2 & 16, May 7

Labor Management Meetings Schedule

Dec. 10, Jan. 21, Feb. 18, Mar. 18, Apr. 15, May 13

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Address: 12345678	Pay Start Date: 02/16/2005	Reporting Unit: 00	Current: 3456.78	1234.56	
Advice Date: 07/13/2005	Pay End Date: 05/20/2005	Retirement System: TRAA/RSF	45,678.90	34,567.89	
Department ID: 1234			Net Pay 1,234.56		
EARNINGS			TAX DATA		
Pay or Pay To Date: 05/20/05	Rate: 3456.78	Rate: 45,678.90	Federal: 1	State: 0	Local: 0
Component: 5678	Rate: 56.78	Rate: 678.90	Fed. Inc. 1	State Inc. 0	Local Inc. 0
TAXES			BEFORE TAX DEDUCTIONS		
Pay or Pay To Date: 05/20/05	Rate: 3456.78	Rate: 45,678.90	Current: 1234.56	YTD: 1234.56	
Component: 5678	Rate: 56.78	Rate: 678.90	45,678.90	34,567.89	
AFTER TAX DEDUCTIONS			BEFORE TAX DEDUCTIONS		
Pay or Pay To Date: 05/20/05	Rate: 3456.78	Rate: 45,678.90	Current: 1234.56	YTD: 1234.56	
Component: 5678	Rate: 56.78	Rate: 678.90	45,678.90	34,567.89	

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