

FredUUP

Spring 2025
Volume 14, Issue 2



United University
Professions

Fredonia Chapter
Newsletter

Contents

President's Message	1
Chapter Election Results	2
Rethinking Budget Solutions	3
Professional Staff Engagement	4
Spring Membership Meeting	5
Spring DA in Albany	6
Professionals Workload Workshop	6
Make Your Voice Heard	7
Member Spotlight-Rebecca Cuthbert	8
UUP Membership Applications	9
Stay Connected	10
UUP Events Calendar	11
The VOICE-UUP's Official Podcast	12
Local Leadership	13

Events

July 17, 2025
Information/Benefits Fair
BBQ Lunch
11:00 - 2:00



Christopher Taverna, Chapter President
Janet Mayer, Chapter Vice-President for Professionals
Ziya Arnavut, Chapter Vice-President for Academics

President's Message

Dear Colleagues,

As we close out of another academic year, I find it beneficial to take a moment to reflect on our collective achievements, challenges, and the path forward. This year has been a testament to the resilience, dedication, and unwavering commitment of our faculty and staff. Together, we have navigated through unprecedented times and have stood strong in advocating for the rights and well-being of all members.

I am especially grateful to our Chapter Assistant, our Chapter Officers, our Executive Board, and our Labor Relations Specialist. Additionally, I would like to acknowledge the support and mentorship of our statewide Officers. Our leadership team has stood united through the various challenges we have faced and are prepared to continue our defense and advocacy on our collective behalf.

Thank you all for your continued support and trust. We have a challenging year ahead of us, but I am certain we can overcome and succeed together.

I wish you all a happy and rejuvenating summer!

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Christopher C. Taverna'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christopher C. Taverna
President, UUP Fredonia Chapter



Fredonia Chapter Elections - Results

The term of office for each position is from June 1, 2025 through May 31, 2027.

<https://uupinfo.org/elections/results/chapter/Fredonia/25/Results.pdf>

Chapter President – Christopher Taverna

Vice President for Academics – Ziya Arnavut

Vice President for Professionals – Janet Mayer

Secretary – Paul Starcher

Treasurer – Derrik Decker

Officer for Contingents – Anne Fearman

Officer for Retirees – Joy Bilharz

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer – Lei Huang

Grievance Chair for Academics – Reneta Barneva

Grievance Chair for Professionals – Angela Pucciarelli Rice

Membership Development Officer – Vacant

Academic Delegates:

Reneta Barneva
Anne Fearman
Ziya Arnavut
Lei Huang
Derrik Decker
Gurmukh Singh
Junaid Zubairi

Professional Delegates:

Angela Pucciarelli Rice
Paul Starcher
Christopher Taverna
Idalia Torres

<https://uupinfo.org/elections/results/chapter/Fredonia/25/Results.pdf>

Rethinking Budget Solutions at SUNY Fredonia

Since 2010, SUNY Fredonia has faced ongoing financial struggles due to declining enrollment and rising operational costs—challenges that mirror broader trends in higher education across the country. As the institution seeks solutions to address budget shortfalls, administrators have proposed reducing contingent faculty while increasing full-time faculty workloads from a 3-3 structure to 3-4 or even 4-4. While this is positioned as a cost-saving measure, does it truly address the root issues?

Reducing contingent faculty positions might seem like an effective financial strategy, but the long-term consequences could outweigh any immediate savings. Heavier workloads for full-time faculty threaten to accelerate burnout, weaken teaching quality, and curtail faculty research output. The impact could be far-reaching, jeopardizing the institution's academic excellence and overall reputation.

To address budget difficulties Former Provost and Academic Vice President Terry Brown previously outlined two key strategies when we were discussing “Right Sizing and Right Serving”:

1. Merging Academic Departments
2. Eliminating Deans and connecting departments directly to the VP of Academic Affairs

Merging departments have already been implemented. Financial savings have proven insufficient, prompting administrators to seek new measures. We have yet to fully implement item 2, apart from a temporary trial in the Business School from 2019 to 2022. The new suggestion that has been addressed at the last Senate meeting (May 5, 2025) is to eliminate contingent faculty positions to generate substantial budget relief. Given that a contingent faculty earns approximately \$5,000 per course, cutting \$200,000 would require eliminating about 40 courses. But such a decision would severely limit academic offerings and negatively impact students.

Instead of diminishing course offerings, institutions could reconsider administrative restructuring. Former Provost Terry Brown proposed consolidating some administrative offices, including eliminating Dean Offices—a move that could yield comparable financial savings without directly affecting course availability or faculty workload.

SUNY Fredonia must take a holistic approach to budgetary concerns, ensuring that financial adjustments do not compromise the institution's educational mission. By prioritizing efficiency in administrative spending rather than overburdening faculty, the university can navigate financial difficulties while preserving the quality of education and student experience.

Ziya Arnavut, Ph.D.

UUP Vice President for Academics

SUNY Fredonia

Why Professional Staff Engagement Matters Now More Than Ever

In today's challenging higher education landscape, professional staff are facing unprecedented pressure—tight budgets, increasing workloads, and reduced workplace flexibility. Here at SUNY Fredonia these issues are all too real. Our union is working hard to advocate for our needs, but real progress depends on one thing: active participation from all of us.

The Power of Showing Up

Whether it's attending union meetings, filling out surveys, or simply staying informed, professional staff engagement gives our chapter the strength and legitimacy it needs to advocate effectively. When we show up, speak out, and stand together, we send a clear message to campus leadership and SUNY administration: professionals deserve to be heard.

Telecommuting: Know Your Rights

One urgent issue facing many professionals is the lack of flexibility in telecommuting arrangements. The current statewide telecommuting agreement, negotiated between UUP and the State, allows for up to two remote workdays per week, based on operational needs.

However, our campus has unilaterally imposed a stricter limit—allowing only one telecommuting day per week for professional employees, despite the statewide policy. This reduction not only contradicts the spirit of the agreement, but also affects morale and work-life balance. Note this limit is not applicable to management, only UUP professionals.

Our union is actively raising these concerns through labor-management forums, but we need *your* voice to make the case stronger. When more professionals are informed, vocal, and engaged, we are in a much better position to push for equitable treatment.

Budget Challenges Need a Unified Response

Budget shortfalls are hitting our campus hard, threatening staffing levels, program stability, and the professional workload. These are not just numbers on a spreadsheet—they are real impacts on your job, your colleagues, and your ability to serve students. When professionals are at the table and involved in union action, we gain the leverage to challenge bad decisions and protect our interests.

How You Can Get Involved

- Attend monthly UUP meetings and campus forums
- Join a union committee or become a delegate
- Participate in chapter surveys and advocacy campaigns
- Stay informed through union emails and website updates
- Reach out to chapter leadership with concerns or ideas

Your Union, Your Voice

UUP is here to fight for better working conditions, fair policies, and a stronger future for all professionals. But a union is only as strong as its members. Your engagement fuels our ability to advocate, negotiate, and win on your behalf.

Together, we can demand better—not just for ourselves, but for the generations of professionals who will come after us.

In solidarity,

Janet Mayer

UUP Vice President for Professionals, Fredonia Chapter

Spring 2025 Membership Meeting

Our Spring 2025 Chapter Membership Meeting was held on Monday, March 3, 2025, from 11:30 am – 1:30 pm in the Horizon Room over lunch.

The 2025-2026 Fredonia Chapter Budget was presented, voted on and passed. Updates were given by Chapter President Christopher Taverna and Statewide VP for Academics Alissa Karl. Then an open discussion was held.



Chapter President Chris Taverna



UUP Fredonia Chapter Members



Statewide VP for Academics Alissa Karl

UUP Spring Delegate Assembly April 4-5, 2025 at The Desmond Hotel in Albany



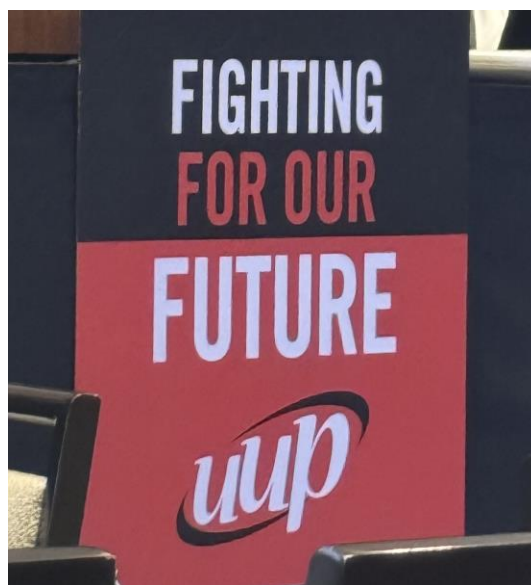
VP for Academics Ziya Arnavut



Delegate Bruce Simon



Statewide UUP President Fred Kowal



Theme: Fighting for our Future

Workload Workshop for Professionals

On Tuesday, April 29, 2025 from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm in the Williams Center room S204ABC, UUP Professionals were invited for lunch and a discussion about professional workload and workload increase, including how to address increases if and when they happen and understanding their rights under the Contract.

Along with the workshop, the UUP Professionals Workplace survey, created by our statewide UUP Professional taskforce was launched. The survey aims to collect valuable, actionable insights on the workplace challenges professionals face. The results will be shared with chapter leadership, the UUP Statewide Negotiations team, and may even shape future legislative priorities.

Make Your Voice Heard: Participate in the UUP Professionals Statewide Work Climate Survey

Earlier this year, UUP launched the Professionals Statewide Work Climate Survey, a vital initiative created *by professionals, for professionals*. Developed by a statewide taskforce of UUP professional delegates, the survey is designed to gather meaningful, actionable data about the workplace issues that matter most to us.

Why Your Participation Matters

This survey is a critical opportunity to shed light on the challenges we face in our day-to-day work. It focuses on key issues such as:

- **Workload**
- **Morale**
- **Telecommuting**
- **Job flexibility**
- And other topics directly relevant to professional staff

The insights gathered will not only guide how our **Fredonia UUP chapter** advocates for improvements locally but will also inform statewide labor-management discussions and potentially influence future legislative priorities.

How to Participate

Fredonia has its own **campus-specific survey link and QR code**, ensuring your feedback is tailored to our local experiences:  [Take the Survey Now](#)



The survey takes about **10 minutes** to complete. While it may appear lengthy, most members find it manageable and well worth the time.

Help Us Reach Our Goal

Our goal is to achieve at least a **50% response rate** at tech and comprehensive campuses, and **25%** at larger campuses. Your participation—and encouragement of your colleagues to participate—is key to hitting that mark.

Regular updates on participation rates will be shared as we work to strengthen our collective voice.

Every Response Counts

We know how busy you are, but taking just a few minutes to complete this survey can have a **lasting impact** on how our workplace evolves. Your voice matters, and this is your chance to be heard. If you have any questions or need help accessing or completing the survey, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank you for your continued support and solidarity.

In unity,

Janet Mayer

Member Spotlight – Rebecca Cuthbert May 2025



Rebecca Cuthbert, a Lecturer in the English Department and UUP Member, has earned a second bachelor's degree utilizing the UUP Tuition Waiver.

Ms. Cuthbert will graduate with a B.S. in Communication: Public Relations. She credits the tuition waiver for the opportunity to get a bonus degree one class at a time. Additionally, our Department of

Communications instructors are thanked for their guidance throughout. The knowledge and skills learned from this degree program have already provided positive results in her work as a professional author.

Ms. Cuthbert said:

"The UUP tuition waiver made it possible for me to earn a second bachelor's degree while working as a contingent professor with a 4/4 class load. The fact that it was available for the J-term each year was vital--it's when I was able to fit coursework in without handling my teaching obligations at the same time.

Everyone in the Registrar's Office, the Human Resources Office, and Student Accounting was wonderful and helped me at the start of each semester to get my paperwork in.

I've also made use of the UUP IDA grants for the past several years, which have allowed me to attend conferences and conventions that have greatly improved my publishing industry knowledge while raising my professional profile.

UUP has so much available for its members to take advantage of. I'm glad I was able to use the tuition waiver program to earn an extra degree."

She will graduate on the 17th alongside some of her former students. This degree will be added to her BA in Literature and her MFA in Fiction.

The UUP Tuition Waiver program provides a 100% waiver of tuition (excluding fees) for one course each semester taken at any State-operated campus in the SUNY system (i.e. four-year SUNY schools). Applicants must be admitted on a matriculated or non-matriculated basis.

For more information on the implementation of this program at Fredonia, please visit: [UUP Waiver | Fredonia.edu](https://uup.fredonia.edu)

To learn more about Rebecca Cuthbert's works you can visit [Rebecca Cuthbert – Speculative, Slipstream, & Dark Fiction & Poetry](#)

If you have a story to share with our members, please send us an email, uup@fredonia.edu and tell us about it!

UUP Membership Applications

REGULAR MEMBERSHIP

[General Membership Application](#) - Online application for regular membership to UUP. The deduction for dues (as of the 10/23/24 paycheck) for membership is .9 percent of the adjusted bi-weekly gross of base annual salary if the base annual salary is \$36,420 or less with no limit for pay basis codes 01, 02, 03, 04, 06, 07, 14, 16, and 17. The deduction is 1.0 percent of the adjusted bi-weekly gross of base annual salary if the base annual salary is \$36,421 or more with no limit for pay basis codes 01, 02, 03, 04, 06, 07, 16, and 17.

[Maintenance of Membership Application](#) - Contingent Academics or Contingent Professionals who are temporarily off payroll due to breaks in service may bridge their UUP membership during the membership year.

[Leave Without Pay Application](#) - If you are going on employer approved leave without pay, you may continue your membership.

SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP

[Sustaining Membership Application](#) - Is open to those who have been retrenched or non-renewed or to any person who has been involuntarily terminated and has litigation, grievance, or other, similar proceedings in progress.

RETIRED MEMBERSHIP

[Retired Membership Application](#) - UUP members who have five years of continuous UUP membership immediately prior to retirement, or who have continuous membership for the length of their employment prior to retirement if less than five years, may apply for Retired Membership. For more information on Retired Membership click [HERE](#)

Are You a Member?

Thomas P. DiNapoli New York State Comptroller		JOHN DOE Current YTD: 3480.79 1234.56 45,678.90 34,567.89	
Advisor # 123456789 Advisor Code 09/10/2015	Pay Start Date 09/10/2015 Pay End Date 09/30/2015	Net Pay 1,234.56 Pay Rate 66,789.10	
Department ID 1234			
EARNINGS			
Regular Pay Salary Employees Location Pay	2456.78 84.19	1234.56 45.67	1234.56 45.67
BEFORE TAX DEDUCTIONS			
Regular Salary Tax Withhold Regular Salary Tax, Social Security Total Retirement Salary Tax	456.78 123.45 58.19	1234.56 1234.56 1234.56	1234.56 1234.56 1234.56
AFTER TAX DEDUCTIONS			
		UUP Member 26P	34.56 456.78

CHECK PAY STUB TO MAKE SURE

In order to be a member of the union, your paycheck *must* say "UUP Member." If it says "UUP Agency Fee," then you are included in the Professional Services Negotiating Unit, but are *not* a member of the union.

UUP Membership Entitles You To:

- Vote on collective bargaining agreement
- Hold union office
- Attend union meetings
- Elect union leaders on your campus and choose your representatives at the state and national levels

- Maintain UUP membership after retirement and be eligible for benefit programs
- Upon separation of service, obtain Associate Membership with NYSUT and be eligible for benefit programs

Please contact your chapter officers for a membership application.

SAVE THE DATE

UUP Information Fair...

July 17th 11-2 MPR with Patio BBQ

STAY CONNECTED!

UUPConnect is the newsletter that collects union happenings, current events and issues that affect you, your field and your career each week.

From Supreme Court decisions to issues in education, from changes in the health care profession to the latest news from the SUNY system, UUPConnect keeps you connected.

To receive UUPConnect in your in box, email UUP Communications Director Mike Lisi at UUPconnect@uupmail.org.



KEEPING YOU CONNECTED.
www.uupinfo.org



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{ uupinfo.org/store }



Follow the link to see and register for events on the UUP Events Calendar, such as: Pre-Retirement Workshops, Know Your Benefits, UUP 101, UUP Virtual Public Service Loan Forgiveness Clinics among others.

Collette Travel:



STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS

All UUP members qualify for Public Service Loan Forgiveness.
Virtual clinics held every payday.

Register through the UUP Events Calendar: UUPINFO.ORG/CALENDAR/

The Voice – UUP’s Official Podcast



The Voice is UUP’s official podcast. Hosted by UUP President Fred Kowal, The Voice will feature interviews with newsmakers across New York state about many of the most crucial challenges facing New York and the nation.

On episodes of The Voice, you’ll hear discussion on labor issues and social justice topics, including the climate crisis and the environment, racial injustice, health care, student debt and voting rights. Show episodes will be released twice a month.

It’s free to listen to and subscribe to The Voice podcast.

See the list below of ways to listen. Contact Mike Lisi, UUP’s Director of Media and Publications at mlisi@uupinfo.org with questions.

TO LISTEN NOW, GO TO BUZZSPROUT, UUP’S PODCAST HOSTING PLATFORM [HERE](#)

The podcast is also available on the following platforms

- Apple [Podcasts](#); Podcasts app; iTunes. Click [here](#) for more information
- Google [Podcasts](#), Google Podcasts app. Click [here](#) for more information
- Spotify [Spotify.com](https://www.spotify.com)
- Amazon [Music](#) app
- YouTube Podcasts [YouTube Podcasts](#)
- iHeart Radio [iHeartRadio.com](https://www.iheart.com) iHeart app

The Voice podcast is also available on these apps: TuneIn, Podcast Addict, Pocket Casts, Deezer, Listen Notes, Player FM, Podcast Index, Overcast, Castro, Cashbox and Podfriend



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*The
union
that
makes
SUNY
work*

We're on the Web!
www.fredonia.edu/uup

Fredonia UUP Chapter Leadership:

President: Christopher Taverna 716-673-3340, Christopher.Taverna@fredonia.edu
Vice President for Professionals: Janet Mayer 716-673-4828, Janet.Mayer@fredonia.edu
Vice President for Academics: Ziya Arnavut 716-673-3864, Ziya.Arnavut@fredonia.edu
Secretary: Paul Starcher 716-673-3803, Paul.Starcher@fredonia.edu
Treasurer: Derrik Decker 716-673-4757, Derrik.Decker@fredonia.edu
Grievance Chair (Academics): Reneta Barneva 716-673-4750, Reneta.Barneva@fredonia.edu
Grievance Chair (Professionals): Jefferson Westwood 716-673-3217, Jefferson.Westwood@fredonia.edu
Membership Development Officer: Daniel Smith 716-673-3317, Daniel.Smith@fredonia.edu
Officer for Contingents: Anne Fearman, Anne.Fearman@fredonia.edu
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer: Lei Huang 716-673-4671, Lei.Huang@fredonia.edu
Officer for Retirees: Joy Bilharz 716-680-1164, jabilharz@gmail.com
Amenities Officer: Gregory Cole 716-673-3217, Gregory.Cole@fredonia.edu
NYSUT, Labor Relations Specialist: Matthew Kibler 716-634-7132, Matthew.Kibler@nysut.org

Academic Delegates:

Bruce Simon	Ziya Arnavut
Thomas Morrissey	Derrik Decker
Anne Fearman	Lei Huang
Reneta Barneva	Junaid Zubairi
Iclal Vanwesenbeeck	Gurmukh Singh
Meral Arnavut	

Professional Delegates:

Angela Pucciarelli-Rice
Idalia Torres
Paul Starcher
Christopher Taverna
Janet Mayer

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