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UNITED UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONS
Purchase College, SUNY Chapter
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UUP EXECUTIVE BOARD / JANUARY RETREAT
MEETING MINUTES
1/12/2015

Start: 9:30am

Present: Fern Becker, Bill Capowski, Glenda Davenport, Jon Esser, Mary Garcia, Paul Kaplan, Connie Lobur, Theresa McElwaine, Lorraine Miller, Richard Nassisi, John Taylor, Eric Wildrick

Absent: Joseph Ferry, Warren Lehrer (on sabbatical), Paula Rankine-Belgrave, Christopher Robbins, Sheryl Secor,

1. Review of Fall 2014: Professionals who teach

This discussion originated from a workshop given for professionals; a recap of that discussion was distributed to the board. It was determined from this discussion that there are various practices on campus regarding how professionals who teach are reviewed, compensated for time, and when and how this works in connection with their professional obligations. Discussion centered on how this is a UUP issue, how this affects parts of the campus differently, and how some professional staff who teach view the issues.

-There are a variety of ways that the positions are set up in terms of compensation, review, support, and time allotted. Because of the different structures, workload issues arise; for some, the teaching is in their performance program while others receive an extra service allocation. There is a lack of pay consistency for courses taught by professionals, although specific figures were not available from the provost's office.

-If professionals are filling gaps that should be filled by full-time faculty in certain areas, how does this affect curriculum delivery?

-Certain programs have always had professionals who teach; they have the professional skill base to teach the classes needed in the curriculum. This has been the case historically in the School of Art+Design and the Conservatory of Theatre Arts. It was noted that, in the past, instructional support staff were hired with the expectation that they would teach, both as an instructor of record and more informally in the studio with demonstrations. There appears to be a shift with new hires vs. long-time employees in this regard.

-The Advising Center was noted as a more clear-cut example, in that teaching college writing is in their performance programs.

-Consistent evaluation of professionals who teach was discussed; should faculty review the teaching part? For these hybrid positions, how are these employees evaluated?

-The classification of positions currently and historically was discussed; should instructional staff be faculty positions?

-In the past, professional instructional support staff who taught were given the title of assistant professor (part-time) for the semester they taught a class. This recognition was given in a formal letter from the provost and acknowledged the contribution to the program. This is something to reinvestigate for future employees.

-Some basic structures should be clarified for professionals who teach, such as a minimum extra service rate, protected time to prepare for the class as a starting point.

-UUP will continue to research the issues involved.

2. Review of Fall 2014: DSA

As of this date, UUP Central has not sent out the roster to the individual campuses. They are in the process of stripping out personal information from the list before sending to the individual campus chapters. It was reported that, at Purchase, any faculty members who fail to submit their annual faculty activity report are ineligible for DSA. (All full-time faculty and those part-time faculty who are on multiyear contracts are required to complete the Annual Faculty Activity Report and send it, along with an updated curriculum vitae, to the chair or director of their school or conservatory by a specified date each May).

Discussion occurred regarding the lack of understanding that remains on campus regarding how the DSA allocation is determined for part-timers. When UUP releases the roster, we may consider explaining why part-timers may receive higher amounts of DSA than full-time faculty and staff. As part of the explanation, Connie will draft text explaining all the benefits that part-timers are not eligible for.

General comments from the conversation:

-Last year, the part-time pool was unintentionally corrupted when full-time faculty on leave were included (SUNY classifies them as part-time when on leave), adding to members' frustration and lack of understanding about who received what and why. This was to be corrected locally this year, but should be reviewed.

-Local supervisors made the decision regarding the DSA amounts.

-Former administrators were told that they were not eligible for DSA. This needs to be clarified: in the past year only, or in past years and if were given a salary increase that was retained when no longer an administrator?

-In the current contract, DSA is given as a lump sum, not on base as in the past.

-Better transparency needed; is the DSA merit-based?

3. Review of Fall 2014: Health insurance for part-timers

An individual grievance case regarding eligibility for health insurance benefits was settled with the result of the individual being granted access to benefits. This decision was only applied to this one person. Another situation is currently pending. Right now the issue is being grieved case by case.

4. Review of Fall 2014: Events held in Fall 2014

It was noted that attendance was low to workshops for Fall 2014.

5. Defining our Chapter: Establishing and communicating our role on the campus; goals for Spring 2015; our Web presence and making it more effective

The grievance chair has offered to help the UUP Office administrative assistant to post information on the UUP website for spring 2015. The affirmative action officer volunteered to photograph events so more images could be posted on the website. The three areas to consider how we position ourselves online are: UUP state-wide relationships, issues related to our campus specifically, and relationship with administration on campus. At this time, a physical newsletter does not seem feasible. We discussed finding more points of collaboration with students and issues that affect all of us, such as student loans and debt, and inviting the PSGA representative to an executive board meeting.

6. Recruiting new members and/or officers for the executive board; strategies and implementation of recruiting plans

We discussed sending out a survey to the campus for interest and ideas for new workshops and having the Health & Benefits workshop once a year at least, possibly every semester. Additional workshops were mentioned, such as NYSHIP-sponsored benefit workshop, and inviting Wendy Hord to give a Health & Safety workshop.

7. Alternative outreach efforts: can we deliver our message more effectively to our members and enlist more “activist” members thru different kinds of meetings, events, etc.?

We discussed what the barriers or restrictions there may be that prevents UUP from bringing someone into a particular office space to talk. Additionally, we discussed the logistics of sending out an email that informs employees of their right to attend UUP meetings and still meet their professional obligations. The conversation included issues of how to engage the community, possible social events, and the success of reaching out with specific roles that need filled. We decided to create a survey for the spring to get annual feedback that can be used for summer planning for the 2015-16 academic year. We discussed ways in which we can reach out to the administration and work collaboratively in the future on issues such as student loans. During this conversation it was suggested that we could suggest a collaborative panel forum with the Purchase College (Tom Schwartz) president around ideas of “The Future of the Middle Class.” Additionally, this could be an annual lecture on subjects that can bridge relationships among the union, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

8. Meeting schedules: executive board, campus-wide membership meeting for budget approval, Labor-Management

The executive board meetings will be at noon on every third Thursday of the month. The Labor Management meetings will be scheduled shortly, Mondays or Thursdays near 9 a.m. There needs to be a membership meeting in early March in order to have the budget request approved for 2015-16. It was discussed that the provost has not attended any meetings since the LM meetings have resumed. The structure of the LM meetings in the past was slightly different: one meeting a year included the full Cabinet.

9. Workshops, events, outside speakers: Spring 2015

We discussed that it would be beneficial for the campus (HR or UPD) and/or UUP to do a workshop around a campus shooter situation in addition to inviting other Health & Safety speakers. UPD has been doing workshops for those who work in what they have determined to be high-risk areas of the campus.

The following ideas were discussed for spring 2015: a workshop for faculty on grants that are issued through the provost's office since some of the processes, rules, and funding amounts/allocations have changed; a benefits workshop; and a workshop for professionals preparing for permanency review. Additional topics were discussed, such as developing a workshop on "green" issues for the campus and on NYSHIP legal planning.

10. Chapter budget:

There was a discussion about what events, workshops, and luncheons to host for the remainder of the year and how funds can be more effectively used to benefit UUP members.

11. Other business

Questions regarding campus practice of having employees work an "alternative assignment" during review, before any investigation of an incident or situation. There is no limit on the amount of time an employee may be given an alternative assignment, which was not the intention of the provision. If the case is an assault, the college has one year to investigate and make a decision.

Reminder that the elections are coming up, and the chapters have mailed out nomination forms.

Meeting ended 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kirsten Nelson
Chapter Secretary