UUP ESC Chapter Labor Management Meeting Notes

June 26, 2023

<u>**Introductions**</u>

Chapter: Pamela Malone, Anastasia Pratt, Kelly Mollica, Malongze Foma, Sophia Mavrogiannis, Tony Costa, Janet Aeillo-Cerio, Michelle Couture (LRS).

Management: Nathan Gonyea; Kathleen Roberts; Brian Selchik (President's designee); Julie Majak (for a few mins.).

<u>**Funding and initiatives**</u>

1. Update on the college budget and enrollment.
2. Discussion of SUNY funding from the NYS budget. How is that being distributed? How is the University involved?

<u>Discussion:</u> Management just presented on the budget at Senate on Friday. $3.5 million in ongoing support from SUNY. We're still waiting on additional info on how to apply for transitional funds from SUNY. We're just starting to get some info about how / why funding was allocated. The university needs more time to understand things and formulate arguments and advocacy around getting more. Management is not prepared to discuss this in specificity at this time and we should move on to the next agenda item. **The Chapter wishes to continue discussing this topic. Funding is part of UUP's legislative agenda and believes that funding should not be a competitive process but it should go to campuses in need**.

<u>**Course Access via Brightspace**</u>

1. The chapter is concerned about access to online courses. We have heard that adjuncts can no longer be able to access live courses to familiarize themselves with it (announced); however, it seems that administrators can access courses without notification.

<u>Discussion:</u> This is something we need to investigate if during the competitive bid process if this was a feature that was available, if it was and SUNY opted out, and if we can opt in. They can see non-term shells before the term starts. **The Chapter asks when adjuncts will have access to the poured shells.** *Management states adjuncts would have access on the pour date for each term. Management can share those dates with the Chapter but doesn't know them off hand.*

2. While there are existing policies related to academic appeals and academic honesty, there is concern over global ability to access courses without notifying instructors or students.

Discussion: This was always the capability of Blackboard. This is nothing new for Brightspace. It may come as new or as a surprise for folks because the feature may be visible on the interface. Management who are authorized under FERPA to access the information do have the right to do so. They would not be looking at it without good cause. Copyright and IP concerns: SUNY and college policies for Intellectual Property remain in place, and mere access to courses does not diminish any of the Intellectual Property rights of any faculty. **The Chapter explains that now access is anonymous and given to more people, versus in the past it was more limited and admin names with access to the room were visible. Now they appear anonymous. There are also intellectual freedom concerns for students who may face consequences for saying something in the course that may seem controversial outside of the context but is well within the scope of critical thinking for course content.** *Management acknowledges this is a valid point and will look into how to better use this feature. The college upholds their commitment to academic freedom and has no desire to squash academic freedom at the college. If the Chapter's scenario against a student does in fact ever play out, this is something that HR should be made aware.*

Professional Advisors

We have sent questions related to changes to this group forward and are reserving space for discussion.

Discussion: Lindsey is working on a reply to the questions. Management states that this pilot will begin in July and it is a shifting around of duties within their overall workload. The pilot will be looked at during several points within the year. It's a pilot so whether it's permanent or not remains to be seen. Many or most have been doing this work for a while now and the pilot is making this more consistent from the student perspective. The title change also better aligns with the work they've been doing. **The Chapter will send a copy of the questions to Kathleen and Brian so that they have it,**

Faculty Chairs

Reserving space to discuss any updates or issues with the changes in faculty chair responsibilities

Discussion: Management states that all feedback has been positive and that no issues have been reported. Everything is on track. **The Chapter states that the Faculty Chairs have asked that we look at the faculty handbook for the process of Faculty Handbook negotiations.** *Management states that Section 4 of the handbook and the appendices is still open.* **The Chapter will send over their letter and requests. Having this completed by the summer would be amazing.**

Part Time annual meetings/appointment letters.

Discussion: Management states they began being scheduled a short while ago.

Retirement Options

We have heard from a couple of members who never signed up for their retirement, and now must pay any back owed contributions. How is this being prevented in the future? We would also like good contact numbers for our members to arrange for repayment.

Discussion: *Management states that what we can do as a university is ensure an augmented onboarding for new employees in addition to what's already done. We need a systematic way of approaching reminders for employees to make a timely decision before the system forces a decision (by pushing them into ERS).* **The Chapter was able to connect with the Comptroller's Office about remediation for an existing employee who was part of a group that was incorrectly not placed into ERA, but it has been challenging.** *Management states that this is clearly a SUNY-wide problem and that the best we can do as a university is stay on top of reminding our employees about their deadlines. The Chapter can assist with this.* **The Chapter suggests maybe generating a report of folks who are eligible for retirement but who haven't been seeing a deduction in their paychecks.**