

UUP ESC Chapter Labor Management Meeting Notes

February 21, 2024

Data requests are in bold.

In Attendance: Pamela, Anna, Kelly, Janet Sophia, Tony, Michelle (LRS)

Management: Lindsay, Rob.

Faculty Annual Planning and Evaluations

- The chapter's expectation is that all procedures outlined in the negotiated section of the Faculty Handbook regarding evaluations and annual planning are followed exactly until new mandatory procedures are bargained to conclusion.
- Feedback and/or summaries of the annual planning meeting vary tremendously. The chapter requests a standard process by which faculty receive clear and thorough confirmation on the obligations discussed in the annual meeting.

Discussion: The Chapter's expectation is that the procedure in the handbook is followed until a new procedure is bargained for and bargaining is completed. Management states that SUNY BoT policy states that the Faculty Chair supervises faculty, and Empire is not changing the process, they're potentially changing the people who the supervisor is. The Chapter and Management disagree on the language in the handbook and need to decide on next steps: find common ground or move forward with an IP for failing to follow the negotiated handbook. Re: annual planning: The Chapter laid out inconsistencies in the process and feedback, and management agrees that things can/should be more centered with clear and thorough benchmarks.

Faculty Extra Service

- Many of the faculty members are well above their teaching targets. This is considered Extra Service, which is voluntary. What is the process of requesting a faculty member accept an extra service assignment, and where is their acceptance (and agreed upon compensation) recorded?

Discussion: Management states they are working through the process to get everyone paid; playing a bit of catch up at the moment. Extra Service has always been voluntary and requires forms to be signed and submitted. This is done through Interview Exchange. Management states they can provide refresher training for supervisors on the process, and the need to use it. The Chapter questions what happens if an employee does NOT want to do the extra service work and asks that Management think through that hypothetical scenario because employees have a right to turn down extra work. Management states that employees have the right to say no, and they have, so the opportunity is there. The Chapter explains that there are several ways that the mentee count is skewed by the process.

Related to Adjunct Members

- **The chapter requests a list of all adjuncts who teach in the Fall 2023, Spring 2024, and/or (so far) summer 2024, and that the list include their official supervisor.**
- Vacation payouts: the chapter requests details on the specific process and formula for determining payout of vacation time for adjunct members, including the calculation of days and their value.
- There are many concerns from departments that rely on adjuncts for more than 6 courses per each year. In addition, current enrollment growth is stalling instruction. How are exceptions granted? Is the University considering full time lecturer lines?
- Related to these issues as well as academic workload, and the issue of availability of courses for students, we again bring the issue forward of over-enrollment and the process of approval. Are there plans to add the instructor to the approval process? How does the 6-course limit relate to course caps?
- What instructions should we provide to adjuncts who want to take advantage of the newly negotiated eligibility benefit of combining work at multiple campuses for health insurance eligibility? Does the University have a form?
- What training do adjunct supervisors receive regarding general supervision, processes related to adjuncts, and adjunct benefits? When is this offered?
- Additional Question: why are new employees shown as “extra service”? Are they coming from another campus? Just today, we received a new hire report that listed Anthony Basile, Jennifer Bueche, Marcy Gaston, and Kelly Martin as faculty, but instead of listing UUP, under Negotiating Unit it says “Extra Service.”

Discussion: Management states that adjuncts are assigned to the ACs in their discipline; HR will send the list to the Chapter. Re: accruals: Lindsay will look into the issue of manual calculation versus formula. Term dates are being used to calculate adjunct accruals. Payouts are paid out by the termination date. *The Chapter asks how payout is calculated.* For adjuncts, vacation is paid out based on their last bi-weekly payment (which equals 10 days). Lindsay will send specific details to the Chapter. *The Chapter asks how hard and fast the no-more-than-6-credit rule really is?* Management explains that having adjuncts teach more than 6 courses per year can be problematic in that they may end up teaching a full time faculty workload, or in some cases more than that. If it's found that there's instructional needs that require new line faculty then that's a situation we want to know about in order to advocate for it. Chairs should be bringing those issues up. *The Chapter highlights that employees at the intersection of discipline qualifications might have two supervisors who maybe aren't in communication.* Rob explains that this highlights the need for a better process of making sure that communication is happening. Adjuncts can also self-advocate and let their supervisors know. *The Chapter wants to know why instructors are not part of the process to add new students to already full courses.* Rob will look into this and get back to the Chapter with more info and clarity. *The Chapter*

requests to see the trainings that Chairs are receiving on all of these matters. Management agrees.

Academic Restructuring

The UUP membership has brought forward many concerns regarding the proposed academic restructuring. ***The most common theme was to pause the implementation of any changes while data collection and input from the college community continues.*** Chapter leadership has encouraged all to submit the administration's survey, and brings the following specific concerns to labor/management:

Rationale and Timing

- There are many concerns of change fatigue, culture, and climate. There is no time to address these issues before navigating another major change.
- How did the idea of restructuring come about?
- Why must we change the structure to address the problems? According to the community town hall, identified issues include resources and communications. Why not address those issues directly?
- Why are we considering the changes during the search for a new Provost? Experience has told us that new administrators often look to reorganize their areas.
- Why are we considering major changes during a time of enrollment growth, and why are we looking to model our academic structure after institutions that are struggling?
- There is a general feeling of the process being rushed. There must be time for unpacking the proposals—and, before even doing so, time to examine the basic idea of shifting schools first. Several weeks and a couple of meetings for the community (general and now specific affinity groups) is not enough.

The Process

- The initial survey was assumptive, drove responses to restructuring and had leading questions. There is a feeling of predetermination and while there are one-hour meetings scheduled, there is a sense that the input will matter little in the final decision. Why are we not having more opportunities to discuss, beginning with the actual concept?
- Was there a cost/benefit analysis done on any proposal? **The chapter requests a copy of the analysis (or analyses).**
- Has there been an examination of the institutional processes and programming that will be needed? For example, Banner programming, communications, website changes, etc. **The chapter requests a list of those areas identified.**
- How have students been involved in this process?

The Proposals

- What specific administrative roles will there be in each model? **The chapter requests a departmental organizational chart for each proposal.**

- How will professionals be affected? Are there anticipated moves with either proposal, reorganization, supervisor and/or departmental changes?
- How will the proposals impact faculty supervision and evaluation (and a reminder of above: the chapter's expectation is that the negotiated faculty review process is unchanged until a new process is bargained to conclusion).
- How will this impact mentee assignments?

Impact on Current Schools

- Were there any other criteria, other than enrollment, used to group the academic departments? What if enrollment shifts?
- There are grave and concerns over the loss of school status for Human Services, SMAT, Nursing and Labor. These are incredibly important schools to Empire and their importance is lost in the proposals.
- Grad and Undergrad are run very differently. Why is grad being dissolved? Why are the other schools being dissolved?
- What current schools will be impacted in terms of accreditation?

Discussion: The Chapter wants to know why this process is happening now given how the change fatigue that's been identified by the climate committee and other committees. Rob explains that executing the Strategic Plan also includes asking what limitations or challenges might exist in executing the plan. The committee has mainly only been collecting feedback and questions, and will put those forth. They're largely looking at themes. The committee heads were charged with the work and isn't something they thought up on their own so they only have surface level answers. The Chapter asks why this would be underway while a Provost search is also underway. Rob explains that this is a long-term process. Perhaps it would not be prudent to have someone new come in and make these decisions versus having some of this work being done by those who are already here and know the university. The Committee's findings will be put forth to Cabinet, which may then lead to more committees and work for which any new Provost will likely be a part of. The Chapter reiterates member concerns about the survey and the models presented in the survey. Rob explains that the survey was one data point out of many, and that they've been able to get some valuable insight from the survey, including information about folks finding issues with the survey. The Committee is focused on some barriers that might exist for the strategic plan. Some changes may help some schools but not others. The Chapter brought up cost / benefit analysis being more than just dollars and cents but also students / student success, etc. These are all matters being taken into consideration and which are being included in the committee's notes. This is an exploratory process.

The Chapter expresses many concerns from members about the impact of a reorganization on everything from permanency and tenure to supervision, grad/undergrad, Labor and Nursing, and accreditation.

Follow Up: Professional Promotions

- **The chapter requests the number of professional vacancies that were filled in the last year, and of those, how many were filled through the internal candidate process.**
- How are search chairs notified of the internal process for most professional vacancies? Are they told to instruct their committee to not look at external candidates until they have reviewed the internal ones? Are they made to feel comfortable in using that process?

THIS ITEM IS MOVED TO NEXT LM.

Other Data Requests

- **The chapter requests a list of all courses taught by adjuncts in the Fall 2023, Spring 2024 and (so far) Summer 2024 terms, to include the course title, department, instructor, number of credits, and number of students enrolled.**
- **The chapter requests a list of all Independent Studies from the Fall 2023, Spring 2024 and (so far) Summer 2024 terms, to include the department, instructor, number of credits, and if there are multiple students.**

Work Location and Travel (added within minutes of sending agenda to management)

Regarding travel, we had previously confirmed that those who work completely remotely and have to travel to fulfill their responsibilities would be compensated. In addition, this is a change in terms and conditions and therefore subject to negotiations.

Discussion: Management explains that we're following the State Comptroller guidelines. Only employees whose locations have closed have seen a change in their assigned work location. Anyone who has a work location assignment to Saratoga would not be eligible for travel reimbursement. *The Chapter explains that the problem is that now that some of those locations have been changed to Saratoga, employees who were eligible for reimbursement now have to go out of pocket for travel costs. Some of the employees work upwards of 100 miles away from Saratoga and don't have a physical location in Saratoga.* Lindsay explains that the travel communication could have been handled better and they are actively working on how to make this better. There are logical concerns from employees who are "remote" but who are assigned to an actual location, like Saratoga. HR is looking for ways to resolve this.

Department Chair Teaching and Mentoring Obligation Guide (added by Rob Sanders—guide is in folder)

Our statement today is basically that we will forward to the workload negotiations team.

Discussion: *The Chapter states that there are nuances in the document that we will not support. There might be commonalities, but it's likely the Chapter and Management have different definitions of items in the handbook.* Rob says he shared the doc thinking this was just a matter of fixing typos. *The Chapter*

explains that we have an official negotiations team ready to negotiate the guide. Rob says they'll let us know management's next steps.