Empire State University

September 10, 2025 - Labor-Management Meeting NOTES

In attendance: Jason R., Emma B., Dianne R., Malongze F., Aley O., Sophia M., Sharon B., Rashmi P., Lindsey H.

1. Selden closure and the status of the university's other locations.

    - Management explains that the Brooklyn location will be closing; unforgiving timeline given by the landlord– all items must be packed up by September 24; management is trying to push the timeline back with the landlord and is working with staff to address needs as they're identified.
    - *The Chapter explains that when a location closes and there is an impact to an employee's work circumstances, that is a mandatory subject of bargaining.*
    - *The Chapter has questions regarding the next steps for employees: will they be given the option to relocate or be remote; will there be help with moving costs; what kind of physical supports will be available for packing and moving; etc.* Management explains that Facilities will be onsite next week to evaluate the volume of items and assist employees where they can. Staff will need to identify what needs to be moved and what can go to the trash. Management acknowledges that this timeline is stressful for employees and wants to help to mitigate some of that as much as possible. Mark Spain is having conversations with impacted employees who have religious conflict to come up with a viable moving schedule that does not overlap with a religious holiday.
    - *The Chapter stresses that everyone's living and commuting situation is different; not everyone has space at home for their office things; it's quite difficult to move things via subway.* Management acknowledges this and says that these things are being taken into consideration; things are fluid; the intent is to ensure that the right thing is done.
    - The Seldon closure was discussed in the President's State of the University.

2. Continue SALE discussion.

    - A separate meeting will be scheduled for this discussion.

3. Ongoing faculty and professional staff workload issues:

- UUP would like to schedule dedicated meetings to discuss the Directors of Academic Review, workload in the School of Nursing and Allied Health, and the imposition of additional work and extra service on professional staff and faculty.
  - Management asks for clarification of how "workload" is being calculated so that we're all on the same page. *The Chapter explains that it's more holistic than looking at a specific number. It's more about the amount of time it takes to complete the task within a specific timeframe vs how many things you have assigned to you. When there are changes made to assignments of individuals and an employee believes those changes have resulted in an increase in their workload then a discussion about their workload needs to happen. This can happen during the PP discussion w/ supervisor, but it doesn't always and the issue is not addressed. The next step is to bring HR into the discussion, and UUP.*
  - *The Chapter explains that we **need to set a meeting to negotiate** this in order to come to an agreement about how to define workload.*
  - The Chapter and Management agree that this discussion of the DAR workload should be addressed collaboratively in a separate meeting in order to properly and substantively capture and address the matter. Will need to include qualitative and quantitative information.
- UUP previously communicated with the Empire State administration regarding workload in a letter dated 20 August 2025. We confirmed that extra service or compensatory time would be offered to any person taking on extra work to assist with first enrollment advising.
- UUP also communicated with the Empire State administration regarding the School of Nursing and Allied Health in another letter dated 20 August 2025.
  - *The Chapter explains that mentors are reporting that how their workload is assigned has changed which makes it a mandatory subject of bargaining. It was done by courses for years and it is now done by targets. This needs to be negotiated with the union because it impacts the entire mentor group of SoNA.*
  - Management explains that the "lead faculty" were being given 20% release time, but "lead faculty" isn't a thing at Empire so essentially they're being paid more to do less which is inequitable to other faculty across Empire. *The Chapter explains that practice sets precedent: if these mentors have historically always received this type of workload and compensation, it cannot just be taken away without bargaining.*
  - Michelle, Jason, Rai, HR, and someone from the department will meet to understand what's been happening historically, the direction Management wants to go, and a plan proposed by Management to make that happen.

4.   Use of Artificial Intelligence at SUNY Empire. What are the administration's plans regarding implementation of AI tools?

- Management explains that AI will continue to be a part of employee and students' lives and Empire is working to increase support and learning resources for staff around AI. Management explains that his approach has been a bottom up approach to AI in leveraging existing internal interest around learning and using AI such as making AI training available, providing sample AI Policy language for faculty to use in their syllabi, finding ways to infuse Credit for Player with AI, finding ways to use AI in advisement, etc.
- *The Chapter explains that AI enhancements have the potential to have positive impacts on employees, but there are also unintended consequences and that Empire needs to be sure that any policy or projects comply with NY State labor laws around AI and its impact on employees.*

5.   New York State and SUNY financial outlook, and SUNY Empire budget model. UUP requests a budget summary showing the university's revenues and expenses including personnel costs. UUP also wishes to know the dollar value of the assets held in the SUNY Empire Foundation.

- Budget details were shared on 9/4 by the president and are posted on the SUNY Empire SharePoint site.

6. Upcoming supervisory training, and invitation to participate in sessions related to performance management. (as done previously)

- Management explains that part of the training includes workshop content that was built collaboratively by UUP and Lindsay (on PPs and evaluations). Michelle and Lindsay will collaborate on further / additional content for future workshops.
- *The Chapter explains there was some confusion from members on whether this was a UUP designed and approved workshop.*
- Management explains that the intent was to acknowledge that some of the content comes from material that was developed in collaboration with UUP in the past.

7. SUNY Empire's administration was recently accused of breaking laws. Please plan to identify details and specific scenarios so we can respond appropriately.

- Management asks for clarification about this. *The Chapter explains that the Cease & Desist letters are legal notifications letting Empire know that they're breaking Taylor Law around some issues (such as workload, extra service, etc.). When there is no response or a delayed response, that is an illegal issue. Under the statute of workplace requirements and procedures, not responding or delaying a response are considered*

illegal. And if they're not remedied the union can/will file an improper practice (which is how they are adjudicated). Management explains that these statements could have negative impacts on employees and it was disparaging because Management has in fact been working diligently to resolve employee issues. *Emma explains that it is inappropriate for representatives of management to weigh in on the language members and chapter leadership use. Union meetings are supposed to be safe spaces where members can express themselves without fear about how management will perceive it. We agree that language matters but that any discussion about how we use our platform must be internal.*

8. We would like to discuss how ESU can collaborate with UUP on AI technology and leveraging it for employee and student success.

- *UUP is still working to understand the impact AI has/will have across campuses.*