

President's Report – February 2026

Reclaiming Academic Quality and Equity: SUNY Oneonta Moves Toward a 3/3 Teaching Load

After years of persistent advocacy, strategic organizing, and unwavering commitment from UUP leadership, SUNY Oneonta management is finally taking meaningful steps toward restoring a 3/3 teaching load for tenure-track and tenured faculty. This progress represents not only a long-overdue correction to an inequitable workload but also a critical investment in the academic mission of the university.

This work began years ago under **former Chapter President Robert Compton**, continued through the efforts of **former Vice President for Academics Mark Ferrara**, and has been carried forward with determination by our current **Officer for Contingents, Melissa Lavin**. Their collective leadership, supported by countless members who raised their voices, shared their stories, and refused to accept the status quo, has brought us to this pivotal moment.

Management has now acknowledged what UUP has argued all along: if SUNY Oneonta is to remain competitive with peer comprehensive institutions, it must address the unsustainable teaching load that has long placed our faculty at a disadvantage. As a result, four departments—Sociology, Fashion and Textile, Psychology, and Communication Studies—have been chosen to participate in a pilot program aimed at developing a cost-neutral path to implementing a 3/3 load beginning in Fall 2026. All four departments have submitted the required attestations, signaling their readiness to move forward.

From UUP's perspective, this shift is not a concession; it is a correction. SUNY Oneonta has consistently ranked near the bottom of its peer group in terms of salary while simultaneously maintaining one of the heaviest teaching loads. For years, faculty have shouldered more work for less compensation, a reality that has strained morale, hindered recruitment and retention, and limited the time available for research, service, and student mentorship.

For these reasons, UUP does not view the 3/3 load as something faculty must “earn” by taking on additional responsibilities. We reject the notion that a reduction to a reasonable, competitive teaching load should be tied to increased expectations in other areas. Our members have already given more than their fair share. The 3/3 load is not a perk, it is a baseline standard across SUNY comprehensive campuses and restoring it at Oneonta is a matter of fairness, parity, and respect.

The benefits of this change extend far beyond workload equity. A return to the 3/3 load will strengthen the quality of instruction across the university. When faculty have the time and space to prepare deeply, innovate pedagogically, and engage meaningfully with students, the entire academic community thrives. Students receive more thoughtful feedback, more individualized attention, and more opportunities for mentorship. Faculty regain the capacity to pursue

scholarship and research, participate in shared governance, and contribute to the intellectual vibrancy of the campus.

Just as importantly, this shift has the potential to rebuild pride and morale by addressing the two areas that have suffered over the years: workload and compensation. When faculty feel valued, supported, and aligned with the standards of their peers across the SUNY system, their commitment to the institution deepens. A healthier, more sustainable workload fosters long-term investment in SUNY Oneonta's mission and strengthens the university's ability to attract and retain talented educators.

The movement toward a 3/3 load is not merely an administrative adjustment; it is a reaffirmation of what makes higher education meaningful. It is a recognition that quality teaching requires time, that faculty labor deserves respect, and that students benefit most when their instructors are supported rather than stretched thin.

UUP celebrates this milestone while remaining steadfast in our advocacy. The pilot is a beginning, not an endpoint, and we will continue to push for full implementation across all departments. Our goal is clear: a SUNY Oneonta where faculty workloads are equitable, student learning is enriched, and the university stands proudly alongside its peers.

This progress belongs to all of us. It is the result of collective action, persistent organizing, and a shared belief that our work, and our students, deserve better. As we move toward Fall 2026, we do so with renewed optimism and a strengthened commitment to building the university our community deserves.

Strengthening Our Voice: Oneonta UUP Launches New Member-Centered Communications

Oneonta UUP is taking an important step forward in strengthening how we connect, organize, and advocate together. In response to clear and thoughtful feedback from our members, the chapter is launching a redesigned newsletter that puts accessibility, clarity, and union priorities at the forefront.

Members told us they wanted a more unified way to receive information with one place to find updates on events, benefits, and key chapter news. We listened. With the dedication of our **Communications Committee, Matthew Unangst, Jessie Simpauco, Ethan Fox, and Anthony Nichols** we are rolling out a streamlined format that reflects the needs and expectations of the people who make this union strong. The new format is also ADA compliant.

This new newsletter will serve as a central hub for timely updates and event promotion, including RSVP collection for gatherings where lunch is provided. By coordinating this information in one place, we can ensure our events remain well-organized, welcoming, and accessible to all. To keep the newsletter focused and efficient, it will no longer include articles.

But our commitment to member engagement and academic freedom doesn't end there. Oneonta UUP is developing a new publication dedicated entirely to the articles, reflections, and reports that matter to our chapter. This publication will include Executive Board minutes, summaries from Labor-Management meetings, and contributions from members who want to share their perspectives, experiences, and expertise.

This new platform will not only inform—it will amplify the voices of our colleagues and strengthen our collective understanding of the issues shaping our campus and our profession. As a union committed to academic freedom, we believe in creating space for open dialogue and member-driven content.

As we move forward, your feedback remains essential. These changes are rooted in member input, and we want to continue building a communication system that reflects the needs and values of our chapter. We encourage you to share your thoughts, ideas, and contributions as we launch these new initiatives.

Together, we can ensure that our communication tools support our organization, strengthen our solidarity, and keep every member informed and empowered.