

General Union Meeting
Dec 12, 2012
Minutes

The meeting began at 2:35.

Rich pointed out that the university will approve approximately \$9 million on consulting at the December 13th Board of Trustees meeting, including \$7,300,000 on the OneMontclair project. He noted that the announcement about the consulting expenses at the Board meeting the following day (Dec 13) probably would not invite any remark and would be approved without any questions.

The minutes from the Nov 14 general union meeting were presented and unanimously approved.

Rich spoke about the upcoming Board of Trustees meeting. Twenty-eight faculty members would be receiving tenure; two faculty would be granted emeritus; and several professional staff would receive multi-year contracts. Rich said that everyone should make an effort to attend the meeting, because it would send the right message to the trustees. In his comments to BOT, Rich said he would note that Montclair State has turned a corner, and that it is now run like a business. The only issue that seems to matter is efficiency, to the exclusion of many other issues. Pedagogy, especially, is neglected.

Among other developments: the business school building is back on the University's agenda. We don't know what will happen to the T1 parking lot. A member concurred with Rich's statement about the changing nature of the university, and added that he didn't agree with treating the institution as a business.

Rich said that anyone could write to the trustees. They have to acknowledge the communication at the beginning of the meeting, but they are not required to divulge its contents. Members can also write to the faculty representative to BOT, Jack Baldwin LeClair.

Bill Sullivan pointed out that Montclair State is the only campus in the state that does not allow the attendees the opportunity to speak at the BOT meetings.

Ken said that the only principle that seems to be applied is the cost-benefit analysis, with the result that departments are increasingly run as cost centers.

A member asked why the BOT meetings are not videotaped. Rich said that they were and the video and minutes are archived in the library.

Instructional Service Specialists/Clinical Service Specialists (ISS/CSS)

Ken announced that a tentative agreement has been reached on the hiring of ISS/CSS, and only minor issues remain to be resolved. Department chairs can make requests to their deans for these positions. Rich said that the hires in these positions would be on a S-scale. They would receive an increment of 2.5% when their contracts are renewed but they are not on the salary guide as other faculty. The minimum salaries have been fixed as follows: those with a Master's would receive a minimum of \$46,000, whereas those with doctorates would be entitled to a minimum of \$56,000. They would also receive the same benefits package as

faculty and staff. The big difference, however, is that contracts will be for one calendar year and that the salary guide would not apply to ISS/CSS. The administration is taking the position that each of the contracts would be negotiated between the hiring agents and the individual in question. Anyone in the 13-0 category can be grandfathered into the ISS program, and would not be adversely affected.

For CSS, the responsibilities could include teaching two courses and other related allied work. Rich said that the Union negotiated hard on these positions. The Local had no hand in creating these positions, but the salaries and benefits were negotiated. In some ways these positions are better than 13-0, but not as good as tenure-track. The language we have states that the hires for these positions would be located in departments.

Bill Sullivan said that the creation of these positions should be seen in the broader context of the pro-employer laws in New Jersey. Although we have heard that the administration is claiming that the unions asked for these positions, this is not the case.

In response to a question, Rich said that the English department has to request these positions. The Union is not involved in anything that might hold up this process.

The ISS positions may entail teaching a maximum of twelve 3 credit courses (no more than four per term). The administration has assured us that those hired in these positions would know their schedule for the year in advance.

One of the concerns about these positions is their effect on the new tenure-track lines. Would these positions lead to a diminution in the new tenure-track lines? The Union is going to closely monitor the approval and number of these lines and their possible impact on tenure-track positions. One of the goals that the administration may be trying to pursue by creating these positions is reducing the number of adjuncts.

The process of hiring for ISS/CSS positions would be initiated by the departmental chairs just like any other departmental line.

In response to a question about where these positions may be created, Rich said that currently they could only be created in academic departments.

In response to another question about CSS, the Audiology Department was pointed out as a potential place where these positions might be created. The audiology department relies on internships, practica, and clinical experience. The CSS hires may be assigned a combination of teaching and supervising responsibilities. Another possible place might be the Counseling Department, which has a coordinator position that could be appropriate for a CSS. Rich said that, in general, we have no idea where the CSS positions might be created.

A question was raised about the University's financial condition. Rich said the managerial salaries in the previous year went up by 3.5%

Jennifer showed a sample care package the Local is arranging for students staying back in the dorms over the winter break. The packages should be deposited with Charity Dacey who is coordinating their collection.

Sick Time

Jennifer said that it has come to her notice that HR is monitoring the use of sick time by professional staff. Sick time use is tracked over a 12-month period. Use of more than 15 sick days over a 12-month period results in flagging, and documentation would be required for further sick leave. Our advice is to provide documentation (e.g. a doctor's note) for sick time requested, so that it doesn't count towards the 15 days. Currently, a doctor's note is needed in case where five or more days of sick time are being requested. Also, do not use your vacation time because you would need it. On January 1, a new clock would start for tallying the sick time. In response to a question about confidentiality, Jennifer said that the situation has been brought to our notice without any names being divulged.

Betsy announced that the professional staff luncheon was scheduled for Dec 22. She also reminded that the applications for performance-based promotions would be due in December. Regarding vacation time, she pointed out that up to 22 days can be carried over, but anything in excess of that would be lost. Sick time, on the other hand, can be carried over without limits.

Rich said that the Donated Leave Program applies to professional staff, but not faculty.

Mike Heller said that he did not have anything to report. On the expenses front, the Local is still waiting to receive back telephone bills from the University.

We have an upcoming deadline in March for MBKUW scholarship. The deadline to apply for these \$500 scholarships is Friday, March 1, 2013. Applications must be dropped off at the Local's office. Students who wish to be considered for this award are required to complete an application, write a short essay, and provide two letters of recommendation from full-dues paying members of the Local.

Rich said that we are expecting a higher volume of applications this year. Jennifer asked everyone to spread the word. Also, in the past some students got disqualified because they failed to follow the procedures. An announcement about the scholarship has been posted on the campus listserv. No announcement has been placed in the Montclairion, however. We have also provided a link on our Facebook page to The Essex-West Hudson Labor Council's scholarship award for high school seniors is now accepting applications. There are twelve of these scholarships available. Children and spouses of full dues paying members AFT Local 1904 are eligible to apply.

In response to a question about how BMKUW scholarships are funded, Rich said that the University Foundation manages the account and interest income is used for the scholarships. Rich also pointed out that expenses are tracked as chargeable or non-chargeable. There is a limit of 15% on the non-chargeable funds, that is, only a maximum of 15% of the collected dues can be used for purposes that benefit only members. Currently, the Local's use of non-chargeable funds is far below this threshold.

Kathy Hughes began her report by mentioning a non-reappointment by Provost, which was later reversed. She also advised that people should take advantage of the opportunity to meet with decision-makers all the way up to Vice President. Also, those going up for promotions, reappointments and other personnel action should keep notes. Kathy said that recently the Provost turned down for promotion a faculty member who is ranked highly in his field. A member of professional staff received his multi-year contract, but the language

in his contract makes his position contingent on the availability of grant funds. This is a departure from past practice. Kathy said she is continuing to work with a faculty member who has been forced to see a doctor, and who is running out of medical leave.

Jennifer said she and Dana are working on a tuition waiver program. We don't have a good precedence for it, as there is no campus in the state that has a program on waivers. If anyone has any language on waivers please let us know. We are also talking to Judy to have eight members on the Professional Staff Review Board. Jennifer also said that Judy Hain is thinking of overhauling the Career Development Program, but hasn't made clear when this would be affected. We wanted an announcement about it before we went on the break.

Ken and Dana spoke about the meeting with Judy Hain about the Career Development Fund (CDF). She assured Ken that the Career Development is a formative and not punitive process. The Provost is going to send out an announcement about CDF. There are priority areas, which would be given preference for funding. Anyone can apply but those with multi-year appointments would be given priority. In essence Career Development Funds are used for purposes not covered elsewhere. It would be easier to get funded for an objective, if it could be connected to need that has been identified during assessment

Dana announced that library employees could use the MLK day to cover one of the holidays.

Essential Employees

The university's deadline to respond to our request to negotiate is tomorrow. Other issues that we are working on include out-of-title work, professional development program and summer Friday schedules.

The sabbatical decisions were made recently. The provost gave Spring, one term sabbaticals to nine of the twelve of those who applied.

Ken pointed two ongoing issues that have irked many faculty members:

1. The unilateral raising of class caps by the provost. This action was not properly thought through and has created a difficult situation for the affected faculty. It appears that the administration can set the caps at any level they deem appropriate. We are arguing that setting the caps is their prerogative, but on-load credits are negotiable. So far we haven't received a positive response.
2. The intensity of requirements and expectations from the FSP program has increased. Many faculty members have been turned down or asked to increase their output.

Several of those present asked questions about the increased FSP expectations. Concern was expressed that the administration may soon start demanding grants for approving FSP.

Rich wished happy holidays to the members.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:01 pm.