

UUP Executive Board - Meeting Minutes

Meeting Information

Meeting Date/Time: 9.24.20 at 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Meeting Purpose: Meeting of the Executive Board UUP SB West Chapter

Meeting Location: Virtually with Zoom

Note Taker(s): Jackie Donnelly

Chapter Attendees (voting members*): Dominique Barone, Jennifer Carter, Paula Di-Pasquale-Alvarez*, Jackie Donnelly*, James Doyle, Josh Dubnau, Stacey Finkelstein, Amanda Flannigan, Crystal Fleming*, Tiffany Friedman, Nancy Gaugler, Jeffrey Heinz*, Shoshana Hershkowitz*, Odaliz Hernandez, Jennifer Jokinen*, Nick Koridis*, Richard Lakowski, Ken Lindblom, Pam Matzner, Charles McAteer*, Carrie-Ann Miller, Liz Montegary*, Joseph Pierce, Ed Quinn*, Joe Simonetti, Andrew Solar-Greco, Francesca Spedalieri*, Jan Tassie, Diana Tischler, Jason Torre, Colleen Walsh, Frederick Walter, Lisa Willis, Judith Wishnia*, Charles Wrigley*, Martha Zadok, Michael Zweig*

1 - Call to Order - Ed Quinn, Chapter President calls the meeting to order.

2 - Adopt Agenda - A call is made to adopt today's agenda. Motion - Jeff, Second - Judy

3 - Virtual Delegate Assembly - September 25, 2020

Ed Quinn (EQ) - The Delegate Assembly is happening tomorrow, log-in information should be emailed by the end of today. Website has more information in the "members only" area. Amendments and rules of order should have been sent out and are also on the website. There will be three main items covered: 1 - A report from Fred Kowal, 2 - A vote on constitutional amendment to allow for mail-in ballots, 3 - UUP budget for 2021.

Paula DiPasquale-Alvarez (P-DA) - States she has not received a confirmation, and that she registered on time.

EQ - Confirmation going out today, states he has a list of all delegates going, and he shows around 27 signed up. Reminds attendees to email Jeri if any questions arise.

4 - Startup of Fall Semester Classes

EQ - States there were a few bumps in the road and some technical issues. Almost all faculty who requested to teach remotely were granted that request. Opens discussion.

Jeff Heinz (JH) - Reports feedback from the Academic Council and states that most classes are being delivered online, and that he has not heard of anyone being required to teach in person. Students in face-to face or hybrid who have been given the virtual option seem to have chosen virtual regardless. Campus is very quiet Any update on telecommuting update?

EQ - Reports that there is no update as of today's call with chapter presidents. Negotiations still going on - pushing for it to be extended to the end of the year.

Josh Dubnau (JD) - Do we know the total number of students, faculty and staff on campus? What are the numbers?

EQ- We haven't gotten any numbers, it changes day to day.

JD - I have heard about 4,000 in total, but not sure how accurate that is.

EQ - Students who have moved back onto campus are around 4,500, and about 600 students who are connected with East Campus who had classes over the summer were staying on campus. So, the total amount was 5100, but not sure if that # is still accurate. Students may have left.

JD- How many UUP members?

EQ - I don't have numbers on that. Not sure if administration has those numbers.

JD - They should through self-screening.

EQ - Yes they should, I can request that.

Dominique Barone - Seems as though some employees are under the impression that the telecommuting agreement will go through the end of 2020.

EQ - Confirms he is hearing the same thing, and that he is sure they will come to an agreement next week when the current policy expires (October 2nd). As soon as I hear, I will let you know.

Crystal Fleming (CF) - What is our plan for the telecommuting in Spring? The union had a lot of influence in Fall, and we worked hard to get flexibility. Where are we at now? What is the next step? Important to act quickly.

EQ - Telecommuting policy is negotiated on the statewide level, and they will take the first step to extend beyond the current expiration date.

JH - On the faculty side of things, the provost sent a memo to department chairs on 9/17 stating

that classes with 45+ will automatically go online, and classes under will go to the dean/chair/department for decision - seems the same as Fall 2020. We have a LM meeting next week, so we will be sure to bring this up.

EQ - Yes, I have heard the same thing, departments are asking for the current practices to continue.

PD-A - Registrar is currently transitioning to socially distant time vectors, and moving the 45+ classes online. More information regarding teaching should be coming soon.

Tiffany Friedman (TF) - Asks about current testing practices - expresses concern that there is not enough testing happening. Where will we go for testing? What is the plan?

EQ- We have to work this out with the administration. We had to resubmit our opening plan and have to figure out a methodology for testing as outlined by the chancellor. Until plans are approved, we will start to work out those structures. We will focus on how faculty and staff will be tested, and will work closely with the HSC chapter on this. They have been doing testing all along.

TF - Does HSC have a method in place already that we can just borrow from?

EQ - Yes they do, and the LI Vets home is conducting testing 1x/week, so we will consult those plans.

JD - UUP SW signed an MOU with the Chancellor to use short swab and spit tests when possible, and that they will test faculty/staff at no less frequency than they are testing students. I posted in chat that SB is far behind peers in testing and transparency.

From the chat:

Binghamton (17K UGs) reports ~450 tests per day, M-F (total campus tests to date: 9490)

1251 in last week

1080 in previous week

635 previous week

Albany (17K UGs) reports ~300-500 tests per day around 4 days per week

1909 tests in last week

1987 previous week

Stony Brook (17K UGs): reports 10 and 260 tests per day, 4 days per week (total tests to date: 5322)

964 tests in the last week.

*351 tests in the previous week
646 tests the previous week
653 per week avg.*

*Rutgers New Brunswick: 37K UGs
Testing avg 2K per week on this campus.
Website is transparent about students vs employees.
Students: 1500-1800 per week
Employees: 200-300 per week*

JD - We are testing at half the rate of our SUNY peers, and for comparison, Rutgers is testing 2,000 per week. We need more testing, more transparent numbers and reporting. The test positive rate is not reflected accurately. I have been emailing LR since Aug 3rd repeatedly asking for more information about this, but I have not received a response. Ed, I had asked you to follow up with LR so can you update us on that.

EQ - I have not had a chance to do so.

JD - I am not getting a response on any of my inquiries.

EQ - I will send over today, I have been busy helping members.

JD - Can you copy me when you outreach? EQ agrees.

JH - Regarding testing: the information being presented is not consistent - the task forces are being told one thing and are reporting more testing when it seems there are less reported on the actual community dashboard. Can we push on this now that we have an MOU - improper practice?

EQ - Right now they are not testing employees, they are using long swab test only. In the MOU, if they select to use the long swab, it's not mandatory to test faculty and staff. Faculty and staff can get tested voluntarily. We can't file an improper practice against that, but we will relay up to SW and Fred can work with Malatras on this, and get on campus presidents. But again, we need to sit down with management to make this happen. This was just signed last week. Right now only testing is with students on campus. Fred Walter also did question those numbers on that task force. I don't know if it matches up. SW is looking at chapter trackers not just SUNY tracker.

JD - The current tracker is presenting #'s per week (per last 7 days), sliding window, not assigned to exact dates. SB is not testing everyday. Present data is displayed as an average over the last 7 days.

Fred Walter (FW) - Says that the #'s do not add up in terms of what the taskforce is reporting. There are discrepancies in the numbers. In the SW UUP tele-town hall, I asked Fred about the long swab. We are not testing students at any specific rate, and are testing them randomly. There is currently no protocol to test faculty and staff. We got an "A" for the presentation on our dashboard.

JH - Compared to other campuses, we have some work to do.

EQ - We should use our own testing facilities.

Shoshana Hershkowitz (SH) - How we can engage our members and what steps can we take? All of our members should fight for this, this is not just a chapter president fight. Can we involve the community?

CF - Asks for specifics and a timeline. Need an actionable plan that is timely - if we wait too long, then it's Nov, Dec, and then the issue of inadequate testing goes on. Here are some ideas: 1) a pay-day email to mobilize members to advocate for adequate testing - if no changes then 2) a statement issued by UUP sometime in October if there is no improvement and then if needed, 3) reach out to the campus/local media. We need concrete steps.

Andrew Solar-Greco (AS-G) - All mentioned ideas are great. We can also work with department reps and poll our members. We can write a letter to the editor - why is our testing lower?

Pam Wolfskill (PW) - Agrees with Shoshana - reports that the Senate EC is meeting Maurie soon. Will ask about testing/numbers. Chancellor is on campus today, arriving at 12 noon looking at testing sites.

SH - We took action in Spring & Summer, we need to do that now.

CF- If we as a chapter go public with these concerns, will this have a negative impact or perception from SW?

EQ - I don't anticipate that, SW has been supportive.

CF- So does our statement need to be in alignment with SW? SW has not been happy with our previous statements. We will need to get timely, quick feedback from SW if there is any issue with what we are communicating.

EQ - SW response should be quick. The Chancellor seems responsive. We can stay in communication. This is very high on their agenda, we should get an answer within a day or two.

JD - We were ahead of the curve when this all started, and pushed the envelope with statements on health and safety; we turned out to be right. And we should be prepared to play that role again. Our members' lives are being put at risk and we need to act. It is important to engage SW early on. We should come out with a strongly-worded statement soon.

EQ - Needs to be in line with SW - consistent messaging.

JH - Responds to a question asked in the chat: *“Did our advocacy make a difference? Do we have evidence of that? (Asked by Ken Lindblom).* Yes - confirms that chapter leadership advocated for a no penalty policy for faculty and staff. Non-medical reason is one concrete example.

Ken Lindblom (KL) - I have been involved in union for 5-7 years, and I have never seen this level of self-congratulation. It's great if we publish the impact, but we are assuming it is because of our action, and that may not be true. And then we say we accomplished all of this. I am in favor of powerful rhetoric when it is required, but if we do that immediately, we have eliminated what prior steps we had in place. With a change in administration, we need to be cautious and not move too fast to the nuclear options. We need to do it mindfully.

SH- I agree, we don't need to show our most aggressive card first, but in the age of Janus, it is important to let the members know how hard we are working on their behalf. There is inherent value in the union.

CF - Asks Ken to elaborate on this point of view and expression of doubt in the face of concrete examples.

FW - I wonder if we are conflating a bunch of things here. Results are good either way. And it is not just pressure from us, but pressure from the top, senate, chairs, etc. We are working as a team, but independently.

CF - What is the next step?

EQ - We need to prepare a statement and get some feedback. Perhaps a poll or survey.

FW - Maybe we send a poll in a week that is not a pay day week.

EQ - Motions to adjourn the meeting as time has run out, and requests that remaining agenda items be carried over to the next meeting.

5 - Planning for the Spring Semester

6 - COVID Testing at Stony Brook

7 - Status of Reopening Committees

8 - Update/Clarification on comment in notes by Jaime Dangler on

**“Non-Renewals/Appointment Letters – Reports as of 8/21/2020” from Chapter President’s call wherein it was attributed to Stony Brook West Campus that
“Administration is trying to combine sections of classes so they can reduce costs. Implications on health benefits and income. Chapter has been focused on trying to work it out within departments.**

9 - Professional and Academic Council Updates

10 - Adjournment