

Tentative contract agreement going to full membership

UUP's Negotiations Committee voted unanimously Jan. 10 to submit a tentative 2007-2011 contract agreement to the full membership for a ratification vote. The vote came after the committee had a daylong briefing at UUP headquarters on the proposed new pact.

Following the committee's action, UUP Acting President and Chief Negotiator Fred

Floss said the union will soon mail a newsletter to all active members detailing answers to frequently asked questions regarding the tentative pact. Floss and members of the Negotiations Team will also be visiting every UUP chapter to explain the agreement and answer questions from members. The briefings will begin next week, but a statewide schedule has not yet been finalized.

"The steps we will follow will give every UUP member the opportunity to learn the details and cast a ballot on the agreement," Floss said.

UUP and the Governor's Office of Employee Relations reached agreement on a tentative four-year deal Dec. 19.

Floss called the tentative agreement "a fair and equitable contract for all our members — academic and professional, fulltime and parttime. "The agreement provides competitive salaries and benefits that will attract and retain top-quality faculty," he said.

Highlights of the tentative pact include the following salary increases:

- 3% retroactive to July 2, 2007, or Sept. 2007.
- 3% beginning in July 2, 2008, or Sept. 2008.
- 3% beginning in July 2, 2009, or Sept. 2009.



Negotiations Team members review provisions of the tentative contract agreement.

Photo by Karen L. Mattison

- 4% beginning in July 2, 2010, or Sept. 2010.

The agreement features other benefits, including:

- A one-time \$500 service award to employees who will receive permanent or continuing appointments, or a second, five-year term appointment, at their current campuses during each year of the contract;

- A \$500 service award lump-sum payment to part-time

employees who have completed at least eight consecutive years at their current campus;

- Location stipends, increasing up to \$3,026 for employees in the downstate area and up to \$1,513 for employees in the Mid-Hudson region;

- Discretionary salary increases of 1% in each year;

- A \$200 contribution per eligible employee by the end of the contract to the UUP Benefit Trust Fund; and,

- A new labor/management program providing tuition benefits to UUP dependents.

There will be no percentage increases in the employees' share of the cost of health insurance premiums, with only small increases in their co-pays.

The agreement also features a Pre-Tax Transportation Program that would reduce employee mass transit costs, and a continuation of support for the UUP/NYS Joint Labor/Management Committees.

UUP members will receive ratification ballots from the American Arbitration Association (AAA) later this month, and will have 21 days to cast their votes. AAA will receive and count the returned ballots.

UUP commends governor's call for more faculty

Gov. Spitzer is on the right track in linking state investments in public higher education to the future of the state's economy according to UUP Acting President Fred Floss, who was at the Capitol to watch the governor deliver his State of the State address Wednesday (Jan. 9).

"The governor reaffirmed his commitment to higher education and to a strong state economy by calling for 2,000 more full-time faculty for the state's public university systems," Floss said. "Rebuilding the ranks of our full-time academic and professional faculty at SUNY and CUNY is absolutely critical to rebuilding New York's financial future, and we applaud the governor for seeing that connection."

Floss said he and other UUP leaders are eagerly awaiting the release of the governor's proposed budget later this month to see if state funds for the new faculty are included.

"The full funding for these new faculty lines in the budget would be a major investment in SUNY's future," Floss said. "SUNY needs a reliable funding stream to be certain the funds are there to move the University and our economy forward."

In his address, the governor proposed the establishment of a \$4 billion endowment for public higher education that would be financed by privatizing at least part of the New York State Lottery.

The governor also asked that the process for community college students who want to transfer to four-year SUNY and CUNY schools be made "simple and seamless." Floss said in order for that to happen, SUNY must have more full-time faculty to accommodate those additional students.

"Over the last several years, SUNY reported that it turned away 7,500 qualified community college students because of the shortage of full-time faculty," Floss said. "The state must provide public funds for enrollment growth, including the growth we expect to see from community college transfers."

The governor also proposed designating SUNY's university centers at Buffalo and Stony Brook as flagship campuses.

Reminders/Upcoming meetings

FEB 7 —UUP Executive Board meeting, Albany

FEB 8-9 —2008 Winter DA, Albany

FEB 12 —UUP Legislative Luncheon, LOB, Albany

(excerpts of selected newsclips)

The New York Times —Jan. 10

Governor doesn't seek tuition rise for colleges

www.nytimes.com/2008/01/10/nyregion/10tuition.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

Gov. Eliot Spitzer's State of the State message was filled with benefits for New York's public universities, including 2,000 new full-time faculty members and the creation of an endowment of at least \$4 billion.

Conspicuously absent, however, from his speech was any embrace of the recommendation of a commission on higher education that the state free its public universities to raise tuition without state approval and to charge different prices at different campuses.

"It is off the table for this year," said a top aide to the governor, speaking on condition of anonymity because Spitzer's budget had not been unveiled. "The governor feels strongly that he needs to prioritize what he can accomplish this year, and he believes the endowment is very, very important."

Spitzer's 30-member commission on higher education reported last month that the state was losing its competitive edge and called for it to clear up a \$5 billion backlog in maintenance and construction at its public universities, to hire 2,000 new full-time professors—including 250 academic stars—and carry out tuition changes and other steps.

Spitzer accepted the call for new professors and added his own proposal for the endowment.

But the Legislature has been adamant about holding down tuition at SUNY and CUNY and keeping it equal across campuses. The last tuition increases were in 2003, when SUNY's tuition for state residents jumped 28%, to \$4,350, and CUNY's jumped 25%, to \$4,000. They were the first increases in eight years.

Some of Spitzer's ideas drew praise. Frederick G. Floss, acting president of UUP, the union that represents SUNY faculty members, said, "The full funding for these new faculty lines in the budget would be a major investment in SUNY's future."

But CUNY and SUNY officials expressed disappointment that the governor shied away from giving them more sway over tuition. SUNY's interim chancellor, John B. Clark, a commission member, lauded the proposals but said modest tuition increases were also "important" because the last ones were five years ago. "We are still beating the drums," he said. "We will be talking to people."

Some university officials also questioned whether there would be funds for improvements if the lottery plan did not pass and there was no tuition increase.

Senator Kenneth P. LaValle, (R-Port Jefferson), chairman of the Senate's higher education committee, said that he did not oppose modest tuition increases, but that he did

not like nonuniform tuition rates.

Assemblywoman Deborah J. Glick, (D-Manhattan), chairwoman of the Assembly's higher education committee, also strongly opposed differing tuition.

Both lawmakers, however, said they were willing to consider the governor's proposal to create a large endowment for SUNY and CUNY by selling a portion of the state lottery to a private owner, but needed more details before making any decisions. ...

Newsday —Jan. 10

Spitzer: Stony Brook should be "flagship" school

www.newsday.com/news/local/state/ny-licoll0110.0.5889265.print.story

Gov. Eliot Spitzer added his voice to a chorus of higher education advocates by calling for the hiring of 2,000 full-time faculty over five years for the state's public colleges during Wednesday's State of the State address.

Spitzer also proposed designating Stony Brook University and the University at Buffalo as "flagship" institutions and called for funding to support "cutting-edge" research at public and private universities—both of which he said would propel economic development.

Spitzer also called for bringing together Stony Brook, the private Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, and Brookhaven National Laboratory, the federal facility Stony Brook co-manages, to form "a peerless cross-disciplinary research engine in areas of cancer, neurobiology, plant genetics and bioinformatics. The economic benefit for Long Island will be tremendous," Spitzer said.

Stony Brook President Shirley Strum Kenny said such an alliance would be unlike any other in the country.

Spitzer's proposals stemmed from recommendations from his Commission on Higher Education, which delivered its report to Spitzer last month. ...

Kenny said she was "thrilled" by Spitzer's comments. "This is the first recognition in many years that SUNY should have flagship campuses, as other state institutions do. ... As important as all the campuses are in serving the needs of the state, national recognition is based on the flagship campuses."

She hoped the designation, if approved by the state Legislature, would mean additional research funding. Clark said SUNY was waiting for the budget proposal, expected on Jan. 22.

"If you have appropriate funding for Buffalo and Stony Brook to be great universities, you're going to put this state system on the map," Kenny said.

Spitzer's support for full-time faculty increases was especially welcomed. Fred Floss, president of UUP, noted 1,600 more full-time faculty are needed to restore student-to-faculty ratios of 15

years ago.

Calvin O. Butts III, president of SUNY Old Westbury, said more full-time faculty enhances the quality of instruction by, among other things, creating more consistency. "If you have adjuncts, you never know if you will get the same adjuncts from year to year." ...

The New York Sun —Dec. 27

Public universities may place adjuncts on full-time track

[URL: http://www.nysun.com/article/68632](http://www.nysun.com/article/68632)

State officials are recommending that New York's public universities mine their ranks of adjunct faculty for the 2,000 new full-time faculty the universities are seeking to hire by 2013. But the proposal is meeting resistance from many tenured professors, who say giving preference to part-time staff could restrict faculty searches and lower the quality of their departments.

In an 85-page report outlining measures the state could take to repair its public higher education system, a commission on higher education appointed by Governor Spitzer identified a lack of full-time faculty across the board at all 64 state and 23 city university campuses as a major problem with the system. The commission recommended hiring at least 2,000 new full-time faculty over the next five years to lift the system and stimulate economic growth in the state.

"The adjunct faculty are of a very high quality and many are qualified to be full-time," a senior advisor to Spitzer who has worked closely with the commission, Lloyd Constantine, said in an interview when asked where the universities would look for new hires. "There's an indication that there is a readily available group, and hires would come from adjunct faculty." ...

The faculty union has long been pushing for adjuncts—the lowest-paid instructors in the system—to be hired on tenure tracks. "You have a lot of people who are heavily qualified," a past president of UUP, Nuala Drescher, said. "When you have people who have been committed to the institution, it's moral to give them the first crack at it." ...

The New York Sun —Dec. 20

Republicans Balk at Plan to Boost State Spending on Universities

[URL: http://www.nysun.com/article/68384](http://www.nysun.com/article/68384)

Senate Republicans are warning Governor Spitzer that Albany won't be able to afford what it would cost to adopt the recommendations made by his higher education commission.

Republicans are signaling they will refuse to fund the commission's plan unless the governor meets their budget demands in other areas, including education spending, health care, and property tax cuts. Senate officials also say the commission may be underestimating the cost of its proposed initiatives. ...