

Make your union meetings successful

As a UUP leader, one of your basic responsibilities is to conduct successful meetings. While that task may sound easy, leading meetings requires lots of advance planning to make sure you accomplish your objectives.

In order to achieve your objectives, start by thinking about the purpose of the meeting, what you expect to complete, and what are the basic goals of your committee or group.

Do you have an agenda? That question may be considered confrontational in other contexts, but if you don't have an agenda, chances are your meeting is going to be a failure. Your agenda should include the entire list of items to be discussed at the meeting. Take care as to where you place topics on your agenda. Matters taken up toward the end of the meeting tend to be rushed or deferred. On the other hand, placing a controversial topic too early could consume a hefty amount of your meeting time.

When leading the meeting, make sure that your audience knows what the goals are.

Listen carefully to the discussion, and move the meeting along if an individual is monopolizing the discussion. Provide an atmosphere where participants feel comfortable and free to express their opinions. Having a positive attitude along with being enthusiastic and interested will help stimulate the discussion.

A number of other considerations figure in to having a successful meeting, such as how to arrange the seating. For example, a simple circular table may be best for a small committee meeting, but if



you're having a general membership meeting, a theatre-style arrangement where the main speakers are standing and your audience is seated on three sides may be the best way to go.

This advice is meant to be just a brief overview on how to hold effective meetings. We've borrowed some of the advice offered by our NYSUT labor relations specialists at UUP training sessions, but it serves as a base, if not a reminder, of what it takes to hold quality and productive meetings.

Contract negotiations continuing

Negotiations between UUP and the state on a new contract are scheduled to resume again next week.

"We hope these sessions will be productive and bring us much closer to agreement on a new contract," said Chief Negotiator and VP for Academics Fred Floss.

"We have been and continue to be firm in our talks as part of our goal to negotiate a good contract for our members," Floss emphasized.

Both sides expect to exchange another round of counter proposals on several issues, including health benefits, funds for UUP's Benefits Trust Fund, and direct compensation, among others.

So far, representatives from the Governor's Office of Employee Relations have yet to formally present UUP with a salary offer.

Watch for negotiations updates that will be posted on UUP's Web site at www.uupinfo.org as new developments occur.

Reminders/Upcoming meetings

NOV 22-23 —UUP Office closed for Thanksgiving

NOV 30 —UUP Executive Board meeting, Albany

DEC 7-8 —AFT Leadership Conference, Washington, D.C.

DEC 14 —UUP Executive Board meeting, Albany

DEC 24-31 —UUP Office closed for Christmas

JAN 1 —UUP Office closed for New Year's



The UUP Officers and staff want to wish you a very happy Thanksgiving!

(excerpts of selected newsclips)

THE BUFFALO NEWS — Nov. 16

Student fees rising on SUNY campuses

Headed by UB, extra charges can cost up to 42% beyond the tuition

<http://www.buffalonews.com/home/story/207870.html>

In a world of soaring college costs, tuition at the State University of New York's four year schools has remained the same for the last five years — \$4,350 a year for state undergraduates.

But that doesn't include the technology fee charged to keep students wired.

Or the athletics fee to support sports and recreation.

Or the health fee to run the campus medical center.

And there are more, such as a student activity fee, or maybe a parking fee.

Add it all onto the tuition, and the tab, as it is for the University at Buffalo, could be an additional 42.9 percent.

UB has the highest student fees in the system — \$1,868 a year, according to state figures.

"The small things do add up," said Rohan Dsouza, a UB senior.

Financial aid from the state doesn't help — that goes toward tuition.

But unlike SUNY tuition, student fees continue to creep up — \$40 here, \$60 there — slowly chipping away at the pocketbooks of students and their parents.

While state lawmakers like to avoid being in the politically unpopular position of approving a tuition increase, schools — which set campus fees themselves — often turn to fee increases to keep up with rising costs.

Over the last three years, fees at SUNY campuses, other than community colleges, have been raised as little as \$52 at the State College of Optometry and as much as \$241 at Purchase College in Westchester County, state figures show.

"These fees are a way of helping us close the gap to provide the services the students have come to expect," said Kenneth H. Levison, vice president for administration at Geneseo State College. "It's not a perfect solution." And it's not just SUNY.

Fees at private U.S. colleges went up by an average of 6 to 8 percent last year, according to the College Board, which annually tracks college costs.

Meanwhile, fees went up by an average of 8 to 9 percent at four-year public schools, some of which have modest tuition but impose thousands of dollars in fees.

Earlier this year, Geneseo State — often recognized as one of the best bargains — proposed an "academic excellence" fee of as much as \$1,000.

"I think most people don't know about it, even at Geneseo. It will be interesting to see what happens if it is implemented," said James Bryant, 31, a senior at the college. "I would definitely be upset."

Geneseo State wants to establish itself as a premier liberal arts college, and the extra funding would help it make advances, such as hiring addi-

tional full-time faculty, Levison explained.

For now, Levison said, the proposal is stuck in sort of a bureaucratic limbo, while the governor's new Commission on Higher Education considers better practices for raising tuition SUNY-wide....

While UB — the largest SUNY campus — has the largest fees, close behind are the University at Albany, at \$1,668, and Binghamton University, \$1,662. All are research centers, and they argue that their institutions simply cost more to operate.

UB, for instance, shuttles its students between campuses and runs a Division I-A athletics program, said Dennis R. Black, UB's vice president for student affairs.

"We're trying to do more for our institution, more for our students, and that requires a greater investment," Black said.

Dsouza, 22, a delegate on SUNY's student assembly, thinks UB students generally are satisfied with the services provided by fees and expect their college costs to go up somewhat.

"It depends on if students are paying for college or their parents are paying," said Bryant, who represents four area colleges on the SUNY assembly. "I definitely know there are students who are paying themselves who have noticed the student fees going up. I think people are upset, they just don't know what to do about it."

Fees — which are capped by SUNY annually — rose \$92 at Buffalo State College this year, to \$1,025; \$56 at Geneseo, to \$1,166; and \$60 at Fredonia State College, to \$1,192, state figures show....



The Daily Star — Nov. 14

Prof named Fulbright scholar

http://www.thedailystar.com/archivesearch/local_story_318040034.html

A SUCO professor will have the chance to study abroad next year, thanks to an international organization based in the United States.

A project by Robert Compton, an associate professor in the political science department at the State University College at Oneonta, has been chosen for a fellowship by the Fulbright Scholar program, according to a news release from SUCO.

"I'm gratified and honored to be selected," he said Tuesday.

The award will allow him to conduct research and lecture at the University of Zimbabwe, in Harare, the capital of the southern African country.

He will be working there during the first half of 2008 to study the effectiveness of civil society groups, including labor unions, neighborhood associations and student and women's groups, that are participating in Zimbabwe's parliamentary process.

Compton, 43, joined SUCO's faculty in 2001 and teaches courses including comparative public administration and international political economy. His research interests include southern African political development, according to the release. He

also serves on the board of advisers of the Center for International Development, which is part of the SUNY system.

College spokeswoman Carol Blazina said the college has had several Fulbright winners during the last few years. "This emphasizes the talent we have here," she said.

Compton was one of 800 faculty and professionals nationwide to be chosen for the 2007-08 year.

He said he did a lot of groundwork before making his proposal. This included timing his stay in Zimbabwe to match his sabbatical. If he were to be away at another time, "it would pose a hardship on the department," he said. ...



The New York Times — Oct. 23

College Costs Outpace Inflation Rate

http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/12/us/12compensation.html?_r=1&adxnnl=1&oref=slogin&ref=education&adxnnlx=1195243327-0y3C313jy85fc9DowRtanQ

Tuition and fees at public and private universities have risen this year at more than double the rate of inflation, with prices increasing faster at public institutions, the College Board said.

These increases in the cost of higher education continue to drive up the amount that students and families borrow, with the fastest growth in private loans, the reports found.

Tuition and other costs, not including room and board, rose on average to \$6,185 at public four-year colleges this year, up 6.6% from last year, while tuition at private colleges hit \$23,712, an increase of 6.3%. At public two-year institutions, average tuition and fees rose 4.2% to \$2,361.

Last year, tuition and fees at public institutions rose 5.7%; at private ones, 6.3% and at public two-year institutions, 3.8%.

"The average price of college is continuing to rise more rapidly than the consumer price index, more rapidly than prices in the economy," Sandy Baum, a co-author of the report who is a senior policy analyst for the College Board and a professor at Skidmore College, told reporters at a news conference yesterday.

Those price increases reflect increases in the sticker price that colleges advertise, though, Ms. Baum said, the average student does not pay that full amount. At public universities, the average student gets about \$3,600 in grants and tax benefits, lowering the actual cost to around \$2,600. At private institutions, aid totals about \$9,300, bringing the cost to \$14,400.

But even the net price, after taking into account grants and other forms of aid, is rising more quickly than prices of other goods and than family incomes. In recent years, consumer prices have risen less than 3% a year, while net tuition at public colleges has risen by 8.8% and at private ones, 6.7%.