



UNH Administration And AAUP At Second Impasse

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DURHAM, N.H. – The University of New Hampshire administration and the UNH chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) today declared a second impasse in the current round of contract negotiations. Mediation could begin in February.

Following several months of informal talks, the administration recently presented two formal proposals to the AAUP leadership. Both were rejected.

“We put two proposals on the table because we sincerely want to settle this contract, not only for the university, but for the faculty who deserve a fair and reasonable salary increase,” said Candace Corvey, the UNH administration’s chief negotiator. “We hoped that by presenting two options we would give the AAUP leadership a range of possible pathways to agreement that would lead to a settlement.”

Two-Year Option Provides 9 Percent Across-the-Board Salary Increase

One of the administration’s options is to settle on a two-year contract, with a total 9 percent across-the-board salary increase – 4.5 percent for each of the two years. In addition, the University has offered to set minimum salaries for FY07 at \$52,000 for Assistant Professors, \$62,000 for Associate Professors, and \$78,000 for Professors at an additional cost of .5 percent.

The AAUP has rejected numerous suggestions from the administration for a process to distribute merit/equity. While the two-year option would not include merit/equity, the proposal would create a joint faculty/administration university-wide committee to recommend a merit/equity process for the next contract, effective July 1, 2008.

The 9 percent increase over two years is in line with the average salary increases of the other New England land-grants for FY07 and FY08 combined. The 4.5 percent annual ATB increases are well above the ATB portions of salary increases at the other New England land-grants, and exceed known inflation rates.

Three-Year Option Provides 13.5 Percent Across-the-Board Increase and .75 Percent for Merit/Equity

The second formal proposal from the administration to the AAUP is a three-year contract with a total ATB salary increase package of 4.5 percent in FY07, 4.5 percent in FY08, and 4.5 percent in FY09. In FY09, there is .75 percent available for merit and equity for a combined total of 14.25 percent. This proposal would also establish the new minimum salary levels by rank as described above at an additional cost of .5 percent.

Both Proposals Include Benefits Changes as of 1/1/08

The University’s proposals also call for the AAUP to accept changes in health benefit costs and plans that are already in place for other university system employee groups. In exchange for

accepting these changes, UNH agreed to mitigate the impact on faculty through lump-sum additions to salary beyond those described above.

Both salary increase packages and proposed benefits changes with associated mitigation were rejected by the AAUP leadership.

“President Huddleston has made it very clear that the administration wants the contract settled as soon as possible,” said Corvey. “We hoped that by offering more than the independent fact-finder recommended last July, by placing more of the increase in the ATB portion than other New England land grants, and by offering both two and three-year options we would be closer to achieving a settlement.”

Dick Cannon, UNH vice president for finance and administration, says that the University faces significant financial pressures, including the need to limit tuition and fee increases and to increase need-based aid. In addition, there is an enormous deferred maintenance problem that the USNH Board of Trustees will focus on soon.

John Cochran, the independent fact-finder, recommended a total compensation increase for faculty of 13.5 percent over three years, including the cost of implementing the salary minimums. He wrote in July that budget forecasts beyond FY07 were grim. He emphasized:

- “Evidence for future years is far less positive....projections about increased emergency costs, employee benefits, and financial aid obligations cannot be ignored.
- “...evidence about deferred maintenance costs that must be addressed in future years is un-rebutted.
- “At the same time, there are limits to the University’s ability to increase its enrollment, and any enrollment increases may be offset by increased expenditures.”

(The full fact-finder’s report can be found at <http://www.unh.edu/academic-affairs/pdf/factfinders-report.pdf>)

According to state labor law, the University and the AAUP will now engage in mediation and, if necessary, fact-finding, again. These processes require neutral, third parties who are in a position to encourage further efforts to resolve the challenges that lead to impasse.

“The latest salary increase offer is consistent with economic and marketplace realities, as well as with the University’s desire to ensure that faculty compensation levels are fair and facilitate the continued recruitment and retention of outstanding faculty,” Corvey said.

The last contract that was settled in 2003 remains in effect until both sides agree on a new contract.

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