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Media Relations

UNH And AAUP Reach Tentative Agreement On Contract For FY10

June 4, 2010

DURHAM, N.H. -- The University of New Hampshire (UNH) announced today that it will recommend the University System of New Hampshire (USNH) Board of Trustees approve the tentative agreement reached with the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) to accept the recommendation of an independent fact-finder for a 2.5 percent average salary increase for faculty effective Jan. 1, 2010. Of the 2.5 percent increase, 2 percent would be delivered across-the-board to all faculty and .5 percent would cover merit/equity awards. The total cost impact to the university for FY10 would be 1.25 percent of the faculty salary base.

If the AAUP membership votes to ratify this agreement and if the USNH Board gives its approval, the parties will move to formalize a one-year contract, effective July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2010. The next meeting of the USNH board is June 24.

The report from fact-finder Allan Drachman was received by both parties on May 14 and, in accordance with N.H. statute, the parties had 10 days to consider the report before making it public and declaring their intentions to accept or reject it. By mutual agreement the parties extended the consideration period through yesterday.

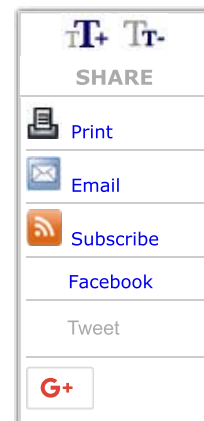
According to Candace Corvey, UNH chief negotiator, going into fact-finding "the university had stretched hard to offer a 2 percent increase with an effective date of Jan. 1, 2010. Moreover, the university has made plain since last fall that any FY10 increase would be contingent on agreement by June 30, 2010. In the interest of compromise we stretched to the outer limit to achieve closure prior to June 30 by accepting the fact-finder's recommendation for FY10. This is clearly in the best interests of our faculty and the university community as a whole."

The fact-finding report included a second recommendation that the parties consider a two-year deal for FY10 and FY11, but the magnitude of the recommended increase for FY11 was impossible for the university to accept. "The fact-finder recommended that the FY11 increase be effective Jan. 1, 2011, and be equal to the average of the contractual increases of our comparator institutions. At the time of the fact-finding hearing two of those institutions had not yet determined their increases," said Corvey, "but now we know that the average of the group is 3.7 percent." The eight comparator institutions are the New England land grants plus SUNY-Buffalo, Delaware, and Rutgers.

Corvey indicated that there are three major considerations that must be balanced to reach a fair and sustainable settlement—ability to pay, cost of living, and market position. No one factor should overwhelm the others. "Naturally, the university is deeply committed to the long-term competitiveness of faculty and staff salaries, and is pleased that faculty salaries are currently at market. But, an increase approaching 4 percent at a time when the economy of the state is so precarious, inflation is very low, and the families of our students are struggling more than ever before to cover the cost of education would have been imprudent." Corvey observed that an article released recently by the Associated Press declared "...core inflation rose over the past year at the slowest pace in 44 years."

The parties worked intensively since the issuance of the fact-finding report to reach agreement on a two-year deal, but the differences between them were too wide. "It was disappointing for both of us to have to fall back to just a one-year settlement, but it is better to have a one-year deal at this point than none at all," said Corvey.

The parties have agreed to begin negotiations for FY11 and beyond in the early fall. Pending future agreement, the FY10 contract will remain in force after its June 30, 2010, expiration date. "We are eager to get into a cycle where new contracts are settled before prior ones expire and will continue to work hard toward that end," said Corvey.



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