

To the University Community,

As Fiscal Year 2018 gets underway, and with the recent passage of a budget that includes state funding for Western Illinois University, I would like to take this opportunity to update the University community regarding the ongoing negotiations with the University Professionals of Illinois (UPI) WIU Chapter 4100, which represents 612 WIU faculty and professional staff.

We have been meeting with UPI leadership since October 2016 in an effort to come to a mutually acceptable agreement. Unfortunately, we have yet to reach a consensus for a new agreement. The initial proposals from both parties were typical of the negotiations process and our hope was that both parties would move toward a compromise. After 10 months of discussion and agreement on certain non-economic issues, unfortunately, we have not made satisfactory progress or an agreement on substantive provisions. A summary of the most recent and significant on-the-record economic proposals from each side is outlined on page two.

Therefore, the University has requested a mediator in an effort to make the negotiation sessions more productive. In the spirit of cooperation, the University requested that UPI WIU Chapter 4100 join us in asking for mediation; however, UPI has declined the joint request.

Mediation has many benefits, not the least of which is to bring a neutral third party to the process. The mediator not only brings new ideas, but a fresh perspective, which can be used to facilitate discussions and identify priorities. The process also allows the parties to pursue, through off-the-record discussions, alternatives to solve ongoing contract disputes. However, the facilitator will not decide the agreement for the parties. Thus, for there to be an agreement, both sides need to compromise to reach a consensus. It is our hope that an objective third party will guide the parties to focus on the key issues and encourage effective communication so an agreement can be reached.

As you know, while the University has received a budget from the state, it is 90 percent of the FY15 state appropriation. It is important to also reiterate that the University did not receive an appropriation from the state for two years and the institution's funds in reserve were depleted. Coupled with the reduction in funding, and the lack of appropriated funding over those two years, tuition revenues are expected to decrease by approximately 10 percent. It is also likely payments from the state will be delayed in light of the backlog of pending bills. It is going to take a great deal of effort and time to overcome the negative effects of the budget impasse. Looking ahead to next year, there is no guarantee a budget delay will not occur once again. Even if there is an assumption of a timely budget and receipt of funds, history has taught us that future state and tuition revenue are not guaranteed. As such, we must focus on reducing costs, implementing structural changes and generating additional revenue to position Western Illinois University for the future.

Our goal is to situate the University so we do not again experience abject uncertainty, which was commonplace during the budget impasse. For these reasons, we must move forward with facilitation of the negotiation process in an effort to achieve the changes needed for future growth.

Now is the time to move our institution forward together and to continue fiscally responsible practices to ensure Western's viability.

Sincerely,

Russ Morgan  
University Contract Administrator  
Associate Provost for Academic Affairs

## **Summary of UPI and WIU Economic Contract Proposals (as of Sept. 18, 2017)**

### **UPI Proposal:**

- Reduction in workload from 22 to 18 Academic Credit Equivalents (ACEs) for Unit A and from 24 to 21 ACEs for Unit B.
- Waiver of one tutored study course per year (per the deferral Memorandum of Agreement) to become permanent.
- Annual salary increases (in the final three years of the contract) tied to Consumer Price Index (90 percent of CPI increase).
- Increase overload from \$1,000 per ACE to \$1,500.
- Reduce involuntary overload from one to two classes per academic year, but if a second is needed, then the faculty member would receive double payment (e.g., \$3,000/ACE).
- Rejects WIU's promotion proposal and instead proposes that current minima lanes and promotion amounts be retained for Unit A, and increased for Unit B faculty, and implemented for ASPs, and all UPI members with four-plus years of service can request a salary increase at any time (Art. 29).
- Increase promotional dollars from \$95/month to \$150/month for associate faculty after six and after 10 years of service and convert to longevity-based system for both "promotions."
- Create new promotional structure for ASPs with increases of \$100 per month after six years and 10 years.
- Four-year "Professional Achievement Award holiday," if WIU agrees to reduce workload per UPI proposal. PAA amounts equated for all units (i.e., Unit A and B both get \$1,530 added to base), but only eligible every fourth year.
- Travel fund of either \$250,000/year or equal to administrative travel.
- Limit course preparations to a maximum of five/year and award an extra ACE for the fifth preparation.

### **WIU Proposal:**

- Beginning FY19, 3 percent annual salary reduction for duration of contract. However, UPI (with FY15 revenues) or WIU (with 5 percent decrease from previous fiscal year) may request to reopen agreement to bargain over salary increases/decreases.
- Beginning FY18, up to eight furlough days per year (during winter/spring break) with UPI right to request to reopen to reduce furloughs with achievement of FY15 revenue.
- Beginning FY19, eliminate automatic minima bumps/lanes, instead increase promotions to \$1,000/month for Unit A and \$400/month for Unit B (generally after six and after 11 years).
- Beginning FY19, revision to PAA system to create merit-based payment for employees beginning after 10 years of service coinciding with four-year evaluation cycle (lump sum payment in following year not added to base). Similar cycle for Unit B. Lump sum payments of \$1,530 for Unit A and \$900 for Unit B.
- Beginning FY18, revise summer session compensation to an incentive based-system.
- Beginning FY19, eliminate compensation for travel for distance delivered courses.
- Eliminate payment by the University (through appropriated funds) for 30 ACEs of UPI reassigned time each year, instead allow unpaid release time.