

Update from Statewide UUP President, Fred Kowal

Colleagues,

So much has been occurring in the past couple weeks and there are times when I fear that those of us at the statewide level and at many chapters simply can't keep up with the various issues we're all dealing with, nor can we keep the flow of information moving as quickly as it should. This quick message is meant to give you a brief run-down on the issues we're working on at both the chapter and statewide level. We're also working on a weekly Update message, which will be going out regularly to all of you on these efforts.

First, there already is a great place to start for regularly updated information. Our [website](#) has a direct link to all information related to the Coronavirus. Just click on the Coronavirus link at the top of the page and it will take you to a listing of resources, including a portal which members are using to post questions to us, the videos I'm making to detail what we're working on, and numerous other items. There will be an updated Q & A which reflects the most recent progress we've made on issues and the new ones that are coming up thanks to input from so many of you, especially our chapter presidents, who are providing great information to us on a daily basis.

So, to start, go to www.uupinfo.org and you'll be up to date.

Second, here's a list of the issues that we're dealing with now:

- Personal Health and Safety issues, primarily at the SUNY hospitals, but also for our members who have interactions with students and others at the campuses, e.g., residential life, financial aid, EOP, admissions, etc...
- Overtime/Extra-Service pay for those who are at the hospitals, working on IT issues for online education and adjuncts doing the prep work for online work.
- Childcare needs, primarily for those who are at the hospitals.
- Working to insure that the lists of essential personnel who have to report to campus is reduced to a minimum. **NOTE: The Governor announced, 3/29, that Non-essential state employees would continue to work from home at least until April 15. That's an additional two weeks. Extending it further will be considered as we get closer to the 15th.**
- Working to insure that the telecommuting agreement is working well for our members.
- Working to make sure our members' reappointment, tenure, and permanent appointment procedures are followed in a way that protects our members' professional status and health.
- Protecting the work we do in the online teaching environment, both in terms of intellectual property rights and the temporary nature of this work.
- Protecting the exclusivity of our work, while accepting that the use of volunteer labor is needed at the hospitals during this crisis.

There are other areas that we are working on both at the chapter and statewide level. The work involves multiple teleconferences with SUNY and the Governor's office daily. But we are making progress on them. We are also doing amazing work at protecting our members at the chapter/campus level thanks to the hard work of our chapter presidents and LRS's. And the work will continue for as long as the crisis continues. Please take advantage of email and the portal on the website to let us know if there are other issues you feel we need to address. Our members need to know that their union is working with them and for them. We will continue to do all that we can to make sure we are all safe, both physically and professionally.

These are difficult days. But the work we do together empowers us and from it, we draw the energy, determination and hope that we will get through this. Please take care of yourselves and your loved ones.

In Solidarity,

Fred

Happy Monday!

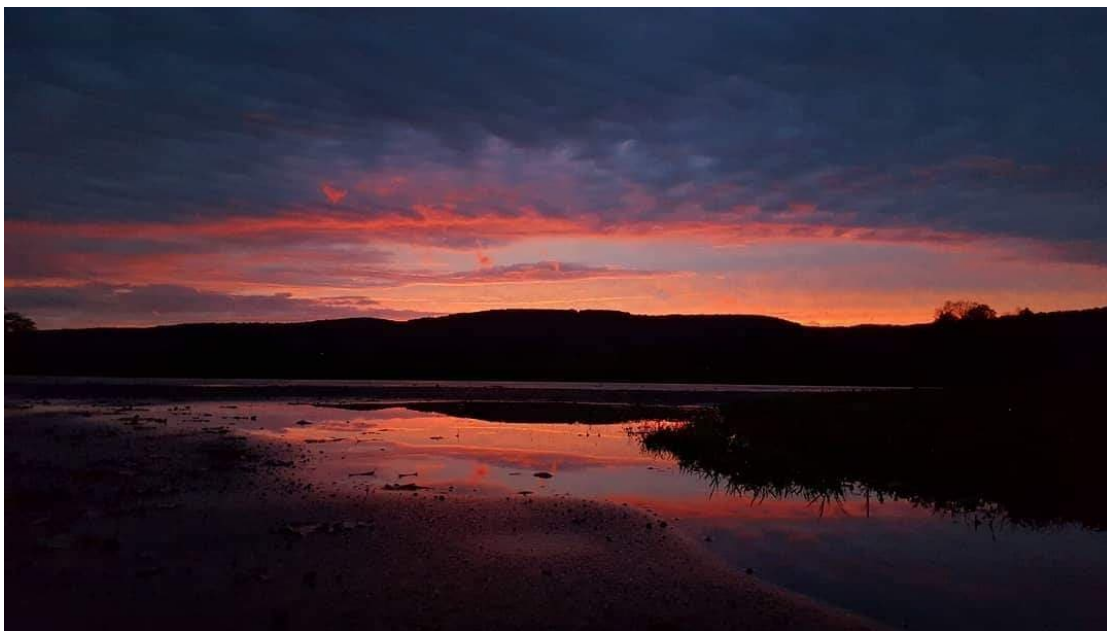
I wanted to wish you all happy, positive thoughts for the coming week, may it be full of things to be grateful for. I have added two of my favorite photos that I've taken to this issue. Sunsets overlooking the old Polo fields in Gilbertsville, the reflection is in a puddle on the side of the road. This is one of my favorite spots to take sunset pictures, especially after it rains. I wanted to share because I think that there is beauty in everything, even puddles. I am grateful for storms because they leave behind a whole new world of beauty to be found if you are open to seeing it.

I hope you are finding these updates useful and that you all have a wonderful new week!

Kerry

DAILY QUARANTINE QUESTIONS

1. What am I grateful for today?
2. Who am I checking in on or connecting with today?
3. What expectations of "normal" am I letting go of today?
4. How am I getting outside today?
5. How am I moving my body today?
6. What beauty am I creating or inviting in today?



College Implements Spending Controls

The mounting costs of responding to COVID-19 are certain to be unprecedented for the nation, state and our campus. To mitigate the pandemic's impact on SUNY Oneonta's finances, we are taking several temporary steps immediately.

Limiting Purchases

All purchases will require justification and approval, and will be allowed only to:

meet essential operating and educational requirements through the end of the current fiscal year, June 30;

prepare for essential operating and educational requirements for the next fiscal year, which will begin July 1, where a significant ordering lead time is required; and respond further to COVID-19.

Examples of essential operating and educational requirements include contractual obligations, compliance requirements and other critical goods or services to meet operational or educational requirements where the failure to procure or pay would result in a critical disruption to campus operations or directly disrupt instruction.

Campus Supply Room purchases are not exempt from the criteria listed above. The Supply Room will review requisitions and forward any questions that arise to the Division of Finance and Administration for follow up with the submitting department and appropriate Cabinet-level officer.

Halting Use of Procurement Cards

Departmental procurement cards are now deactivated. All requests for purchases will go through the Office of Procurement and Travel. Attach to all purchase requisitions an Essential Spending Justification and Approval Form, with approval from the appropriate Cabinet-level officer.

Curtailing Travel

Travel is hereby limited to essential purposes. All travel request applications require approval from the appropriate Cabinet-level officer. The Division of Finance and Administration will decide whether to approve or deny such requests.

Streamlining Processes

To the degree possible, submit all forms to the Procurement and Travel Office via email and attach an email thread documenting their approval by appropriate supervisor(s). "Sign" all forms electronically or by typing your name on their signature lines. **This two-factor approval, by form and email, will take the place of written signatures during this temporary process.**

Centralizing Management

The Budget Office will now manage all account allocations and reduce currently available allocation balances. As essential purchases are approved, the Budget Office will restore allocations to the accounts that fund them. Unit-level allocation transfer requests will not be necessary.

Exceptions include only those funds that are not allocated within the campus' operating budget. Such exceptions are few:

university-wide program allocations;

externally funded grants or gifts;

the SICAS Center; and

externally funded capital projects.

We expect these spending controls to continue through the end of the fiscal year. Their goal is to conserve resources while allowing the college to meet essential needs. Your support will help the college financially weather the pandemic. Thank you for your sacrifice and understanding during this challenging situation.

Links and Information from the World Health Organization (WHO)

The world is currently striving to manage an outbreak the likes of which we would have preferred not to see in our lifetime. Collectively we are doing everything in our power to prevent further infection, care for the sick and keep physically and mentally healthy in environments that are in many cases completely different to what we are used to.

As you will have seen, WHO is working on all fronts to contain this outbreak. An important element of our work is, of course, providing guidance on mental health and psychosocial support for health workers, managers of health facilities, people who are looking after children, older adults, people in isolation and members of the public more generally.

[Coping with stress during COVID-19](#)

Helping children cope with stress during COVID-19

<https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/helping-children-cope-with-stress-print.pdf>

Social Media Live Q and A Interview with WHO on coping with stressors related to COVID-19

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/WHO/status/1237372330696798208?s=20>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WHO/videos/819204905251053/>

For the latest information on COVID-19, you can also follow @WHO on our social media channels for the latest information.

[Facebook](#); [Twitter](#); [YouTube](#); [Instagram](#); [LinkedIn](#)

More Updated Information

- **New Yorkers can call the COVID-19 Emotional Support Hotline at 1-844-863-9314 for mental health counseling.**
- **New Yorkers without Health Insurance can apply through [NY State of Health](#) within 60 days of losing coverage.**
- **Non-essential state employees would continue to work from home at least until April 15.**
- **Tax deadline moved to July 15**
- **NY Primary Elections have been moved to June 23, 2020. To request an Absentee Ballot please contact your county Board of Elections.**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding employment, benefits and/or services, please contact Kerry at oneup@oneonta.edu