

United University Professions



2019 Legislative Priorities

1

Funding for Full-Time Faculty & Staff

- State funding for SUNY dropped from \$1.36 billion in 2007-08 to \$700 million this year—that’s a decrease of nearly 50 percent, or a third of its core operating budget.
- A number of campuses have cut—or are strongly

considering cutting or eliminating—necessary programs and services to close widening budget gaps.

- Programs like the Excelsior Scholarship and the expected enactment of the Dream Act will continue to grow enrollments at SUNY colleges. There are insufficient numbers of full-time, tenure-track faculty to teach classes across SUNY, and class sizes grow each year as enrollments increase.

UUP urges the Legislature to:

- Increase SUNY’s operating budget by \$30 million to hire more full-time, tenure-track faculty and professional staff to meet expected enrollment growth while maintaining the University’s commitment to excellence. This would be a good first step toward accomplishing the governor’s goal of increasing diversity among SUNY faculty.
- Require SUNY to provide a plan outlining how the \$30 million would be allocated to hire additional full-time, tenure-track faculty.

2

Close the Tuition Assistance Program Gap

- The “TAP gap,” the portion of SUNY tuition that campuses must waive for TAP awardees, is a loss of about \$62 million annually that SUNY’s state-operated campuses absorb. This “TAP gap” is equivalent to the annual salaries

of over 500 new full-time, tenure-track faculty.

- The “TAP gap”—and the general underfunding of SUNY—threatens students’ access to and completion of their education.
- More than 40 percent of TAP students attend SUNY schools; over one-third of SUNY students at state-operated campuses receive TAP aid. About a quarter of students at state-operated campuses receive the maximum TAP grant of \$5,165—which covers only 75 percent of SUNY undergraduate tuition.

UUP urges the Legislature to:

- Add \$65 million to the budget to eliminate the “TAP gap.”

3

Fund SUNY Academic Medical Centers

- SUNY's hospitals turn no one away, regardless of whether the patient can afford to pay for care.
- Our public, nonprofit hospitals do not turn a profit and shouldn't be expected to do so. That is not their purpose.

The care, treatment and safety of the hundreds of thousands of patients served by these facilities is a direct state responsibility.

- The SUNY state hospital subsidy was eliminated in 2018, replaced by one-time funding through the federal Care Restructuring Enhancement Pilot program.
- Unlike any other state entity, SUNY's academic medical centers pay for their employee fringe benefits and debt service costs, a total annual expense nearing \$500 million. The subsidy was \$153 million before the Great Recession and is needed to offset these costs.
- In addition, SUNY hospitals rely on Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) funds. This payment is a reimbursement for the care provided to patients without health insurance or other means to pay.

UUP urges the Legislature to:

- Restore the \$87 million hospital subsidy for SUNY's three state-operated hospitals.
- Introduce and pass new legislation for all audited entitlements through DSH to be fully recognized, matched by state funding from state Medicaid funding appropriations.

4

Increase Campus Foundation Transparency & Accountability

- SUNY campus foundations and SUNY-affiliated nonprofits are not subject to the New York State Comptroller's auditing oversight. The campus foundations are conduits for hundreds of millions of dollars; a

significant portion of those funds come from public funding and student fees.

- Many of these organizations contribute little to the academic missions of their campuses, despite being established to fill that purpose.
- A 2018 state Comptroller's report found that more than half of all SUNY campus foundations haven't been audited by SUNY over the last 10 years.

UUP urges the Legislature to:

- Require campus foundations to submit annual budgets to SUNY for approval.
- Restore the state Comptroller's authority to audit SUNY foundations and create a new System Administration compliance unit to ensure that foundation expenditures and transactions are in line with SUNY's mission statement.

