

UNITED UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONS

GUIDE FOR PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT UUP

What is UUP?	6
Membership Matters	6
Membership Dues	7
Know Your Rights	7

MEMBER PROTECTION

Labor Relations Specialist.....	8
---------------------------------	---

NEW EMPLOYEE BASICS

New Employee Quick Notes.....	9
Prior Service Credit	9
Attendance Records	9
Retirement Options	9
Classification of Work	9

DOCUMENTING YOUR WORK

The Importance of Documentation	10
Appointment Letters	11
Types of Appointments	12
Performance Programs	14
Performance Evaluations	16
Appeal Unsatisfactory Evaluation	17
Professional Development	18

PROMOTION AND SALARY INCREASES

Promotion and Salary Increases	19
--------------------------------------	----

UUP AND SUNY ADVOCACY

VOTE COPE	21
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WELCOME FROM FRED KOWAL

Sisters and Brothers,

On behalf of United University Professions, I'm pleased to present to you this Guide for Professional Employees.

We in UUP face many challenges that directly impact our lives as professionals. This guide is one resource we can provide to help you pursue your career in SUNY. At the same time, we are working diligently to protect the interests of academics and professionals across our SUNY institutions.

These efforts will continue so that our University becomes, once again, the standard by which all public higher education institutions are compared.

I wish you continued success in your career in SUNY.



In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'F. Kowal'.

Frederick E. Kowal
UUP President

INTRODUCTION

Dear Professional,

Welcome to UUP. This guide is a snapshot of the governing documents that all professional employees use throughout their employment and careers at SUNY.

Three documents that are crucial to your success at SUNY are: your appointment letter, your annual performance program and your annual evaluation. These documents impact employment renewals, promotions, salary increases and permanent appointment. It is important to become familiar with the contents of these documents from your first day of employment.

Take care to retain these documents because of their importance in your career development. Your appointment letter provides the basic terms of your employment. Your performance program records duties and responsibilities that you are assigned for an annual period. Your annual evaluation is based on your performance of the duties and responsibilities in your performance program.

You are encouraged to take an active role in the development of your annual performance program. UUP offers a wide range of professional development opportunities for you to grow and have an exceptional career throughout your tenure.

The contents of this guide outline a basic road map for professional success. Many sections have direct links to the contract and the SUNY Board of Trustees. I wish you all the success in your career at SUNY. I invite you to be active in your union. And I am always here to help you with any questions or concerns you may have.



In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carolyn Kube". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Carolyn Kube

UUP Vice President for Professionals

518.640.6600

WHAT IS UUP?

UUP is the nation's largest higher education union, representing more than 42,000 academic and professional staff and retirees. UUP comprises 32 chapters, across 29 state-operated SUNY campuses. The campus designations are as follows: comprehensive; technical; specialized colleges and university centers, including three Academic Medical Centers with teaching hospitals in Brooklyn, Syracuse and Long Island.

UUP Members are affiliated with the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the National Education Association (NEA) and the AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations).

🔗 For more information see: <https://uupinfo.org/history/howweare.php>

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

As the nation's largest higher education union, UUP is on the front lines of the fight for better terms and conditions of employment for its members, and better outcomes for patients and students.

UUP is a union comprised of over 495 professional titles and over 40 academic titles. Membership is not automatic, so signing your membership card is required to become a member! UUP negotiates for all Academics and Professionals in our bargaining unit. Union membership affords you a voice in your union governance, the ability to run as a Delegate, vote in union elections and vote on the union contract.

Members also have access to the voluntary benefit programs provided by UUP and its affiliates that range from insurances, mental health resources, travel discounts and professional development, as well as representation in grievances and disciplinary matters.

You must be a member for five consecutive years prior to retirement to take advantage of the Vision, Dental and Life Insurance benefits.

🔗 **Membership Benefits Trust Fund:** <https://uupinfo.org/benefits/btf.php>

🔗 **UUP's Contract:** <https://uupinfo.org/contract/pdf/22-26/State-UUP-Agreement.pdf>

🔗 **SUNY Policies of the Board of Trustees:** [https://www.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/boardoftrustees/SUNY BOT Policies.pdf](https://www.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/boardoftrustees/SUNY_BOT_Policies.pdf)

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Membership to UUP is not automatic. Annual membership dues are 1 percent of your base salary. Dues are directly deducted from your paycheck and are tax deductible in NYS. Your membership makes our union stronger and gives us the ability to fight for your rights and better compensation in the workplace.

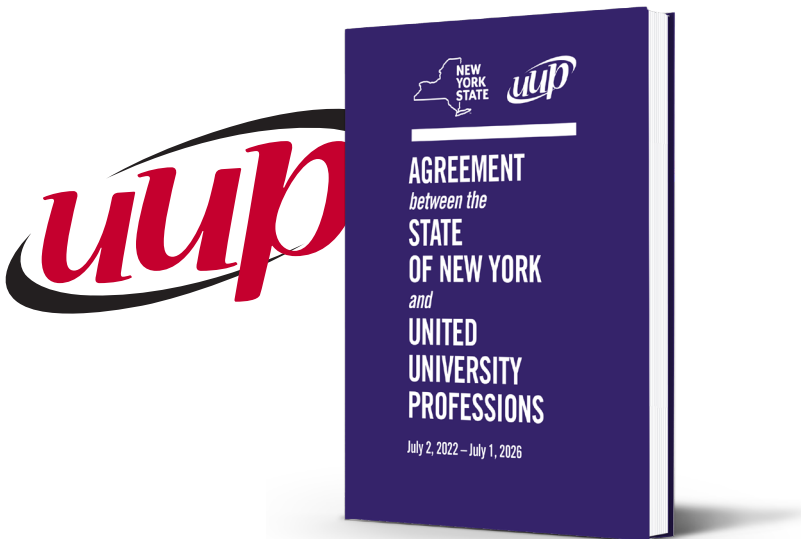
🔗 <https://uupunion.org/myuup/Membership/index.php?HP=Y>

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

As a member, you have the right to consult with the union regarding terms and conditions of employment, as outlined under the Taylor Law.

The UUP contract and Taylor Law prohibit retaliation against employees for exercising their right to consult with the union. Protected activities include participating in UUP-sponsored events, addressing work-related issues, circulating petitions or running for a position in union governance.

UUP takes any retaliation seriously. If you feel you are a victim of retaliation, contact your union office. All information is kept confidential. No action is taken by the Union unless explicit request by the member is received.



LABOR RELATIONS SPECIALIST (LRS)

Each Chapter in UUP is assigned a NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist. Labor Relations Specialists (LRS) have extensive experience with the UUP contract and work closely with your Chapter officers. They:

- Enforce negotiated contract provisions through the grievance procedure
- Assist in Labor/Management meetings with the Chapter President
- Represent you in discipline issues and contractual grievances
- Consult with members on a variety of topics such as benefits; workload; compensation; and other terms and conditions outlined in the contract.

KNOW YOUR CHAPTER

There are 32 Chapters in UUP across New York state. Each Chapter is governed by Bylaws. The Bylaws dictate the structure of the Chapter. Generally, each Chapter has an Executive Board, Chapter President, Vice President for Professionals, Vice President for Academics, Treasurer and a Secretary. Some Chapters may have additional officers such as a Membership Development Officer, Officer for retirees, Contingent officer and DEI officer, along with a VOTE-COPE Coordinator and Grievance Chair (Academic and Professional).

If you have an issue with the Terms and Conditions of employment, it is best to consult with your Chapter Office.



NEW EMPLOYEE QUICK NOTES

PRIOR SERVICE CREDIT

Employees who were previously employed at another SUNY institution have an opportunity to request up to three years of prior service to be transferred to their new position at the new SUNY institution at the discretion of management.

Each individual should contact their HR office for the appropriate paperwork.

➤ [SUNY Board of Trustees Policies, XI, Title C.4\(c\) \(1\)](#)

ATTENDANCE RECORDS

New employees should acquaint themselves with the attendance policies on their campus. See Article 23 in the contract for all categories of paid time off, including sick time and annual leave. This article will also detail all other types of leaves.

RETIREMENT OPTIONS

There are several retirement options available to you and you must make a decision within 30 days of your start date.

This quick guide can assist you in your decision making:

➤ <https://www.suny.edu/retirement/>

Please contact your HR department.

CLASSIFICATION OF WORK UNDER FLSA

UUP bargaining unit members are unclassified service per New York State law. UUP professionals are classified into two categories under the Fair Labor Standards Act as Exempt or Non-Exempt. Exempt Employees are not eligible for overtime pay. Non-Exempt employees are eligible for overtime pay. Title-designated employees are eligible for on-call/recall. (See Appendix A16 of the current contract here <https://uupinfo.org/contract/pdf/22-26/State-UUP-Agreement.pdf>.) All employees in the UUP bargaining unit have a professional obligation to meet as defined in their Performance Program.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WORK DOCUMENTATION

Documentation is important when considering salary increases, promotions and workload increases. It is important to maintain good documentation from the beginning of your employment.

Appointment Letter. This establishes the terms and conditions of your employment (Article 30).

Performance Program. Every Professional Employee should have a yearly Performance Program. The Performance Program establishes the duties of the employee (Appendix A28).

Performance Evaluation. Every Professional Employee should receive an evaluation annually (Appendix A28).

Counseling Memorandums. Both UUP and Management recognize the importance of progressive discipline and corrective action. Counseling Memorandums are meant to be corrective actions and are not considered disciplinary actions. If the action in the Counseling Memorandum is corrected and no other Counseling Memorandum on such action is issued within 3 years, a UUP bargaining unit member can request to have the counseling memo removed from their official personnel file (see Appendix A-36).

OTHER TYPES OF DOCUMENTATION

Other types of documentation include:

- Annual reports, letters of commendation, awards granted
- Training records/ handouts
- Meeting minutes



APPOINTMENT LETTERS

When you begin employment at a state-operated SUNY campus, you will receive an appointment letter from the college president or the chief administrative officer. Your appointment letter, and any other subsequent renewal appointment letters, are important documents and should be kept in a safe place.

The letters will contain the terms of your appointment and must contain these elements:

- Salary level (SL1-SL6)
- NYS payroll title
- Type of appointment (term, temporary or permanent appointment)
- Duration of appointment (start and end dates)
- Basic annual salary or rate of direct compensation
- Effective date of your appointment
- Whether you qualify for health insurance and other benefits (if you are a part-time employee)

You should review your appointment letter when you receive it and ask for clarification on any items about which you have questions. Your UUP Chapter is also a resource for any questions you may have about your appointment letter.

Discipline procedures are found in Article 19 of the contract.

If you believe you are a target of a disciplinary action, ask to contact your UUP Chapter office and invoke the following rights:

- You should ask the subject matter before questioning and have the ability to confer with your representative privately before questioning begins.
- To have a representative present during the interview to provide assistance
- To offer statements/evidence to prove/support your vision of the incident

TYPES OF APPOINTMENTS

It is imperative that you be aware of your appointment type. The types of appointments for employees are outlined in The State University of New York Policies of the Board of Trustees - Article XI - Appointment of Employees (See page 7 for a link to the Policies of the Board of Trustees.)

Temporary appointment may be terminated at any time. Temporary appointments are ordinarily given only when service is to be part-time, voluntary or anticipated to last for one year or less, or when the initial appointment is made to a position vacated by a professional employee who is serving a probationary appointment, or when a position has been vacated by an employee on an approved leave. (Policies of the Board of Trustees, Title F. Temporary Appointment)

Part-time employees who have a temporary appointment, with four or more consecutive semesters of service, shall be moved to a term appointment. This appointment type can be nonrenewed with 45 days notice. These can be applied to time toward permanency.

Special note for part-time employees with four or more consecutive semesters of service: Part-time employees are ordinarily given a temporary appointment when initially hired. However, further employment of part-timers who have served four consecutive semesters shall be on the basis of a term appointment. (Policies of the Board of Trustees, Title D. Term Appointment)

Term appointment. Term appointment may be given to any person. It is for a specified period of not more than three years, which automatically expires at the end of that period unless terminated earlier because of resignation, retirement or termination. Term appointments are typically appointed for one year.

Permanent appointment may be granted to a professional after completing seven consecutive years of full-time service, with the last two years served in that professional title. You may request early consideration for permanent appointment upon completion of three or four consecutive years. The last year must be in the title. (Policies of the Board of Trustees, Title C. Permanent Appointment) Athletic appointments: See SUNY Policies of the Board of Trustees, Title D. Term Appointment.

Probationary appointment is for a period of one year. A probationary appointment must be granted to a professional employee holding a professional title in which permanent appointment may be granted when the employee is appointed to a different professional title or to a professional title in Appendix A. (SUNY Policies of the Board of Trustees, Title E. Probationary Appointment). See page 6 for link to the contract.

Probationary appointment for Hospital Employees: New employees are placed on a 3-month probationary appointment. (Appendix A-56)

Five-year term appointments are granted for professional titles listed in Appendix A of the Policies. (Policies of the Board of Trustees, Title D. Term Appointment)

Athletic appointments: Appendix B titles

- Division I campuses—Athletic director and staff shall be appointed for a year to a maximum of five years.
- Division I Revenue and Non-Revenue Producing Sports—Coaching titles receive a term appointment of one year to a maximum term appointment of five years, provided their coaching and coaching-related duties account for 75 percent or more of their professional obligation.
- Division III sports whose coaching and coaching-related duties account for 75 percent or more of their professional obligation shall receive an appointment of one year up to a maximum term appointment of three years for the first four years of employment. (If the professional obligation contains less than 75 percent coaching or coaching-related duties, then an employee should receive a regular appointment.)

Following the fourth year, employees with athletic appointments shall receive a term appointment of three years. (Policies of the Board of Trustees, Title D. Term Appointment)

Fundraising titles in Appendix C receive an appointment of one year to a maximum term appointment of three years. Following the fourth year of employment, these employees receive a minimum term appointment of three years. (Policies of the Board of Trustees, Title D. Term Appointment)

As illustrated, the types of appointments for professional employees have various definitions. It is important to understand completely all of the requirements and conditions relating to your appointment. To see the exact appointment language, refer to Article XI, Appointment of Employees, in the SUNY Policies of the Board of Trustees.

PERFORMANCE PROGRAMS

All Professionals should have a Performance Program, a written document that outlines your employee's duties and responsibilities assigned for a one-year period. It is not a job description, but instead provides the basis for your yearly evaluation. The performance program should be developed through a conversation between you and your supervisor. It is the official record of the your professional obligation and is placed in your official personnel file.

The first written performance program is provided within 45 days of employment. A new one is provided:

- whenever duties and responsibilities change
- after a promotion
- whenever your supervisor changes

Your performance program is signed by both you and your supervisor. You will receive a new performance program each year, even if there are no changes in duties, or as conditions warrant. Signing of performance program signifies receipt of, not agreement.

If you do not receive your performance program or you disagree with your program, you should contact your UUP office for help.

EXTRA DUTIES

If your supervisor asks for you to take on additional duties throughout the year, there are a few questions you should ask your supervisor before taking on additional duties.

- Ask is this a voluntary duty or directive.
- Ask the duration of the duty.
- Ask what other duty will be removed from your Performance Program.
- Ask for compensation for additional duties (Compensation time, Extra Service Pay, Temporary Duty Pay).
- Consult with your Chapter office before signing any agreement to work extra duties.
- Document all conversations in writing.
- If duties are increasing your scope and complexity, ask for a promotion.

PERFORMANCE PROGRAMS DO'S AND DON'TS

► Do:

- Take advantage of the consultations with your immediate supervisor prior to the final preparation of your performance program. Ask questions and request clarification on anything in your program that is unclear.
- Ask that continuing professional development and training be included, if needed.
- Make sure you have a clear understanding of supervisory and functional relationships.
- Make sure you understand the criteria for evaluating the achievement of each aspect of your written assignment.
- Make sure you understand the tasks, if any, you will be required to perform over the next 12 months. Make sure the timelines for achieving your objectives are reasonable.
- Ensure you know who secondary sources are, why they will be consulted and what specific duties in your Program they will be consulted about.
- Take advantage of an informal, ongoing evaluation process with your immediate supervisor. If you are having difficulty with aspects of your program, discuss it with your immediate supervisor at the earliest opportunity.
- It's important to sign your Performance Program, which acknowledges you received the program. If you cannot reach agreement about duties in your Performance Program, an addendum can be filed with the Program. (See Appendix A28 of the contract).

► Don't:

- Accept statements of duties that are not described, such as “any duties as assigned.” You cannot be evaluated on detailed duties not written in your Performance Program.
- Accept general or passive descriptions of your duties, such as “responsible for all activities in residence hall, lab, department,” etc.
- Accept duties and responsibilities that you have no authority or resources to carry out.
- Accept duties and responsibilities that are controlled by someone else.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

Your annual evaluation serves several purposes, including providing consultation to the college president in decision-making regarding employee re-appointments, performance improvement, job analysis, promotions, salary increases and permanent appointments. The criteria for evaluation includes effectiveness in performance, mastery of specialization, professional ability and effectiveness in university service. Performance evaluations are based on the items specified in the performance program. Every year, your immediate supervisor will provide you with a preliminary written evaluation.

You and your immediate supervisor should meet to discuss the evaluation and final recommendations or changes to the document. The final summary of your evaluation can only be characterized as “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory.”

After consultation with your supervisor you will receive the final copy of your evaluation. Your signature on your final evaluation denotes receipt of the evaluation only, and does not indicate agreement with the content of the evaluation. If you are in a disagreement with your immediate supervisor about the contents in your evaluation please contact your UUP Chapter office.

A professional employee who receives an evaluation summarized as “unsatisfactory” has the right to request a review of that evaluation by the College Committee on Professional Evaluation. The right to a review is time sensitive. It is imperative to reach out to your UUP Chapter upon receiving an unsatisfactory evaluation.

APPEAL OF AN UNSATISFACTORY EVALUATION

Snapshot of the Process

- Contact your UUP Chapter office for guidance on the process.
- Only unsatisfactory evaluations can be appealed to the College Committee for Professional Evaluation.
- Professional Employee submits a written request for a review of the evaluation to the Chair of the Committee on Professional Evaluation, the College President or designee, and Immediate Supervisor within 10 working days of receipt.
- Committee on Professional Evaluation concludes review within 25 working days from the date of appeal.
- Committee on Professional Evaluation makes recommendation to College President.

To learn more, see the Collective Bargaining Agreement, Appendix A28 at

🔗: <https://uupinfo.org/contract/pdf/22-26/State-UUP-Agreement.pdf>

PERMANENT APPOINTMENT

In your sixth year of employment, your permanent appointment package should be submitted by your supervisor for chain of command review.

After the chain of command review, your package will be sent to the SUNY Chancellor for approval. You will be notified of your permanency appointment in writing, which will include the date your permanency commences.

Check with your HR for eligibility requirements:

[https://www.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/boardoftrustees/SUNY BOT Policies.pdf](https://www.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/boardoftrustees/SUNY_BOT_Policies.pdf)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

United University Professions understands the need for professionals to stay abreast of new technologies and research. Therefore, UUP has negotiated and provides a variety of ways employees can continue their professional growth.

They include:

- New Employee Orientation Sessions
- Public Service Student Loan Forgiveness clinics
- Monthly Know your Benefits sessions
- Space available tuition-free class opportunities at 29 State Operated SUNY Campuses (excludes Community Colleges) for UUP employees
- SUNY B-140 Tuition Waiver
- Psych HUB offers free CE credits to all types of behavioral health practitioners
- UUP-funded undergraduate and graduate student scholarships for students

➡ Find these benefits and more: <https://uupinfo.org/>

JOINT LABOR MANAGEMENT BENEFITS

- Individual Development Awards (IDA)
- Certification and Licensure Exam Fee Reimbursement (CLEFR)
- Certification and Licensure Exam Fee Reimbursement – Renewal (CLRP)
- Joint Labor Management Committee Grant Opportunities

➡ Learn more about Professional Development, <https://oer.ny.gov/nysuupjlmc> and <https://uupinfo.org/benefits/>

PROMOTION & SALARY INCREASES

There are six salary levels for professional employees: SL-1 to SL-6 (Article 20). Salary levels are associated with both duties and titles referred to in this link:

 <https://uupinfo.org/reports/intro10.php>.

There is nothing in the Collective Bargaining Agreement or the SUNY Board of Trustees Policies that prohibits you from requesting a promotion or salary increase. If you believe a promotion or salary increase is warranted, it is important for you to understand what a promotion or salary increase is and decide which one to pursue before making the request.

A promotion is an increase in a professional employee's basic annual salary, accompanied by a movement to a higher salary level with a change in title.

A salary increase is an increase in base annual salary with no change in SL-Level or official (budget) title. Your title may change.

You can receive a salary increase without a promotion, but you cannot receive a promotion without a salary increase.

If you are permanent and receive a salary increase with a change in state title (promotion), you will be placed on a probationary appointment for one (1) year. Prior to the end of the probationary period, you and/or management has the right to determine if you will be permanent in your new role, or go back to your lower rank permanency.

If you are NOT permanent and you receive a salary increase with a change in state title (promotion), you must be in the new appointment for 2 years before you can go up for permanent appointment in the new position.

HERE ARE THE STEPS FOR REQUESTING A PROMOTION OR SALARY INCREASE:

- Make your request in writing to your immediate supervisor.
- Your supervisor has 45 calendar days to give you a response.
- If your request is denied at any level below the college president, you can appeal the denial to the College Review Panel, which is a committee of five to seven members elected at each campus by professional employees in the Bargaining Unit.
- If you have not received an answer before the 45-day time limit has passed, your request is considered a denial and you can appeal to the College Review Panel.
- If the College Review Panel determines that a promotion or salary increase is warranted, it will forward its recommendation to the college president. You will be informed in writing.
- You will be informed in writing if the College Review Panel determines the promotion or salary increase is unwarranted.
- The college president has 90 calendar days to render a decision.
- If the college president denies the promotion or if you do not receive a response, you can appeal to the University Review Board. (An appeal to the University Review Board is at the level of the Chancellor.)
- If the University Review Board denies your appeal, you may not reapply for a promotion or salary increase for 18 months, or until your performance program changes, whichever occurs sooner.

VOTE-COPE

Our union dues cannot be used for political action. UUP has a voluntary fund called VOTE-COPE where members can make either lump sum or payroll deduction contributions that will go toward candidates who support UUP's and legislative agendas.

VOTE-COPE:

- Helps protect our collective bargaining rights.
- Gives members and students valuable opportunities to deliver UUP's message to legislators by attending advocacy days, in district meetings/events, and fundraisers.
- Supports candidates who fight to protect public higher education—our University, our students, our patients, our jobs and our retirement benefits—regardless of party affiliation.
- Gives us a voice against the formidable forces pushing to privatize our work and our campus resources.
- Allows us to challenge misperceptions and promote solutions to the real problems our campuses face.

You can make contributions through:

➤ Payroll deduction at: <https://uupinfo.org/siteforms/VCForm.php>

➤ Via a Pledge Card:
<https://uupinfo.org/votecope/images/vcPledgeCard.pdf>



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