



Fall Welcome

Paul T. Wilson, WMU-AAUP President

I confess to a minor addiction to puns and word play. Thus I muse once a year on the polysemy of "Fall." Because Fall is actually the start of our year, academics could wish each other happy new year twice a year. And it seems ironic to me that we start a new academic year with a fall; might it not be more inspiring if we began with a rise instead? Traditional usage, I fear, will not shift in these directions any time soon and so, for the most part, I keep my concerns to myself.

We are, however, starting anew once again, and so as I wish you the best for 2009-2010, I would like also to ask you to think about how we can help you, and what we need from you, in turn.

First, the WMU-AAUP stands for the values of academic freedom, tenure and shared governance, and for the policies and practices they entail. The faculty play a unique role in making universities different from other large scale institutions; we do so through our commitment to candid, confidential, collegial peer review, and a significant voice in academic and institutional decision making. We work hard to maintain our commitment to creating an environment, a community, in which everyone has both the desire and the opportunity to do the best possible work that they can do in teaching, research and service. The WMU-AAUP is here to serve you through standing firm on this commitment.

Second, we have two new Officers whose bios are available in this issue, and who may well play important roles in your life here at Western. Dr. Nancy Mansberger, from Teaching, Learning and Educational Studies, has agreed to serve as our Grievance Officer. Dr. Mansberger has a great deal of relevant experience and spent much of last year helping out our former Grievance Officer, Lisa Whittaker, so she is well informed about current issues and ready to help you with any concerns about contract violations. Also, Dr. Joetta Carr, of the University Counseling and

Testing Center, has agreed to serve as our Contract Administrator. All of you who were here last year are familiar with Dr. Carr because she served most capably as our Chief Negotiator for the 2008-2011 Contract. That experience has given her well-informed insights on a broad range of issues involving our contract language. She is happy to be available to support you in working out how our Contract applies to your individual and departmental situations.

Generally, in relation to how our resident Officers (those with reassigned time to work at Montague House) handle cases, often the Contract Administrator is your first point of contact. Dr. Carr, in her role, would determine whether or not there has been a violation of the Contract and then, if need be, bring the case to the other Officers to determine a plan for addressing your concerns.

Third, we provide a range of services intended to support you at various stages of your academic and professional life.

Every Fall and Spring semester, in cooperation with the Office of the Provost, we participate in workshops on tenure and promotion. The Fall workshop, coming up on Friday, September 18, 2009 from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m., is aimed primarily at members of Tenure and Promotion committees. The Spring 2010 workshop, yet to be scheduled, is intended for faculty who are going to be reviewed starting in Fall 2010. During this past Summer I session, we had an additional workshop that garnered the largest attendance of any within at least the last 6 years, so we'll seriously consider doing it again. I should be clear that while there is an intended audience for each workshop, any faculty member, and any department chair, is welcome to attend. This Fall, in part as a result of ongoing discussions with the Provost about criteria for tenure and promotion, we will be offering a new workshop on Department Policy Statements. The Provost has told us that when there are

Officers

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Paul Wilson
Vice President
Allen Zagarell
Contract Administrator
Joetta Carr
Grievance Officer
Nancy Mansberger
Secretary
Bruce Bejcek
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Dominic Nicolai

Executive Committee

Academic Support Services
Galen Rike
A&S - Humanities
Marilyn Kritzman
A&S - Science & Mathematics
Bruce Bejcek
A&S - Social Sciences
Ed Martini
Aviation
Dominic Nicolai
Business
Norm Hawker
Education
Nancy Mansberger
Engineering
P. Daniel Fleming
Fine Arts
Stanley Pelkey
Health & Human Services
Donna Weinreich
International Programs
and Services
Ila Baker

questions during a tenure or promotion review about the quality of a faculty member's work, he looks to the DPS for guidance. A number of our departments have little or no specific guidance on tenure and promotion criteria. This is an opportunity that we must take advantage of, so we shall be starting the process this fall.

If you are approaching retirement, the WMU-AAUP has a financial adviser, Dr. Ahmed Issa, who runs a retirement planning seminar each Fall semester. The seminar is free; you must register well in advance; and there is sometimes a waiting list. Many faculty have told us that this has been a real eye opener and exceptionally valuable.

Fourth, we have a regular schedule of meetings, any of which you may attend, and two of which we would very much appreciate having you join us. The Executive Committee meets every second Friday, more often as needed, at Montague House. The Association Council, composed of your department reps, meets on the third Thursday of the month in the Bernhard Center, at least twice each semester. The Chapter -- that's you and me and all of us -- has two meetings a year, in October and April, again on the third Thursdays.

This September's Association Council meeting (along with an early October special meeting), and the October Chapter meeting will be of particular interest, and potentially momentous in the history of the WMU-AAUP. During the last several years, AFT Michigan has organized (a) the graduate teaching assistants

into the Teaching Assistants Union (TAU) and (b) the part time instructors into the Professional Instructors Organization (PIO). Having two other unions representing teaching faculty on our campus presents us with logistical and political challenges and opportunities. For the last year, the Executive Committee, through an ad hoc Union Study Committee, has been looking into the kind of relationship we are going to need to have with AFT Michigan and it's local, TAU and PIO in order to address the new realities we will face. By the time you read this, you will already have received information (via email and pdf document) about the recommendation that we make this relationship a formal one, an alliance of unions that share some common interests. We will, of course, retain our independent existence; but there are ongoing issues to be worked out. It is at these September and October meetings that the implementation of this recommendation will be discussed.

My intent for this article was to give you a sense of what we do for you, and to ask you to give us something in return. I am asking that you give us your best thinking about how we can move forward effectively from this point. Please, in the first place, let us know about any of your concerns and ask for help, whenever you need it. But also, in turn, please participate in the upcoming deliberations about our future, by talking with your department and college reps, and by attending the Chapter Meeting on October 15. I'm looking forward to seeing you there, and to listening, with great interest and attentiveness, to your views.

WMU-AAUP Association Council Representatives: A Key Form of Communication and Representation

Allen Zagarell, WMU-AAUP Vice-President

If you are an Association Council Representative what is expected of you?

Each department, depending on size, has the right to have at least one Association Council Representative. The Association Council is an important policy-making body of the WMU-AAUP. Its authority supersedes that of the Executive Board, and is only out-ranked by the decisions of the entire faculty, as represented by Chapter meetings or ballots representing the entire faculty.

What is your job as Association Council Representative?

First we congratulate and thank you for your readiness to take on the responsibilities associated with Association Council Representative. This is a task with multiple obligations. You are both the connecting link between your department and the union decision-making apparatus, as well as the first line of defense for the contractual and participatory rights of your colleagues. Both of these responsibilities may be critical for the well-being of your department and the welfare of your peers. It is your job to represent the views of your constituents, to

guarantee their concerns are represented. It is your job to report back to your department the issues being discussed at the Association Council meetings. You have the obligation to inform your constituents of important policy decisions being contemplated by the Association Council before such policies are to be voted on. You are the voice of your colleagues. To carry out these responsibilities it is incumbent upon you to arrange your teaching schedule so it does not conflict with the normal meeting time of the third Thursday of every month at 3:30-4:30. If for some reason you are unable to make a particular meeting we expect that you will find a replacement for that meeting. If you cannot carry out these expectations we hope you will discuss it with your colleagues so that a representative can be selected who will be able to do so.

It is your job to operate as a representative of the union in your department. The position represents a kind of academic shop steward. You are to make sure the contract and self-governance remain intact in your department. You are to assure that the contract and the rights of your colleagues are protected. This gives you special rights under state and national labor law. You have the right to speak to those in positions of

authority with full protection of the law, when you are representing the rights of colleagues. At the very least, when problems arise you are expected to contact the WMU-AAUP office, so that we can judge whether our involvement is necessary. If you feel this task will be difficult for you, we hope you will contact the WMU-AAUP office, and let us discuss this with you.

If you are a bargaining unit member what should you expect from your Association Council Representative ?

Your Association Council Representative is your connection to the decision making organs of your union. He/she is your voice. They should be attending the council meetings and informing you and your departmental colleagues of the relevant policy questions being discussed. Your representative should be discussing these issues with your department and adequately representing your views on those issues. Most association council representatives are doing a great job responsibly representing their departments. However, if your representative is

not able to carry out these responsibilities, you should make sure it is being done. If your representative, for whatever reason, is unable to fulfill this basic function your department should select a new representative.

Your Association Council Representative is also a sort of shop steward. That is, your Association Council Representative should make sure the Contract is being adhered to and that shared governance, as contractually protected, remains intact. Should you or a colleague face some difficulties you can expect your Association Council Representative to be your first line of defense and at the very least your representative should be putting you in contact with the appropriate union officials to deal with your problem. Of course, we are always available to you directly as well. Should you have any questions feel free to contact our office. We are always happy to talk to you.

Introducing the New WMU-AAUP Grievance Officer

Nancy Mansberger, WMU-AAUP Grievance Officer

As this new school year opens, I find myself eager to begin serving the faculty of Western Michigan University as their new AAUP grievance officer. I would like to take this opportunity to share with AAUP members the beliefs and experiences that have led me to seek the honor of representing the interests of the faculty in this role.

During the last three decades, the growth of the popular view of education as a utilitarian and social resource has led to the belief common among the powerful in our country that the primary societal purpose of higher education is to serve the training needs of U.S. industry and business. In the effort to build the responsiveness of higher education to the needs of the U.S. economy (as defined by U.S. business interests), pressure has been placed on politicians and college administrators to increase their control and accounting over the academy.

Adding to the political pressures are the financial pressures faced by universities, driving them to become more and more entrepreneurial and competitive. We, as members of the faculty, must remember that, in this race to successfully compete and survive, what the university is “selling” is US: the talent, the work, the knowledge, the creativity, and the visions of the professoriate. In light of the increasing politicization and commercialization of the processes that seek to set the goals for our research, mandate the outcomes of our teaching, and control the methods we employ, a strong union is required.

In my professional life I have served both on the side of management and of labor. As a former board officer of a local school district, I have been closely involved in the negotiation

of numerous employee and faculty union contracts, as well as in the hiring, evaluation, and firing of administrative personnel. Conversely, as a public school teacher and union member for nine years, I have also experienced the devastating effect of becoming the “collateral damage” of weak, poor, and/or unethical administrative practices.

My background at WMU has similarly informed my understanding of educational dynamics and politics. During the 1990s I was employed as a researcher at the WMU Evaluation Center, and later at SAMPI (Science and Mathematics Program Improvement, now a part of the Mallinson Institute). In these positions, I worked as an evaluator of NSF-funded and private foundation projects to “reform education” in Michigan. These projects entailed the detailed evaluation of the educational policy-making environment in Michigan and program delivery structures at the K-12, higher education, and state levels. In my present position as associate professor in the department of Teaching, Learning, and Educational Studies, I advise, teach, and help to coordinate the graduate program in teacher education. Much of my academic research has focused on leadership and management issues in education.

As the new WMU-AAUP grievance officer, I will work to maintain and grow the strength of our union. I believe the best future for WMU—as well as for our profession—is based on a relationship of mutual respect built between two equal partners. It is vitally important to both our individual futures and the health of the academy of which we are proud members that we promote and protect a powerful union voice.

Introducing the New WMU-AAUP Contract Administrator

Joetta Carr, WMU-AAUP Contract Administrator

I was elected last summer to be your WMU AAUP Contract Administrator. As most of you know, I served as your chief negotiator at the bargaining table summer before last. I learned a great deal about our contract and gained a deep respect for the carefully-crafted document that was created through much struggle over the last 30 years. Our negotiating team fought hard to get the best agreement we could in tough times. As chief negotiator, I joined the Executive Committee a year and a half ago where I am still an active member. In addition, I have served as my department Council representative for approximately 8 years. This rich experience serving in leadership roles at the AAUP will provide an excellent basis to serve as Contract Administrator.

In this office I will assist faculty in interpreting the Contract, prevail upon the WMU administration to adhere to our Contract, and work closely with our Grievance Officer to mitigate disputes and unfair labor practices. In these difficult economic times, our union must grow even stronger to withstand the turbulence that will challenge our university. Many of you stepped forward to show solidarity with our union over the course of the last negotiations. Let us seize on this momentum and increase participation on Association Council, our working committees and other chapter activities.

I feel honored to have the responsibility of administering the remaining two years of our Contract and to keep you informed as issues develop. When we stand together, our collective strength is powerful!

Brief Biography

I received my PhD in Psychology at Florida State University in 1975. After working at the University of Washington on a one-year grant, I came to WMU in 1977 and taught on term appointments for 4 years in the Psychology Department. In 1980 I was awarded a large grant from NICMH to develop a preventive health curriculum for young children. After a hiatus from WMU where I did private practice, I returned to WMU eleven years ago as a faculty member at the University Counseling and Testing Center. I counsel students, consult with faculty and staff, train doctoral students, and conduct scholarly activities. I serve on the University Eating Disorders Treatment Team. I am a tenured full professor.



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