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October, 2005

the WMU
AAUP



Advocate

at Western Michigan University

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Developing Workload Guidelines

Jon Neill, Ph.D.

Chief Negotiator

Due to changes in the contract, departments would be well advised to review and, if necessary, revise their policy statements. A department may have workload guidelines in its Department Policy Statement (DPS) and, once approved, these guidelines must be used by the chair, dean, etc. to measure a department member's workload.

The need for workload guidelines stems from the fact that faculty work is quite varied. Faculty teach courses, conduct research, and provide service to the University. In other words, a faculty member has, in any one semester, a number of different work assignments. Since 1996 workload has been set at 24 credit hours of regularly scheduled courses in any one academic year. Therefore, we must now develop guidelines for converting work assignments other than teaching into credit hours. Because there are significant differences in the way in which students are instructed across departments, these guidelines must be developed at the departmental level to best meet faculty needs.

Current Contract Wording

The current contract states that an adjustment of teaching load **shall** be available for faculty who 1) teach large classes, 2) conduct research, 3) have heavy advising responsibilities, 4) supervise theses and dissertations; a department's guidelines **must** give a faculty member credit hours if he or she is involved in these activities. The amount of credit given is the depart-

ment's business. However, faculty need to be reasonable. In the event that your department has equivalencies for these activities, our advice is to continue with them because it is assumed these have been agreed upon by all parties. Please do not look upon the changes in Article 42 as an opportunity to inflate them. This is not to say that a department should under no circumstances make changes in their equivalencies. Rather, just be prudent, and whenever possible, base them on current practices.

The contract also states that an adjustment of teaching load **may** be available for teaching graduate and upper level classes, new or multiple preparations, laboratory supervision, supervising student projects, etc. A department can also give a faculty member credit hours for these work assignments. Thus, teaching load reductions can be given to any faculty participating in these activities, as well as for other activities that the department deems deserving of credit.

In crafting a workload policy, keep a number of aspects in mind.

Western Makes Work Assignments

A faculty member is not free to pick and choose his or her work assignments. Final determination of all **work assignments is made by Western**. For example, perhaps a DPS states that a faculty member's new research project will be counted as 6 credit hours for the academic year. This does not mean that a faculty member can

walk into the chair's office and announce that, since he will be working on four new projects in the upcoming academic year, he does not expect to be assigned any courses to teach.

As another example, perhaps the DPS states that for every university committee a faculty member serves on, she will be given a one-credit hour reduction in teaching load over the academic year. Despite this, a faculty member cannot tell her chair that, since she has decided to serve on a dozen university committees, she expects to be given a two-course reduction in her teaching load over the academic year. Ultimately, a faculty member **is entitled** to a reduction in teaching loads only for research and service that is **approved by Western**.

On the other hand, if **the chair approves** those four research projects or the twelve university committee assignments, then those faculty members **would be entitled to the teaching load reduction specified in their DPS**.

Prior Approval for Release Time is Crucial

What do the examples teach us? First, if a faculty member expects to be given the DPS teaching load reduction for service, make sure that the faculty member gets chair approval before agreeing to provide that service. Second, each department should have a committee that will review requests by faculty for teaching load reductions for the purpose of conducting research and make recommendations to the chair regarding the amount of credit to be given each faculty member for her or his research projects. (The DPS should be **explicit** as possible about the credit that will be given.)

However, this is not to say that the committee needs to have an explicit one-to-one formula in place unless it wants to. Instead, a DPS could state

that a faculty member will be given 2-4 hours of credit for a new research project that will take the academic year to complete or 1-2 hours to complete a project that was supported the previous year. These recommendations would then be considered by the faculty committee and then recommended to the department chair. The chair would not be obligated to approve all or any of the projects that faculty wish to undertake. But if a faculty member is not given a load reduction for a research proposal, he or she is under no obligation to undertake that project.

*...a faculty member **is entitled** to a reduction in teaching loads only for research and service that is **approved by Western**.*

We realize that it is little consolation to a faculty member whose request for release time is denied by administration even when it has been recommended by the committee. This situation may lead to questions about the standard to which a faculty member is held who has been denied released time to conduct research when he or she goes for tenure or promotion. But these are, to an extent, separate issues. If requests for released time by untenured faculty or tenured associate professors to conduct research are denied, this will certainly be a big issue, but still a separate issue.

Resource Availability Will Be Considered

Another caveat faculty must consider in crafting a DPS is department re-

source availability. The contract states that DPS guidelines for measuring workload will be followed unless the DPS gives out so much released time from teaching that the department's normal course offerings cannot be staffed with available resources. Because of this, a department would be well-advised to prioritize work assignments in its workload guidelines.

To address this idea, consider the following example. Perhaps the research and service that faculty want to do means that the department would have to give its faculty reductions in teaching load amounting to a total of 60 courses. But if the department followed the DPS, it couldn't staff 15 courses that it normally offers. Then the chair would be required to withhold approval of some research projects, service, etc.

However, the DPS could speak to this possibility by establishing the order in which assignments would be accommodated in such circumstances. It might say: 1) those teaching large classes will be given reduced teaching loads, 2) those who have heavy advising responsibilities will be given reduced teaching loads, 3) those conducting research projects will be given reduced teaching loads, 4) before anyone is given a teaching reduction for a second research project, everyone who is proposing a research project will be given a teaching load reduction. On the other hand, rationing of teaching load reductions can be accomplished by reducing the equivalencies. For instance, the DPS could say that before anyone is given 6 hours of released time for the academic year, everyone undertaking a research project will receive 3 hours of released time, etc. There are many avenues by which to approach DPS rationales.

What We Should Do

Currently, a number of departments have very detailed workload guide-

lines that, more or less, have been adhered to by the Administration for years and years. These could be used as templates by any department feeling in the dark about how to proceed. Paul Wilson and I are willing to meet with department executive committees to answer questions, etc. Depending upon interest, we may hold workshops. Feel free to contact Paul or me regarding this matter. In any event, if your department does not have detailed workload guidelines, please start developing them immediately. ■

WMU-AAUP Officers' Hours*

Ralph Tanner

President

Tues 2:00— 4:00pm

Fri 10:00—12:00pm

Michael G. Miller

Contract Administrator

Mon 12:00noon—2:00pm

Thurs 9:00am— 11:00am

Jon Neill

*Grievance Officer &
Chief Negotiator*

Mon 9:30am—12:00noon

Wed 9:30am—12:00noon

Fri 9:30am—12:00noon

Alan Rea

Information Officer

Mon 2:00pm— 4:30pm

Thurs 1:00pm— 4:30pm

Fri 11:00am— 1:00pm

*And by appointment

Welcome Back

*Ralph Tanner, Ph.D.
President*

I would like to offer everyone a belated welcome back to the semester.

This past summer your AAUP officers and the negotiating team were engaged in obtaining a contract that would benefit us all. I was pleased that so many of you were also actively supporting the Chapter throughout the summer negotiations. That faculty members were willing, en masse, to say "No" to the demeaning offers made by the administration is what lead the administration to say "Yes" to the reasonable demands that your negotiating team proposed.

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administration...

We have achieved a contract that will help move all of us forward. While, there were many significant improvements made in this contract, I am particularly pleased with the contract language in the workload article (Article 42). Article 42 will allow faculty to establish a measuring stick to assess the equivalencies among all the various work assignments that faculty members encounter in a particular department.

This now leads us to a challenge. Many departments do not have a workload statement in their Department Policy Statement. Now that the workload statement is binding, even departments that do have such workload statements may want to review them to ensure they adequately represent the work of the department. Jon Neill offers some guidelines and suggestions in this issue on how faculty can approach the crafting of these statements.

Another challenge that we all face is the 2008 contract. Although I am pleased with the contract that you helped secured this year, I believe we must begin now to work on achieving an even better contract in 2008. I will be asking many of you to serve on action committees regarding particular contract articles. We have too much talent in our faculty to wait until just before this contract expires before we start working on its successor.

Once again, I want to thank you, the faculty, for standing up and insisting that the administration negotiate a contract that will help all of us accomplish our work at WMU and move all us forward as we work to continually improve ourselves and the university. ■

**WMU-AAUP
website:**

WMICH.EDU/AAUP

The Info Corner...

*Alan Rea, Ph.D.
Information Officer*

An Introduction

Greetings to the Chapter membership. Although I've spoke with some of you over the past few months as we worked together to help the Negotiation Team bring a contract to the table, for many of you this is "first contact."

Please allow me a brief introduction. I'm an Associate Professor of Computer Information Systems in the Business Information Systems Department at the Haworth College of Business. I arrived here in 1997. My research areas are Web technologies, information security, and computing ethics.

I came into the Union in July as a "Communications Consultant" to help plan for a new Website, function as an information conduit between the AAUP and Chapter membership during negotiations, and serve as the WMU-AAUP press contact. After being approved as the Information Officer by Chapter representatives, I took over this position at the beginning of the Fall semester. Although my title changed, the duties basically remained the same.

Goals

Over the course of the next few months, I will be working to improve three main areas: developing our Web offerings, increasing Chapter communication to its members, and improving Chapter and membership dialog as we work to support faculty under the current contract and prepare for negotiations in 2008. All three items underlie the main mission of the Information Officer: get-

ting timely and useful information to the Chapter membership so that we all can be productive and informed participants in our daily happenings at WMU.

Let me offer brief explanations of each, as you'll learn more in the months to come:

New Website

The changes you may have noticed over the past two months on the Website are part of a transition strategy from our old Website offerings to a new Website that will add search, communication, and survey functionalities for the Chapter. In the interim time frame, I made the decision to make our current Website more usable and responsive to members' needs. However, we have had to archive some information as a result of this streamlining. With the new Website, much of the information will be added back into the mix with the means to search for specific items.

In the new Website, we will have protected discussion boards for secure communications, anonymous surveys, improved search functionality, and archive capabilities for items such as this publication. You will find the Chapter moving more of its com-

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munications to the Web as we work to get information to the membership in a timely and convenient manner.

Increased Communications

Although we will post all information to the Chapter Website, we do plan on using e-mail more effectively as well. This means you will see more AAUP e-mail than before. However, we will keep e-mail brief and — when additional information is available — embed a hyperlink for additional files or Web pages.

Over the course of the summer, we made an effort to send out more information via e-mail and the response has been positive. In a world of instant messengers, mobile phones, and an Internet full of information, the AAUP will move forward as well, so that information can be delivered in a timely manner to our members.

All of this is not to say that we will ignore other forms of communication nor will we attempt to compete with the sheer abundance of e-mail spam in your inbox. However, you will find meeting announcements, critical information, and other items that might concern you coming to you via e-mail.

Improved Dialog

Communication is not one-way. The final area that I would like to improve on is increased and sustained dialog among members and Chapter officers. Occasional meetings and impromptu conversations are great; however, we need to talk whenever we think an issue needs to be addressed.

Although phone calls and office visits are still encouraged, we will use the new discussion forums that will be part of the new Website. These forums will have levels of access ac-

cording to each person's or committee's needs. The new functionality will allow us to share ideas and hold conversations regardless of time and location. We hope the forums will not only allow more members to take part in conversations, but also allow committees and task forces to work more effectively throughout the year.

An Invitation

Finally, I would like to invite each of you to watch for the new Website (it will be announced via e-mail), participate in ongoing discussions (both online and off), and let us know when you have questions or concerns. Even though we are available via e-mail and phone, please feel free to stop by the office and see us. ■

CAGO Update

*Michael G. Miller, Ed.D.
Contract Administrator
&
Jon Neill, Ph.D.
Grievance Officer*

Student Grades

Faculty should think about the methods they use to report grades to students. Listing students by their social security numbers is not permitted by the University. In fact, using any part of a student's social security number is not permissible because this may increase the chances of ID theft. Faculty could consider using different identifiers on class lists. This identifier can be numbers, letters or other markers that students choose. It is also wise to randomize the order of student grades each time they are distributed.

As many of you know, WebCT can be used to report scores and grades. This vehicle ensures confidentially

WebCT can be used to report scores and grades. This vehicle ensures confidentially and eliminates the possibility of ID theft.

and eliminates the possibility of ID theft. Some faculty give students their grades during office hours or at other arranged times. Remember that whatever method you choose to employ, you will be held accountable for the confidentiality of the process.

Policy Statements

All and any changes in Department Policy Statements must be approved by the AAUP and the Office of Collective Bargaining in the Provost's office. Please be sure to submit copies to both offices. Your department should also consider reviewing your current DPS to make sure it is consistent with the new contract. Remember, Department Policy Statements are superseded by the contract.

Tenure and Promotion

Before convening, Department Tenure and Department Promotion Committees should review **Articles 17 & 18**, respectively. Please be aware that faculty up for promotion or tenure are to be evaluated in three performance areas: professional competence (teaching, etc.), professional recognition (research, etc.), and professional service. Also be aware that the evaluation of a faculty member's recognition cannot be based on one particular type of recognition.

More pointedly, a department cannot recommend against tenuring or promoting a faculty member simply because he or she did not obtain external funding for his or her research. Receiving an external grant is only ***one form that recognition can take***, and thus, to make external funding a necessary condition for either tenure or promotion would violate the contract. So please remember that what matters is how much recognition the faculty member has received, not the specific forms. Journal articles, books, chapters in books, external grants, etc. can be substituted for one another.

It is left up to each department to decide the rate at which any one form of recognition can be substituted for another. All we ask is that faculty be reasonable and fair in evaluating each other. If a DTC or DPC has ***any questions*** regarding tenure and promotion reviews, please contact Michael G. Miller or Jon Neill at the Montague House.

Student Evaluations

Those departments that are unhappy with ICES "may choose to use additional evaluative tools." Moreover, the administration is contractually bound to take the evidence on professional competence provided by such instruments into consideration when conducting tenure and promotion reviews. See **Article 16.§4.1** in the new contract. ■

**WMU-AAUP
Email**

WMUAAUP@AMERITECH.NET

Members’ Viewpoints

Educate or Placate: Is the Customer Always Right?

John Jellies, Ph.D.

Department of Biological Sciences

Might customers be wrong on occasion? Unless we admit that possibility, what would be the reason for any educational experience to exist? We could extend this question to ask if there even needs to be a “customer” in our environment.

Please permit me to make a few assertions to frame the issue of “customer service” in our University. Our University cannot exist without a fully engaged faculty. Likewise, the University cannot exist without sufficient numbers of interested students who choose to avail themselves of what we offer. Through our scholarly activity and active participation in creative activities, we, as faculty, remain on the cutting edges of our various fields and hence are in a position to offer the benefit of our expertise to students as they prepare for, and acquire skills needed for lifelong learning.

If I can be forgiven an overused paraphrasing, we in Higher Education are devoted to teaching students to fish, that they might never go hungry. We are not simply in the business of selling fish sandwiches! Yet, we continue to hear that Higher Education is a business. There are those who would have us then go further and accept the business model for all extended University operations as incontro-

vertible fact. Why does this lead us astray? Let me suggest how it does.

My family operates on a daily basis using sound budgetary ideas. We strive to do good work, enjoy the fruits of our labor, and spend less than we make. The non-profit organizations I contribute to also can be expected to operate on the basis of sound fiscal policy — not spending more than they take in. There are many examples of enterprises and organizations that use good business practices in operations, yet are not “businesses” and do not have **customers** who must be placated as always being right. They may have clients, participants, partners, beneficiaries, and benefactors. Or, dare I say it...students.

How we frame our mission can lead to very different paths to successful operations and priorities. What follows are two contrasting views of how we see our students and ourselves. The context in both acknowledges roles for sound fiscal practice, enhancing student satisfaction, creating attractive environments, and offering students opportunities that might entice them to choose our University as providers. However, the assumptions and boundary condi-

tions that accompany each of the two contexts seem enormously different and lead to different approaches to Higher Education.

The first view derives from an email exchange with one of our central administrators. The message in which this passage was found was openly copied to the WMU-AAUP.

1) “We sell a product, there is a cost associated with the delivery of that product, and as an employer, we have very real operating expenses that must be paid if we are to stay in operation. To compare us to a business may sound cold and heartless, but it need not be the case. Students are our ‘customers’ in every sense of the word. They are individuals who are purchasing a product from us and they deserve to be treated in the same manner we want (no, expect) to be treated when we pay a large sum of money for a dinner in a four-star restaurant.”

A contrasting view to the “academia as business model” still requires sound fiscal practices and reality-based approaches to service but does not place us in a consumer-oriented paradigm.

2) We offer access to facilities, expertise and training. We have real costs associated with maintaining and offering these assets and these costs must be offset for us to operate. At our core, we are a community of scholars in service to our students, the community, humanity and our own curiosity. Stability and prosperity are necessary for us to thrive and adapt. Students exchange resources for access to all the varied services and training we can provide. By availing themselves of this training and access to content, students may realize enormous growth in future income, personal identity, and career choice. This is what seems truly necessary for a “knowledge-based” economy.

A contrasting view to the “academia as business model” still requires sound fiscal practices and reality-based approaches to service...

...seeing our students as customers to be placated diminishes them as active participants in our University ...

The first perspective seems to be profit-driven. Quality and what is offered appears to be defined by subjective consumer desire as a primary focus. Must revenues increase at an ever-accelerating rate to be considered "profitable"? Growth and programs would seem to be determined by rate of revenue increases divorced from strategic planning.

The second view seems to be service-driven. Quality and what is offered appears to be defined by both objective and subjective criteria. Truly, if we only offer access to things that nobody is interested in, our survival as an enterprise would be quite limited. Revenues must cover actual costs of continuing operations and provide for prosperity. There is no profit as a monetary return to investors. Growth and programs can be determined by design and strategic planning.

Choosing to adapt to the needs of our students and society is something we can, and must do. We can select good practices, things that work in the for-profit sector to use in our mission. We can learn from business without becoming a business. However, seeing our students as customers to be placated, in my view, diminishes them as active participants in our University and offers little return for anyone. ■

What the Union Means to Me

*Alan Rea, Ph.D.
Information officer*

I will be the first one to admit that if you would have told me a few years ago I would not only be in a union but also a union officer, I probably would have chuckled a bit, shook my head, and made a mental note to give you a wide berth in the hallway.

When I arrived at WMU, becoming active in the union was the farthest thing from my mind. I was fresh out of graduate school and ready to implement my ideas in the classroom, publish books and articles on my way to tenure, and revel in students calling me "doctor."

...there are people on campus who have a passion for equality, a sense of comradery, and a strong purpose to make sure faculty's rights are protected and their contributions valued.

At the same time, I was also introduced to the concept of service. I quickly found that I liked working with colleagues in my department, college, and the university. I appreciated learning things beyond what I had specialized in for the past few years.

About three years ago I became the department representative to the AAUP. At first I was apprehensive, given my discipline (I'm in the business college). I soon found that there were people on campus who had a passion for equality, a sense of com-

radery, and a strong purpose to make sure faculty's rights were protected and their contributions valued.

However, it wasn't until I became an officer this Fall that I truly learned of faculty dedication to one another. I sat shoulder to shoulder, bleary-eyed from lack of sleep and jittery from too much coffee as the negotiating team went into one more late night session. I watched the office staff work twelve-hour days without a complaint. Most importantly, I saw faculty volunteer at Montague House at all hours over the summer to help the Chapter when it needed the support the most.

I have learned more about teamwork and dedication in the last few months than I can discuss in this column. I look forward to working with the AAUP in the years to come. I invite each and every one of you to take a more active role as well. ■

WARF Morphs

Western's Association of Retired Faculty (WARF) spent its first year in existence showing support for the Chapter as it negotiated a new contract. Now it is considering forming discussion groups for WARF members. One group might focus on issues related to TIAA-CREF and other sources of retirement income. Another might concern itself with national and state issues in higher education. A third might devote itself to WMU and its future.

If you, as a WARF member, would like to participate in any of these groups, or have ideas for other activities, please contact the WARF Executive Committee, which meets every

two weeks in the AAUP's Montague House. Members of the Executive Committee are: Shirley Woodworth, Mary Cain, Carol Payne Smith, Arthur Falk, George Miller, Larry Syndergaard, and Joseph Ellin. Retirees, please renew your membership for 2005-06, by sending \$10 to the AAUP Chapter office. Some of the benefits of membership are future access to WARF online discussion boards and receiving this newsletter, which is distributed to all the WMU-AAUP Chapter members. ■

**WMU-AAUP
Association Council and Chapter Meeting
Schedule**

Fall 2005

Association Council	Thursday, November 17, 2005 , 4:00pm Rooms 157 — 158, Bernhard Center
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Spring 2006

Association Council	Thursday, January 19, 2006 , 4:00pm Rooms 157 — 158, Bernhard Center
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Association Council	Thursday, February 16, 2006 , 4:00pm Rooms 105 — 107, Bernhard Center***
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Association Council	Thursday, March 16, 2006 , 4:00pm Rooms 105 — 107, Bernhard Center***
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Chapter	Thursday, April 20, 2006 , 4:00pm Rooms 157 — 158, Bernhard Center
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***Note Room Change



WMU-AAUP Chapter
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Kalamazoo MI 49008

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED