



Notes from Montague House

Paul T. Wilson, WMU-AAUP President

The Spring Chapter Meeting: Our Spring Chapter Meeting saw a signal event, the formal signing of our alliance with AFT Michigan to help ensure cooperation among the three unions on campus -- the WMU-AAUP, the TAU, and the PIO. The next step here is to flesh out, in consultation with our Executive Committee and the Association Council, the details of a council of unified faculty that will be the venue for cooperation and consultation among the unions.

Another major thematic emphasis at the meeting was preparing for our 2011 negotiations; this included thinking about salary goals and equity. During the coming year, both in our public meetings and our department visits, we will be speaking with you about these and other important issues. In addition, we invited all of our membership to join us at the annual meeting of the MIAAUP, on April 24, where work begins on creating a new public voice for higher education faculty. You are welcome to come along to the meeting; please call 344-0151 if you'd like to travel with us.

Summer Pay: Spring typically bring flowers, but along with them, predictably, come weeds as well. One of the perennial weeds we find that we need to pluck out of our garden each year is Western's incursion into compensation rates for Summer teaching. Summer pay is specified in Article 31, Compensation Guidelines.

31.§1.3 Academic year faculty, including academic-year non-teaching faculty, who serve full-time in a Summer I or Summer II session, shall receive twenty-two percent (22%) of base salary. Faculty who serve part-time in Summer I or Summer II sessions shall receive a *pro rata* salary equal to the percent of employment, with twenty-two percent (22%) of base salary as the base of proration.

This language is perfectly clear. If you teach one course, you get 11%. If you teach two courses, you get 22%. The percents are calculated on your base salary. If your chair or another administrator attempts to get you to teach for any lesser percent, that is a willful violation of the Agreement. Please let us know immediately so that we can take this up on your behalf.

WMU-AAUP Committees: As the Spring semester winds down, please consider having someone from your department serve on one of our WMU-AAUP campus wide committees; the committees are a valid aspect of Professional Service, should be reported on your PAR, and certainly count positively in tenure and promotion reviews. In order to be maximally responsive to you during the upcoming negotiations, we need participation from every college on every committee. The committees play an important role in establishing negotiating positions for 2011.

Faculty Governance: One of the key factors in effective faculty governance is voting. I will write about this at somewhat greater length in a bulletin, or for a future Advocate. My point, however, for now, is that if all that happens at meetings is discussion, the rewards may be short term and effective, rather than specific and action oriented. If you vote on a policy or a procedure, include the details of who is going to carry it out, and the schedule for its implementation. If you pass along a task to a committee, vote on what the charge is, and when the committee is going to report back to you. It can be very helpful, both to your committee and to the department faculty as a whole, if your discussion includes the kind of report the committee will give: Do you want one specific recommendation on which the department will have an up or down vote, or do you want a report that will stimulate further discussion, followed by discussion with all of the faculty. Being clear about these matters can save strife and hurt feelings later on.

A particular advantage of voting is that the faculty's views on an issue are crystal clear to the administration. A discussion may leave some with vague expectations of outcomes, but a vote leaves no doubt. After a vote, questions can be raised with administrators about why they did or did not implement the particular recommendations specified by the vote. Voting on key issues in your department meetings is an effective way for the faculty to express their views. Vote strategically, with specific purposes, so that your voice will be heard, on the record, on every issue that matters for you and your colleagues.

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Strategies for Negotiations and Beyond: The WMU-AAUP

Allen Zagarell, WMU-AAUP Vice President

Our Association has been engaged on a number of fronts, to develop a longer term strategy to handle the new realities we are facing. The basic context is that Higher Education is experiencing a significant transformation. Universities are altering their make-up. This is particularly true of state universities. Part-time and contingent faculty are increasing as a percentage of total university faculty throughout the country. Threats to tenure have increased, particularly at non-unionized campuses. State support for Higher Education is declining on a national level. Universities have become increasingly privatized, with only limited support from state governments. While the economic conditions in the U.S. have exacerbated these trends, they began well before the present crisis and have continued even during periods of relative prosperity.

These trends are particularly prevalent in Michigan. The State certainly faces difficulties unparalleled in the recent past, but there has been a long-term trend of decreasing support to Higher Education. The State has decreased its support for Higher Education from a high of approximately 73 percent of student costs, to a present low of under 25 percent. More and more educational institutions have been forced to act like private businesses, attempting to decrease costs at the expense of quality education. This is the context in which we will be entering our next round of negotiations.

Although the economic conditions within Michigan are certainly not positive, it is impossible to predict what things will look like a year from now. We could no more have predicted the deep recession we began to experience a year ago, than we can the pace of recovery. We will be better able to judge actual conditions in the state as we get closer to the beginning of negotiations. What we can do is strengthen our Association and our university in preparation for our oncoming negotiations and beyond. We see this as comprising multiple levels of organization.

Strengthening Faculty within our University:

We have already embarked upon a campaign to reinvigorate our WMU-AAUP infrastructure. That includes assuring an active Association Council, where substantive discussions and decisions are made, and where the new leaders of our union will emerge. This will include broader union training for those interested. The union hopes to prepare early and well for negotiations. The officers and executive committee cannot prepare for this without the active participation of all of us. We are encouraging the wide participation of our members on our various university-wide committees, enriching our decision making process, taking advantage of the breadth of our faculty's skills, and assuring communication between all levels of our union.

We are also forging new working alliances with the AFT and its affiliated unions on the WMU campus. This corresponds with the new direction of the Collective Bargaining Division of the National AAUP. They are engaged in multiple joint organizing cam-

paigns with the AFT, leading to joint membership in the AFT and AAUP. On our campus part-time faculty and graduate assistant faculty represent a significant sector of the total teaching load at Western. Their unionization is important for faculty as a whole. They are the future of our profession and their experience of collective action is important for us all.

We are moving towards a unified faculty council which will bring together the entire faculty on campus, and allow us to coordinate our actions, cooperate around common interests, and to discuss and resolve areas of potential conflict. This kind of cooperation will significantly strengthen our hand during negotiations.

Strengthening Faculty within our State:

The third prong of our strategy is increasing faculty influence on a state-wide level. We believe that the pathway out of our economic crisis is investment in our state infrastructure and particularly in Higher Education. We believe that the gradual process of privatization of state universities practiced by our legislators in order to save money, is a short-sighted policy. Investment in our state and our youth is the road to a healthier state economy. The Presidents' Council has largely been the voice of Higher Education, but the Presidents often compete for a shrinking pie. Faculty interests frequently coincide with the positions of the Presidents' Council but not always. We need an independent faculty voice on the state-wide level. The WMU-AAUP is currently working in conjunction with the Michigan AAUP to bring together all faculty unions, associations, and organizations, regardless of affiliation to help develop a common program for the protection and expansion of quality Higher Education in our State. We believe partisanship and/or turf wars are inappropriate given our economic crisis.

Immediate Goals:

We are dedicated to strengthening our faculty's right to shared governance. Your association is dedicated to helping every department to develop its own Departmental Policy Statement. We are dedicated to the gradual improvement of our faculty's salary profile from its present lowest 25th percentile in similar national universities to more closely approximate the 50th percentile. This cannot be accomplished in one negotiation, but we must continually make progress in this direction. We strongly support the initiation of the equity study, dealing with gender and other inequities, which was agreed to in the previous negotiation. We are working diligently to protect our health care and other benefits. The Benefits Committee is presently closely examining our health care and benefits package, to understand the actual outlays for our faculty. We are here to assure due process, respect, and protection from arbitrary behavior for every member of our association. We are dedicated to strengthening Western Michigan University, providing quality education to our students, and a close relationship between us and the broader Kalamazoo community.

We need your active support to accomplish this.

PROTECTING SUMMER COURSE PREFERENCE

Joetta Carr, WMU-AAUP Contract Administrator

The WMU-AAUP has been getting inquires from bargaining unit faculty regarding shenanigans around summer preference. If anything like the following is occurring in your department, please contact us immediately!

As you know, Article 41 of our **Agreement specifies** clearly that

“Bargaining unit faculty shall have preference for work assignments, as provided in this article. Preference applies to teaching of courses in the faculty member’s department that the faculty member is qualified to teach....there is to be equitable distribution of opportunities to teach Summer sessions and Extended University Programs.” DPSs should address who determines faculty qualifications to teach classes and how faculty members participate in these decisions. “Department policy statements are mandated to include a section of how such opportunities will be equitably distributed, and preference shall be aligned to such policy.” (See p. 117, 41.1).

To receive preference, faculty should notify their chair no later than November 1 of the preceding year that they want to be scheduled to teach next Summer I or Summer II. “Faculty members whose Summer I or Summer II classes are canceled for low enrollment, if qualified to teach classes assigned to non-bargaining unit faculty, shall have preference.” This means that tenure-track faculty can bump term and part-time faculty. In one college, professors have been told that **classes** with low enrollment may be **cancelled unless the faculty member agrees to take less than 11% (or equivalent for a class different from 3 credits)**. In discussions with chairs, they have floated out offers of “slightly less than break even” amounts for enrollment below the cap for higher paid faculty. This is outrageous and **in violation of our Agreement**. Faculty are entitled to receive the full 11% of their base salary regardless of arbitrary enrollment or

“break even” figures claimed by the administration. If the administration wishes to bargain class caps, course cancellation policies and summer pay in the next negotiation cycle, they may bring proposals to the table in 2011.

Another troubling issue is how Extended University Programs (EUP) courses are assigned during summer sessions. Faculty are eligible for 1 EUP course in Summer I or Summer II, if the faculty member is fully employed on campus during that session. IF the faculty member is not employed on campus during a Summer I or Summer II session, he/she shall be given preference for up to 8 hours of EUP courses, if available. According to our Agreement, preference does not apply to courses offered by EUP that are not offered through a department or similar unit. **Preference shall not operate to allow bargaining unit faculty to “bump” non-unit persons already assigned to EUP courses during a Summer I or Summer II session if the bargaining unit faculty’s on-campus course(s) have been canceled because of insufficient enrollment.**

An essential question was raised, but not answered in Executive Committee last Friday regarding whether **courses** are being **shifted from regular summer courses to EUP courses to save money**. This **would constitute an unfair labor practice in violation of Michigan’s Public Employee Relations Act**. Are pressures being exerted on faculty to teach EUP classes in the summer for less money than the 11% of base salary that traditional summer courses pay? Also, what is the cutoff date to cancel classes due to low enrollment?

If any of you are having problems in these or other areas regarding summer teaching, we would like to hear from you immediately. We need to get a fuller picture of what is happening with summer teaching. If your preference has not been honored, you have the right to appeal and grieve this. Please email me at contract@wmuaaup.net

Fall 2010 Association Council & Chapter Meeting Dates

Beginning this fall the Association Council and Chapter meetings will be held the 3rd Friday of the month at 1:30pm. Association Council representatives, please remember to send a sub if you are unable to attend any of the meetings.

Association Council	Friday, September 17th	1:30pm	Room 157, Bernhard Center
Chapter Meeting	Friday, October 15th	1:30pm	Room 157, Bernhard Center
Association Council	Friday, November 19th	1:30pm	Room 157, Bernhard Center



22nd Annual Faculty BBQ

The annual BBQ will be held
Tuesday, September 7th
From 5:00-7:00pm



WMU-AAUP Chapter
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