

## ***FWC/AAUP NEWSLETTER***

***Faculty Welfare Committee/American Association of University Professors***

February 7, 2005

### **From the President:**

On Friday, we heard an important update from the Faculty Salary Committee on the emerging structure of “collegial discussions” in this new era of merit pay. As we learned, the plans that schools and departments are developing need to be considered in the context of our existing system of determining salary and compensation.

In this week’s issue, we consider what it means for decisions about compensation to come “from the ground up”. We have heard many times in recent years that this new merit plan should be developed by the faculty. What puzzles us is that each time the faculty has spoken, either as the Academic Council or as the General Faculty, our voice has been ignored or we have been chastised for coming up with the “wrong answer”. That leaves me wondering where the “ground” is, and whether or not anyone really wants to hear what “the ground” has to say. If the Board and President knew in 2002 what system of merit pay they wanted to institute, I wish they would have simply told us.

Kathryn Nantz  
President, FWC

### **The Faculty Salary Committee Is Us (or is the Ground)?**

Why is it so important that the Faculty Salary Committee be involved in determining your compensation? We would argue that the FSC is the only voice of the faculty as a whole in a discussion on the allocation of salary.

The administration has argued that merit pay systems should “emerge from the ground up” (Memo from President von Arx, date). Our question at this point is, where is the ground? We would argue that the Faculty Salary Committee is The Ground. It would seem, in fact, there is hardly a better ground from which to start than with a standing committee of the General Faculty, elected and entrusted to represent common faculty interests on matters related to salary and compensation.

It’s important for a faculty body to be systematically reviewing salary and compensation data across departments, across schools, across gender, age, race, etc. While we understand that members of the administration are also entrusted with salary data, checks and balances are an established way to maintain fairness. If it’s good enough for the American system of justice, it should be good enough for us.

Merit plans, whether newly drafted or “living documents” subject to revision, should insist that allocation of salary monies be left to the Faculty Salary Committee. The Faculty Salary Committee has always maintained, and continues to maintain, that assessment of individual faculty members is not their job. That job may well fall to individual departments. This all means that the Faculty Salary Committee has an important role to play in partnership with departments in maintaining clarity, predictability, and transparency in the compensation system, both in the short-term (on an annual basis) and in the long-term (looking at trends over time).

We recognize that changes in our compensation system have been imposed upon us by the Board of Trustees. Though the recommendations from the General Faculty regarding the structure of the merit system were not acceptable to the Board, we have spent a good deal of time and effort trying to structure a workable system that is consistent with the resolution from the Board of Trustees that mandated the change in our compensation structure and that we can all respect. We believe that the FSC plays an essential role in the process of maintaining fairness and integrity in our compensation system, and in representing faculty interests to the administration. Do you?

More next week. . .

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### REMINDER

**Childcare Brown Bag Lunch**  
**Thursday, February 10**  
**12:00 – 1:00**  
**Oak Room**

### REMINDER

A committee has been working to establish a daycare center on Fairfield's campus. Please come and discuss these important issues with faculty and staff from across campus. President von Arx and the various vice presidents plan to join us in this conversation.

Rick DeWitt has developed a terrific website for the FWC/AAUP. On this site you will find current events of interest to members, copies of recent newsletters and other documents, links to other sites related to the activities of the FWC and the AAUP, and announcements.

Check us out at <http://www.faculty.fairfield.edu/fwc>

### UPCOMING AAUP EVENTS

Annual Meeting -- June 9 - 12, 2005 -- Washington, DC  
AAUP Summer Institute – July 21 – 24, 2005 – University of New Hampshire

If you are interested in the activities of the state or national AAUP, please contact George Lang. ([lang@cs.fairfield.edu](mailto:lang@cs.fairfield.edu), x. 2517, Math Dept.) The FWC will defray expenses for faculty who are willing to attend workshops and meetings and then return to campus and share their experiences with others. For further information on any of these opportunities, see the AAUP website at <http://www.aaup.org>.

### IN THE NEWS:

Take a look at the most recent issue of *Academe* (January – February, 2005). It is titled "Classroom Cultures: Teaching in the Managed University". There is lots of food for thought here, and many issues that are important to our own local academic community.

