

Faculty Welfare Committee

Excellence in Education



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From the President:

As the semester draws to a close, we have been asked to consider a variety of proposals that would change the nature of shared governance at Fairfield, and that would change the positioning of our benefits within our contract structure. Important stuff. The FWC will provide two opportunities for casual conversation over wine and cheese on **Thursday, April 23, 3:30 – 5:00, BCC 200** and **Tuesday, April 29, 3:30 – 5:00, DSB Dining Room**. Please join us as we try to understand together the issues at stake.

For this issue of the FWC newsletter, we asked a number of faculty to share their thoughts at this critical time. Faculty opinions on the package are mixed, but as we continue to discuss and debate, I would like to remind all of us that our collective collegiality and cooperative structure provides us with clear procedures to follow as we move forward. Many if not all of us tremendously value one another as colleagues and friends. Though we might not always agree on the right vote to take on a particular motion, our work together into the future is always enhanced by what we are able to achieve as a united group of professional teacher-scholars. I hope to see you all soon at an FWC event!

Kathryn Nantz, FWC/AAUP President

FWC Litigation Fund:

As you will read in this newsletter and hear in the many meetings this week and next, there is a real possibility of a serious, and possibly illegal, departure from accepted standards of shared governance at Fairfield in the near future. The situation, as we understand it from our senior administrators, is a not implicit threat from our Board of Trustees to unilaterally amend our *Faculty Handbook*. Any change to the *Handbook* requires approval by the Board and approval by the General Faculty, unilateral amendment is not allowed.

We are disappointed at this vague threat, but see the necessity for preparing for whatever might come our way. To this end, the FWC/AAUP Executive Committee has authorized the FWC/AAUP Treasurer to accept **PLEDGES TO CONTRIBUTE** to legal action, if the need arises. Do not send any money, but email FWC Treasurer, Rick DeWitt if you would like to pledge any amount to a litigation fund. We sincerely hope that we will not have to collect on these pledges and, of course, will keep our faculty membership informed as things progress. We've only just started communicating with National AAUP with regard to our options and possible actions, but we must be prepared to consider legal recourse. Please email the treasurer rdewitt@mail.fairfield.edu with your pledge today.

FWC AND AAUP UPCOMING EVENTS / NEWS

UPCOMING FWC, AAUP AND OTHER FACULTY EVENTS:

FWC/AAUP Open Meeting
Thursday, April 23
3:30-5:00 PM
BCC 200

FWC/AAUP Open Meeting
Tuesday, April 28
3:30-5:00 PM
DSB Dining Room

We have scheduled two open meetings for discussion and conversation over wine and cheese. In keeping with our mission, to promote faculty welfare, broadly defined, we feel it is essential that faculty get informed about the very important issues coming to the Academic Council and the General Faculty. Come to understand the issues, and what's at stake, and what the options are for faculty. The FWC/AAUP does not plan to take a position on the matters before us, except, of course, to affirm fundamental faculty principles of academic freedom and shared governance. Our goal in these meetings is to provide opportunities for faculty to ask questions and become informed about the most sweeping changes we have ever been asked to consider.

**BREAKFAST before the
General Faculty Meeting**
Friday, May 1
9:30 - 10:00 AM
outside SON auditorium

You know the drill. The Faculty Welfare Committee will provide a *gala*

breakfast outside the SON auditorium before the GF Meeting for Committee Reports and Elections. Catch up with friends over coffee before we hear from our hard-working HB committees. Show up early for best pastry selection and because the meeting will begin at 10:00 AM sharp.

**Connecticut State
Conference/AAUP
Annual Spring Meeting:**

**MANAGERIAL
DISCRETION AND
PROFESSIONAL
AUTONOMY IN A TIME OF
FINANCIAL CRISIS**

Thursday, May 7
5:30-9:00 PM
**Graduate Club, 15 Elm Street,
New Haven**

The CSC serves as a link between the AAUP chapters in CT and the national office of the AAUP. The Annual Spring Meeting, open to all members of all chapters in the state, begins with a social period, followed by dinner. Our presentation this year is on "Managerial Discretion and Professional Autonomy in a Time of Financial Crisis." In addition, CSC-AAUP Executive Committee member, Irene Mulvey, is scheduled to present the second annual George E. Lang, Jr. award. Details were in the March 2009 FWC newsletter and will be sent, with a registration form, to all chapter members. Or visit the CSC-AAUP website at: <http://people.wcsu.edu/nairv/AAUPCSC.htm>.

FACULTY FAMILY PICNIC AND SOFTBALL GAME

THURSDAY, MAY 14
WOMEN'S SOFTBALL FIELD
4:30-6:00 PM

The only event for all faculty and faculty friends and families. Save the date, and watch your email for more details.



Mark
"the Bird"
Fidrych

8/14/1954-
4/13/2009

American League Rookie of the Year 1976

RECENT FWC, AAUP AND OTHER FACULTY EVENTS:

FWC trip to Assumption funded by CSC-AAUP

Kathy Nantz and Irene Mulvey received a Tenzer travel grant from the CSC to cover the expenses of their trip last month to Assumption College at the invitation of National AAUP. We donated our grant money to the CSC's Lang fund which funds the annual George E. Lang, Jr. award.

Fairfield FWC invited to Ohio State Conference Annual Meeting.

DeWitt, Mulvey, Nantz and Rakowitz) travelled to the OSC Annual Meeting in Columbus, Ohio to present a workshop on AAUP advocacy chapters. Full report in next issue!

Some History Concerning our Faculty Handbook

The *Faculty Handbook* was being drafted when I came to Fairfield in 1965. Shortly thereafter the drafting committee completed its work, after which the faculty as a whole spent several years of monthly meetings debating and amending the proposed *Handbook*, often section by section, until the final document was accepted in 1970 by both the faculty and “the Corporation,” the committee of Jesuits appointed by the New England provincial to serve in lieu of a board of trustees. In other words, our *Faculty Handbook* was written by colleagues of ours now long gone, and most dead. Although often amended in detail the *Handbook's* fundamental structure and underlying philosophy of governance have been in place for thirty-nine years. It is older than the Board of Trustees. It is older than many of the General Faculty. It has served us well, and in an important sense, by giving the faculty a secure and distinctive role it has helped to make Fairfield what it is today.

What is the point of all this history? Our colleagues who wrote the *Faculty Handbook* back in the 1960s wrote it for themselves to be sure, but they also wrote it for the future, for generations of faculty to follow. Now we are being asked to fundamentally alter the *Handbook* and to change its underlying philosophy. The actions we take or do not take now will similarly determine the shape of the *Handbook* and the role of the faculty in governance well into our future, even for colleagues who will be hired by the colleagues we ourselves have yet to hire. In the next few weeks, as we decide how to vote on

the proposals that will come before us we should keep in mind our responsibilities to these future colleagues and to Fairfield's long-term future as well.

-Vin Rosivach, Classics



A New Era?

While others comment on the specifics of the package under consideration, I'd like to offer a few thoughts about process. I've been fairly active in faculty governance for 10-15 years, and frankly, I'm tired of the fighting. I'm tired of constantly battling with administrators over both process and substance. And it's not just me; the final report of the NEASC visiting team expressed deep concern over the state of faculty/administrative relations and led to the *Blue Ribbon Commission*. I don't buy the conclusions of these bodies that something in our governance structures is responsible for the way relations have deteriorated. I think the problems can be traced to particular individuals and issues, especially merit. But what I see now is that we have a relatively new President and Executive Vice President, and a brand new Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, and we have the possibility of putting a lot of the merit problems behind us. Under those conditions, we may be poised for a new era in governance at Fairfield, an era marked by respect for process, for one another, and for our shared mission.

Those of you who know me, know that I am far from a glass-half-full kind of person. Whence, you may wonder, comes this ray of optimism? Well, as a member of the Academic Council Subcommittee on Governance, and chair of the Faculty Salary Committee, I've

spent dozens of hours this year in meetings with administrators. Some of the discussions we've had were held under the threat of unilateral action by the Board to change the *Handbook*, and clearly that is a terrible model for real collaboration. Nonetheless, the fact that the two highest officers of the institution engaged with the faculty this intensively to try to find some common ground, rather than simply letting the Board carry out their threat, is encouraging.

More encouraging were this year's merit talks. As two administrators (Weitzer and Crabtree) and three FSC members (Dennin, Tromley and myself) began subcommittee meetings, EVP Weitzer insisted that the university-wide structures we developed be set up to make some distinctions among faculty and that faculty self-evaluate annually regardless of the availability of funds for merit. With those preconditions in place, we worked fully collaboratively on a proposal. Both sides made compromises to reach agreement on the basic structure, and from that point on, the “sides” broke down. Any subset of the five of us might end up arguing against another subset. This pattern continued when we brought drafts of the proposal to the full salary committee and reviewed the feedback we gathered from outside of the committee—there was no predicting who might end up divided or in agreement over any point. I think this freewheeling give and take has made our proposal stronger. This process of collaborating on the merit proposal felt much more productive and rewarding than all of the time I've spent in contention with administrators over the years. That's what has given me hope that(continued on next page)

A New Era (continued)

maybe we are at a real turning point. Now don't get me wrong, if administrators start trampling on faculty prerogatives again, I'll be right back up on the barricades. But I'm cautiously optimistic that that won't be necessary, and I know that we all could use a break from the constant adversarial pose we've been maintaining. I also know that, although both options that the faculty is facing are risky, only one of them allows for the possibility of breaking the toxic cycle in which faculty/administrative relations have been trapped. That's one of the reasons why, unless we fail to reach agreement on the details we're still working out, I intend to vote for the package we're proposing.

-Susan Rakowitz, Psychology



Finding the Best Path Through a Bad Situation

I spoke at the April 3 meeting of the General Faculty as a member of the Academic Council Subcommittee on Governance. Our purpose as a subcommittee was to inform the faculty about where we were in our talks with the administration, but faculty members could certainly tell from my words that I thought the faculty should vote for the package we will bring to it at semester's end.

As all of us know, this a bad situation, made so by members of the Board who have threatened to change the *Handbook* unilaterally. Our subcommittee's response last fall to the *Report of the Faculty Handbook Working Group* (circulated to the faculty and posted on the GFS website) was that if the Trustees wanted a *Handbook* change they should make a proposal that respects the *Handbook's* provision for mutual amendment. President von

Arx demonstrated leadership in the subcommittee's first meeting with him and Executive Vice-President Weitzer last December. He began by proposing that we not talk about any unilateral change in the *Handbook* but instead about a "package" of items that would represent a mix of concerns important to the trustees, the administration, and the faculty. We have spent months talking about this package, and the Faculty Salary Committee has been as involved in these discussions as our subcommittee.

The two most neuralgic issues for the faculty, of course, are cost-sharing health care premiums and moving the details of faculty benefits out of the protection of the *Handbook* into the Benefits Overview Document where they can enter into the mix of annual compensation discussions. As Susan Rakowitz, Chair of the Salary Committee, has pointed out, the Salary Committee last year entertained serious discussion with the administration on cost-sharing in exchange for a merit system whose standard-level of achievement is tied to the cost-of-living. Such a merit system, now included in the package, will prevent any faculty member from benefiting financially at the expense of another's ability to keep pace with the cost-of-living. In this regard, the package endorses two items on which agreement could have been reached last year had the administration accepted then the kind of merit system that the faculty has always judged vitally important and which, with the approval of the package, we will finally have.

I know that shifting the details of benefits out of the *Handbook* is a source of faculty concern. In doing this subcommittee work, though, I

have come to realize that I did not have quite the extent of compensation protection under the *Handbook* that I thought I did. Compensation dollars finally are governed by the administration's commitment to the 95th percentile, which is not protected by the *Handbook*. Currently, the inclusion of benefits in the *Handbook* only protects how a certain portion of annually allotted dollars are spent, and that, in turn, determines how little is available for salary raises. In the end, moving the details of benefits out of the *Handbook* and into the mix of annual compensation discussions places us all largely where we've always been – in the midst of all the desires, motivations, and pressures on the part of all university constituencies to make Fairfield an attractive place to work. Should we as a faculty approve this change, and then find, into the future, that the administration fails to appreciate the hard work and remarkable commitment of the faculty, a space will appear with growing energy for an effective faculty response. I have come to conclude that, ironically, our overvaluing of our very unusual circumstance of not cost-sharing on health care premiums has led us to expect very little from our annual compensation discussions and, unsurprisingly, that is what we had gotten.

Finally, there are items in the package that make room for greater participation of administrators on *Handbook* committees. I want to go on record in stating that I think that the Blue Ribbon Commission's judgment that there are structural problems in faculty governance here is absolute nonsense. In fall 2001 I was elected by the Academic Council (with George Lang, Kathy Nantz, and Lucy Katz) to sit on the

Best Path, Bad Situation, cont'd.

Board's "Committee on Governance" (read Merit Pay) and here I am again on an Academic Council subcommittee responding to the Blue Ribbon (sounds important, no?) Commission's deep concerns about governance at Fairfield. I wish in the future that folks would just say what they mean and call their assembly the "You Don't Agree With Us" Committee. In my judgment, the only reason that governance was flagged as a problem by NEASC was that Academic Vice-President Grossman wrote the governance section of the institutional report all by himself and offered anything but an objective account. Nevertheless, I do believe that all the Handbook amendments we will put forward on Handbook committee membership are improvements in their own right, and I would be voting for them eagerly even if they were proposed outside the present circumstances. My work on the review of the Journal of Record with other faculty and administrators has enabled me to see that a much stronger document will be the result.

Doing anything under a threat forces those threatened to judge themselves unprincipled should they cede in any way. So, shame on the members of the Board who have defined these circumstances. Yet, I do think it would be a drastic mistake for faculty to reject the package, in which there is a reasonable blend of positive and negative things. Rejecting the package will cause us to step into a trap that will unwind faculty governance and, in a very short period of time, faculty unity and community. I think that some of the Trustees would want that even more than to dictate Handbook changes to the faculty.

-John Thiel, Religious Studies

Cost-sharing in exchange for \$2000 and no additional merit unless standard exceeds COLA is a deal we should take.

We as a faculty have been able to avoid one of the most difficult and contentious issues in labor management relations over the last twenty years, that of how much will the employee pay for her health care coverage. Make no mistake we are paying our health care premium costs. Every year when we finished our collegial discussions with the administration and the salary committee would argue we got, for example a 2% settlement the administration would come back and say no, the settlement was 5% because that is how much the health care premium went up. What we have been able to avoid is that the administration could not burden the faculty with a portion of the increased health care cost and still give the faculty a small raise. The administration had to bear the entire cost of the health care premium without any wiggle room on their part. The administration has been trying to rid themselves of this fixed cost obligation since about 1990 and now they have threatened to do so unilaterally if the faculty will not agree to do it mutually.

If this happens either by fiat or agreement this will basically make Fairfield like virtually every other private college in the United States. All compensation issues are on the table and the whole compensation pie is up for grabs every contract cycle. What will protect us from bad agreements will be our political will and the amount of pain we can cause if the administration goes too far, which has always been our most important protection. Some have expressed the view that if we allow this to happen the Board will act to

take away even more of our benefits. I believe this is not a realistic argument because it simply does not make sense. Our salaries and benefits are a function of the market not the mood of the Board. We are paid what is necessary in order to get the faculty they want.

I believe that what we are getting for agreeing to give up our handbook guarantees, the guaranteed cost of living before additional merit, and the \$2000 in the base are worth our consent only because I believe the Board will act unilaterally if we do not agree. Further I believe we can not win a legal battle and an all out political fight will hurt all of us more than anything we can achieve from sustained faculty action. It is not that I trust the administration or believe in their good will I just believe that this is a battle we can not win so take the concessions they are willing to make because the alternative is worse.

-Don Greenberg, Politics



Some Answers to Your Questions

At the recent General Faculty meeting, the Faculty Salary Committee and the Academic Council Subcommittee on Governance discussed a number of changes the administration wants faculty to accept. At the FWC gala following that meeting, and around campus, I've heard a lot of questions about those changes. So I thought it might be helpful to provide my take on some of them.

What are the main changes the administration wants faculty to accept?

Of the proposed changes discussed at the General Faculty meeting, these two seem to us to be the ones raising the most questions: (i) cost sharing on health premiums, and (continued next page)

Answers, continued.

(ii) removing specific information about benefits from the *Faculty Handbook* and moving that information into a separate Benefits document.

Regarding (i), the proposal is that, for the upcoming year, faculty would pay 10% of the health premium. This amount would be about \$700 for a faculty member who is single and on the basic health plan, about \$2,000 for someone with a family and on the basic health plan, and up to about \$3,600 for someone with a family and enhanced dental and prescription coverage.

To offset these additional costs, each faculty member would receive a one-time bump of \$2,000 in his or her base salary. For the first year, the average faculty member would approximately break even. But as health costs rise, as they almost certainly will, the cost share amount paid by faculty would increase.

Regarding (ii), the existing language on faculty benefits in the *Faculty Handbook* provides a good deal of reassurance to faculty that their benefits will remain stable. The *Handbook* can only be amended with the approval of both the Board of Trustees as well as a 2/3rds vote of the General Faculty. Not surprisingly, the benefits, and in particular their inclusion in the *Handbook*, has always been an excellent incentive when recruiting new faculty.

In contrast, moving the specifics of faculty benefits into a separate Benefits document, especially if that document had only a one-year life span (as with our annual contract letters) would mean that faculty would have no assurances that their benefits will remain stable over the years. It is difficult to overemphasize what a substantial, and detrimental,

change this would be to our benefits structure.

Is it unusual to have benefits specified in a Faculty Handbook?

Not at all. We've consulted with AAUP experts on this, and reviewed dozens of handbooks from universities around the country. Almost all faculty handbooks contain sections on benefits. Handbooks differ with respect to how specific they are about benefits—some handbooks have about the same level of specificity as ours, some less—but in general, there is nothing particularly unusual about our *Handbook* or its section on benefits.

Won't cost sharing on health premiums save the university money? And in difficult economic times, isn't that a good idea?

The answer to the first question is “no,” and although in general saving money for the university is a good idea, faculty cost sharing on health premiums simply won't accomplish this. To understand why, it's important to remember our commitment to the 95th percentile in total compensation. This means that our average combined salaries and benefits, for each rank, needs to be at or above the 95th percentile nationwide for schools in our category. So the total compensation pie for each rank, so to speak, has to remain at a certain size. So if the benefits slice of that pie is smaller, the salary slice has to be larger. That's the only way to keep the overall pie at the size required by the 95th percentile.

If we move to cost sharing, some faculty will no doubt opt to be covered under their spouse's health plan, thereby taking themselves out of the university's health coverage. Won't that save money?

Again no, for basically the same reason as above. Say you opt to be

covered under your spouse's plan, and the university does not have to pay, say, \$10,000 this year for your health costs. That will be \$10,000 less in benefits that the university reports to the AAUP for calculating where we stand with respect to the 95th percentile. And that \$10,000 has to be made up (again to stay at the 95th percentile), and the only place to make it up is by putting an additional \$10,000 into salary.

Or to again use the pie analogy, suppose you have a pie that has to be of a certain size (the 95th percentile size). If the pie has only two slices, a salary slice and a benefits slice, then if you cut one slice smaller, the other slice has to be larger. And if a faculty member moves to his or her spouse's health coverage, that means the benefits slice will be smaller and so the salary slice larger.

In short, the proposed cost sharing will not save the university money. In fact, it will have no overall effect on what the university pays for faculty compensation.

What is this “95th percentile” business? I've never understood that.

You're in good company. It takes everyone a while to figure this out. The trustee's commitment to the AAUP's 95th percentile for IIA institutions was explained in the FWC March 2009 newsletter and I encourage you to check out that article on page 5. Newsletters are online at www.faculty.fairfield.edu/fwc under Miscellaneous Publications.

-Rick DeWitt, Philosophy



We can and should make real progress if we re-package the package.

On page 8 of this newsletter, you can read a rough description of the so-called “package proposal” that is on its way to the AC and the GF. Parts of this proposal would alter in fundamental ways the *Faculty Handbook* and the role of faculty in shared governance at Fairfield. You need to understand the proposal, the rationale for the various pieces of it, and the implications of any changes. You need to understand what options the faculty have at this point and make up your own mind as to what’s best for the future of Fairfield.

Let me say at the outset that the AC Subcommittee on Governance has worked tirelessly on our behalf all year long. THANK YOU Don, Kathy, Susan, John and Jo! Whatever criticism I may have of the package in no way reflects on these friends and colleagues who have done the very best anyone could do under impossible circumstances.

There are five sub-proposals to the package (see page 8). The most far-reaching and consequential is item 2. It would remove all specifics of benefits out of the Handbook where they cannot be changed without mutual approval by the trustees and the faculty (2/3 vote at a meeting) into an expanded Benefits Plan Overview document where the faculty would have, as far as I can see, essentially no protection against unilateral change. This is bad for faculty. Check out Fiscal Policies on page 27 of the *Handbook*: health care plans, retirement plan (including the University’s contribution), Life Insurance, Disability policy, sabbatical, pre-tenure leave, tuition programs, and lots more. The proposal takes details of fiscal policies out of the Handbook where they are protected against unilateral amendment. In its current form, this proposal is unacceptable to me and I will speak against it and vote against it. I would support it when and only when all the language in all the documents has been vetted for the faculty by an attorney (at FWC expense). We wouldn’t do anything this drastic in our personal lives without getting the OK from an attorney and we shouldn’t do

so in our work lives. Item 2 should be postponed for further consideration.

Proposals 1 and 3 taken together represent meaningful progress on a couple of issues that have been with us for quite a while now. I agree with Prof. Greenberg that the combination of these two items is something the faculty should accept. The trustees have wanted the faculty to cost-share on health care premiums for a long time. (The reason they haven’t been able simply to force this change on us is because our health benefits reside in the *Handbook*; see previous paragraph.) Faculty pointed out that money “saved” by cost-sharing would need to go into salary (See DeWitt’s article on page 4) and without a guarantee of at least a cost-of-living increase for all, we would be funding our merit pay system (which has never been funded by the trustees) on the backs of “sustained” faculty who could essentially be taking a pay cut year after year. The second sentence in Item 3 in the package proposal addresses this in a way that is acceptable to me. I am willing to support, and encourage faculty to support the combinations of items 1 and 3 (assuming details and language can be worked out): Faculty agree to pay at most 10% of their health care premiums in exchange for (1) a one-time \$2000 payment into base salary, (2) sensible limits on how quickly our less than 10% share can grow, and (3) no additional merit unless standard merit exceeds COLA. This represents mutual gains and meaningful progress on two items that have been labeled “governance problems” for years.

I have no strong feelings on the first sentence in item 3 and item 5.

Item 4 changes the Academic Council in ways that are unacceptable to me. The AC is a deliberative body of *faculty elected* by their colleagues to discuss and decide items that fall under *faculty purview* by *faculty vote*. The AVP, the 6 academic deans, and the Faculty Secretary are *ex officio* non-voting members there to provide input and context. None of these individuals should be voting in the AC, the executive arm of the General Faculty. If this sub-proposal came to us alone, it would probably take an entire semester for us to discuss and understand the implications of these changes. As part

of the “package”, I have heard absolutely no sensible rationale for such a fundamental change. I will not support it at this time, but suggest the discussion be continued into next year when a full and complete rationale can be provided.

But, if we don’t accept the “package” and the trustees unilaterally amend the Handbook, then won’t we have no Handbook at all? Of course, we’ll have a *Handbook*. The tenth edition of our *Handbook* is the official version and will remain so until amended per the process for amendment in the *Handbook*. The trustees can no more write a new *Handbook* than I could. Incidentally, National AAUP has been informed of the threat of unilateral (and almost surely illegal) amendment of our *Handbook* and are in communication with faculty leaders on this matter. In addition, I urge you to make a pledge to the FWC Litigation Fund (see page 1). I have.

There is much in the package proposal that we can and should accept. I thank the faculty and administrators who have worked so hard to reach agreements that seemed impossibly unreachable even just a couple of years ago. Thanks to their work, we have made genuine meaningful progress. There is much in the package proposal that is being inappropriately rushed and should be postponed for further work next year. It’s unfortunate that we have so little direct communication with the trustees and we are hearing from senior administrators what the trustees may or may not do. Event “the threat” to act unilaterally is completely unclear to me. What exactly is the threat? Write a new *Handbook*? Distribute a unilateral amendment for us all to gently tuck into the back pocket of the *Handbook*? Simply ignore the current *Handbook*? The vagueness of the threat strategically adds to the threat.

I sincerely hope that calm heads will prevail and that the administration and trustees realize that genuine progress that is mutually acceptable can be achieved if the “package” is re-packaged into the proposals that we can complete by the end of the year and the proposals that need more work next year.

The Faculty Welfare Committee/AAUP at Fairfield University is an ad hoc committee of the General Faculty and an affiliate of the National AAUP.



The Mission of the AAUP:
to advance academic freedom and shared governance, to define fundamental professional values and standards for higher education, and to ensure higher education's contribution to the common good.



Academic freedom
for a
free society



FROM THE ARCHIVES: Snippets unearthed by the Secretary of the General Faculty...

The following five items constitute the “package proposal” on its way to the Academic Council and to the General Faculty for discussion. These proposals were detailed in the most recent report of the AC Subcommittee on Governance (4/6/2009), the complete report (and much more) is available on the General Faculty Secretary’s website at www.faculty.fairfield.edu/gfs.

1. the Handbook will be amended at II.B.1.a. to eliminate the phrase “at no cost to the faculty member” as a description of our enhanced Health Care Plan and the Major Medical Plan. In the future, faculty will contribute a portion of their salary to pay the Health Care Plan premium. To facilitate this transition, the administration will increase the salary base of each faculty member by \$2,000.00. The Salary Committee is discussing multi-year limits on the premium increases for which faculty are responsible.
2. the Handbook will be amended at II.B. “Fiscal Policies” to remove any specific mention of policy plans or the university’s specific financial contributions to benefits. The Handbook will state that the university provides an enhanced Health Care Plan, a Retirement Plan, Life Insurance, and so forth. But now all the specifics of these benefits will reside in a separate benefits document that will be contractually referenced in the Memo of Understanding. The administration has offered two reasons for this placing: 1. a separate benefits document, and not the Handbook, is the appropriate repository of benefit details; 2. in the future, some of these benefits may be brought into the annual compensation discussions with the Salary Committee.
3. the faculty and the administration will mutually approve principles for a system of merit compensation that are transparent and fair. Central to this new merit system is the principle that additional merit exceeds a standard level of achievement that responsible faculty are ordinarily expected to meet, and that additional merit will only be dispensed when there are sufficient monies to fund this standard level at the cost of living.
4. the Handbook will be amended at I.B.2. “Academic Council: Membership” to extend voting privileges to four ex officio members who currently do not possess a votes: the Senior Vice-President for Academic Affairs, two Deans of Schools appointed annually by the Senior Vice-President for Academic Affairs, and the Secretary of the General Faculty. Also, the Handbook will be amended at I.B.2. “Academic Council: Executive Secretary” to include the Senior Vice-President for Academic Affairs and member of senior academic administration chosen annually by the Senior Vice-President for Academic Affairs in meetings to prepare the agenda of meetings of the Academic Council along with the Council’s Executive Secretary, Chairperson, and the Secretary of the General Faculty.
5. the Handbook will be amended at C.13. to describe the tasks and responsibilities of the Salary Committee more exactly.

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