

# Faculty Welfare Committee/AAUP Excellence in Education

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### From the FWC/AAUP President:

Dear Colleagues,

Spring must be around the corner! The FWC/AAUP Executive Committee continues to meet regularly to conduct business on your behalf. We also invite other groups who have concerns and issues to meet with the Executive Committee as well. One thing we will be bringing to the membership soon are some changes to the FWC constitution. These changes include allowing contingent faculty members at Fairfield to join our chapter and streamlining our election procedures. Our membership will need to approve these changes, so we are planning to present and discuss them at an open meeting following the General Faculty meeting on March 14, 2014. More information is in this issue and, of course, all members will receive all the relevant documents and be informed by email.

We are connecting, as always, with our colleagues on the Faculty Salary Committee and stand ready to support them in their important work on behalf of the entire faculty.

We are in touch with our faculty colleagues on the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and hope to be in regular contact with them as the strategic planning process unfolds.

I hope to see many of you at our next reception and the open membership meeting on Friday, March 14, 2014. As always, feel free to contact me anytime with your suggestions, comments or concerns.

In Solidarity,  
Jocelyn Boryczka  
FWC/AAUP President

**The FWC/AAUP is going to follow each lecture in the FAIRFIELD 2020 lecture series with an open community discussion. Please mark your calendar for Wednesday, March 19 at 4:30. Immediately following the FAIRFIELD 2020 lecture in the Oak Room by author Jeff Selingo, we will gather for conversation and community.**

**Save The Date!**

**JOIN US IF YOU CAN FOR**

**FAIRFIELD 2014**

# Faculty Welfare Committee/AAUP NEWS AND EVENTS

## Recent FWC and AAUP Events:

### General Faculty Meeting

February 21

THANK YOU to our colleagues on the Faculty Salary Committee for their continuing hard work on our behalf. We look forward to their next report at the GF Meeting on 3/14/14. As always, the meeting will be followed by a *gala* reception hosted by the FWC/AAUP. THANKS! to Shah Etemad for organizing the snacks. THANKS! to Irene Mulvey for organizing the drinks. THANKS! to brand new FWC member Paul Baginski for volunteering to take over as wine-purchaser. The wine drinkers thank you!



## Upcoming FWC and AAUP Events:

### General Faculty Meeting

March 14 at 3:30 PM

Gonzaga Auditorium

Agenda and materials on the General Faculty Secretary's website:

[www.faculty.fairfield.edu/gfs](http://www.faculty.fairfield.edu/gfs)



### FWC/AAUP Open Meeting & GALA - Immediately following the GF Meeting on 3/14 Gonzaga Auditorium

Changes proposed to the FWC Constitution will be presented for discussion. An agenda and materials will be sent in advance by email.

**aaup**  
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF  
UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS



## WE ARE ONE FAIRFIELD: News from our food service workers

Fairfield's unionized food service workers (UNITE HERE Local 217) contacted FWC leadership to share concerns about the fact that the food service contract (now with Sodexo) is being put out to bid. We are in the process of getting more information. Prof. Sonya Huber, co-chair of the FWC Action Committee is in contact with the union staff representative and will give us a brief report at the March 14 FWC Open Meeting to explain the situation and suggest ways that faculty members can show support. More on March 14.

### From the FWC/AAUP Executive Committee: Morning After a Night at the Apollo

We read with interest the articles in The Mirror, and the Letters to the Editor concerning the incident at Apollo Night last Saturday. This week, the FWC/AAUP Executive Committee met with a student representative from “Shatter the Silence,” a group organized in response to the Apollo Night event. In keeping with the foundational AAUP principle of ensuring academic free speech for all members of a university community, the Executive Committee supports the student, staff, faculty, and administration’s efforts to engage constructively with the events surrounding the Apollo Night event. This is a “teachable moment” for our entire community.

The AAUP, in statements jointly formulated and approved by a wide variety of other higher education organizations clearly conveys protection for student free speech and, in particular, for artistic expression of students and faculty. Relevant excerpts are below. Full statements (listing organizations that jointly approved the statements) are at the links. We encourage you to read the full statements.

From the *Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students*:

“Students and student organizations should be free to examine and discuss all questions of interest to them and to express opinions publicly and privately. They should always be free to support causes by orderly means that do not disrupt the regular and essential operations of the institution. At the same time, it should be made clear to the academic and larger community that in their public expressions or demonstrations students or student organizations speak only for themselves.”

[aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/policydocs/contents/stud-rights.htm](http://aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/policydocs/contents/stud-rights.htm)

From *Academic Freedom and Artistic Expression*

“Attempts to curtail artistic presentations at academic institutions on grounds that the works are offensive to some members of the campus community and of the general public occur with disturbing frequency. ... Academic institutions are obliged to ensure that regulations and procedures do not impair freedom of expression or discourage creativity by subjecting artistic works to tests of propriety or ideology.” [aaup.org/report/academic-freedom-and-artistic-expression](http://aaup.org/report/academic-freedom-and-artistic-expression)



Taylor Webb (center) discusses the incident involving a spoken word piece written and read by Crystal Rodriguez at Apollo Night with Professors Yohuru Williams (left) and Jocelyn Boryczka (right).

## Why We're On Strike

by *Lennard Davis and Walter Benn Michaels*

*This article originally appeared in Jacobin (jacobinmag.com) and is reprinted here with permission.*

Today the tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty members who make up the University of Illinois at Chicago faculty union walked out of their classrooms and onto the picket line for a two-day strike. It is the first faculty strike at a major research university in the United States in a very long time.

Most of the state research universities that have unions got them in the 1960s and 1970s, but, in a renewed push to organize campus labor, UIC and the University of Oregon just won certification in the past few years. Oregon got to their contract pretty quickly; we've not been as lucky. We now hope that after two years of fighting us followed by a year and a half of stonewalling on our contract negotiations, the Illinois Board of Trustees will finally start serious bargaining on the main issues that divide us.

To understand why we're striking, it's useful to know a bit about the University of Illinois at Chicago. It is, indeed, a major research university, but "large, struggling underfunded research university" would be more accurate. We're more like Wayne State University, Temple University, or CUNY's Brooklyn College than the University of California at Berkeley or the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, or even the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

But mainly, we like it that way. Unlike the flagships of state universities around the country (never mind selective private colleges), we don't think our job is mainly to educate the children of the upper middle class. At Ann Arbor, for example, more students (16.9 percent) report a family income of over \$250,000 than under \$50,000 (15.6 percent). That's why the Education Trust calls these schools "Engines of Inequality."

But at UIC, that number is nowhere near as high. Only about a third of our students come from families making over \$60,000, and many of our students are from immigrant families, live at home, hold full- or part-time jobs, and even have children of their own.

What this means is that we characteristically enroll students whose preparation, as reflected in their ACT scores, isn't as good as the students at places like Urbana-Champaign. (Family income is a very good predictor of ACT scores.) And we have some real problems with retention (family income is a good predictor of retention, as well).

But the UIC faculty and administration are completely united on the fact that we don't think that the way to solve these problems is by getting "stronger" (which is to say, richer) students. In fact, when we put together a "Strategic Thinking Report" in 2005, we explicitly said we're not looking to recruit "better" students; we want to do a better job of educating the students we have.

The faculty is committed to that mission. And the whole point of the strike is to help us fulfill it.

Start with the retention problem. The biggest falling off is between the first and second years of college, so our administration is (rightly) concerned with the first-year experience. What courses do first-year students take? Who teaches those courses?

Every entering UIC student takes at least one writing course; most take two. Not surprisingly, our writing courses are overwhelmingly taught by lecturers (i.e. non-tenure-track faculty), on year-to-year contracts and paid a standard salary of \$30,000. Furthermore, although the administration carries on endlessly about the importance of merit, it's unwilling to establish a promotion track for non-tenure-track faculty members, the whole point of which would be to reward merit.

So what exactly does it mean to insist on the importance of the first-year experience and then pay the people most responsible for that experience a wage that virtually requires them to work a second job? What does it mean to claim you want to reward the best and the hardest working when you not only won't promote them, but you won't even provide a position they could in theory be promoted to? You're short-changing both the faculty and the students.

The tenure-track faculty members, of course, are better paid. But a quarter of them make less than \$75,000, and another quarter make less than \$90,000. The median salary of all faculty members at UIC is about \$65,000—less than what the average Chicago public-school teacher makes. *[UIC faculty strike continued on next page]*

*[UIC faculty strike continued]*

And this is not because our faculty members are just starting out in their careers. On the contrary, with fewer tenure-track appointments getting made, the tenure-track faculty skews older; therefore, we have salary compression—the effect of years of no raises combined with the effects of inflation and no cost-of-living increases. But the Board of Trustees has been as reluctant to deal seriously with this issue as it has been to deal with those \$30,000 a year non-tenure-track faculty.

These are bread-and-butter issues. They don't even speak to the loss of autonomy and control that faculty members are experiencing, to questions like what academic freedom means to people on one-year contracts or to the politics of reducing universities to nothing but supposed instruments of economic development.

Historically, the administration of the university was a function of faculty members who were chosen to manage the running of departments. The dean was Dean of Faculty—chosen by and beholden to the people who actually teach students. But with the bureaucratization of the university and the growth of the university as corporation, deans, provosts, and their myriad vice provosts have become management. This now-bloated segment of the university makes decisions about the welfare of faculty and students.

The term “shared governance” is invoked to disguise this evisceration of power, but what it mainly means is that faculty senates can “advise” the administration and the administration can then do whatever it wants. To call shared governance real governance is like saying your dog has an equal say in how your household is run because sometimes when he whines he gets fed.

One of our issues in this strike is to take back decision-making power over the issues that matter to us—curriculum, teaching conditions, the distribution of money, and the like. The administration is fighting ferociously to retain that power—since giving it up would in effect be returning it from management to workers.

But are professors really workers? When we were organizing, the administration kept telling us we weren't—we were professionals. And, in fact, at UIC, we belong to the Illinois Federation of Teachers, which does indeed describe itself as a “Union of Professionals.” If you've done any work on the history of professionalization, you know that one of the original points of the whole concept of the professional—as it applied to ministers, doctors, lawyers, and professors—was to distinguish them from workers.

But what we've all begun to realize is that, whatever it meant in the late 19th and early 20th century, in the 21st century that distinction is pure ideology. Professionals are workers—and professors are workers.

That's a hard lesson to learn. In organizing our union in the first place, many (especially tenure track) professors were reluctant to join, seeing themselves the way the administration wanted us to see ourselves: as professionals who shouldn't be lumped together with public-school teachers, university staff members, fast-food workers, even our own non-tenure-track colleagues.

But the administration has been helpful, treating us as badly at the bargaining table as they treat UIC's other unions. Those other unions have been even more helpful, since they understand perfectly well not only that they are workers but that we are, too. Recently, our IFT representative Nick Christen came back from a Service Employees International Union meeting where he'd spoken to several hundred members about our impending strike.

“In the audience,” he reported, “were workers from all over the Chicago region including UIC, the City of Chicago, home aides, and hospital employees. Dozens of them volunteered to take time out of their days to stand in solidarity with us during our strike, and in the case of one home-care aide who makes about \$22,000 a year, take an unpaid half-day off to march with us. Why? Obviously, because it is the right thing to do.”

It *is* the right thing to do. We can't get justice for our faculty unless our union fights for our faculty. But unless our union becomes part of a larger movement, fighting for home-care aides making \$22,000 a year as well as adjuncts making \$30,000 a year, and for Chicago public-school teachers making \$75,000 a year as well as Chicago public-college teachers making \$80,000 a year, we can't get justice at all.

We have to end the divide-and-conquer mentality of corporate management and realize again the perennial message of labor and unions—we're all in this together.

*Lennard Davis and Walter Benn Michaels are professors of English at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Prof. Michaels is a member of National AAUP Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure, along with Fairfield's Professor Irene Mulvey.*

The Faculty Welfare Committee/AAUP at Fairfield University is an *ad hoc* committee of the General Faculty and an affiliate of the national AAUP. If you aren't a member, please consider joining. We promote the professional and economic interests, broadly defined, of the Fairfield University Faculty. All our activities are open to all members of the faculty but we are funded entirely by our dues-paying members. To join, contact any member of the Executive Committee



## From the Archives: Items unearthed by the editor to educate or amuse...

From the FWC Constitution:

C. The Steering Committee shall be active during negotiations and during periods of formal university-wide planning. Its membership shall consist of the Executive Committee and those members of the Salary Committee who are also members of the FWC/AAUP. It shall assist the Salary Committee in the development of negotiating strategies, provide support through the national AAUP Collective Bargaining Congress, and coordinate efforts with the Communication Committee. During formal periods of university planning, the Steering Committee shall invite participation of those members of the University Planning Committee who are also members of the FWC/AAUP. It shall assist the faculty members of the University Planning Committee in the development of plans which further the cause of excellence in education. The President shall serve as Chair of the Steering Committee.

**FWC/AAUP Executive Committee: J. Boryczka, President; J. Dennin, Vice-President; W. Abbott, Secretary; I. Mulvey, Treasurer; At-large members S. Etemad, D. Lippmann, C. Tromley, B. Welles-Nystrom. Membership Director: Y. Williams.**

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