

# Faculty Welfare Committee/AAUP Excellence in Education

Awarded the AAUP Assembly of State Conferences  
*Outstanding Chapter Newsletter Award*  
in 2008, 2009, 2010 & 2012



## From the FWC/AAUP President:

Dear Colleagues:

I'd like to be wishing you a happy Thanksgiving, but instead I'm writing to encourage all FWC members to attend the emergency FWC meeting on Friday immediately following the General Faculty meeting. The FWC has activated our Action Committee and we need everyone's input and support.

We have all seen the report from the Trigger Committee and the Faculty Salary Committee (FSC) and we'll hear more about it at Friday's meeting. Our concern is not only with the cost-share increases (more on those on Friday) but with what appears to be a complete contravention of shared governance in the imposition of the cost-share amounts. Collegial discussions, meaningful faculty involvement and appropriate faculty input - the essential principles of shared governance - appear to have been ignored.

Please join me and your FWC colleagues on Friday after the GF meeting. Now, more than ever, we must stand in solidarity.

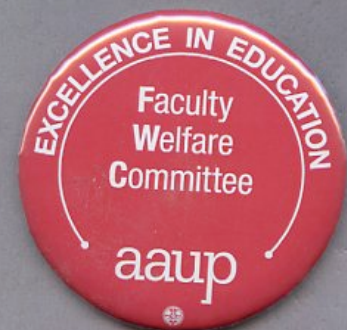
Sincerely,  
Rona Preli  
FWC/AAUP President

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- ✓ Page 1: From the President
- ✓ Page 2-3: History/Timeline from FSC members
- ✓ Page 4: From the Archives

## EMERGENCY MEETING FWC/AAUP

Friday, November 21, immediately following the  
General Faculty Meeting in Gonzaga Auditorium



## History/Timeline

### RE 2009 and earlier cost-shares in the relevant MOU/BPOs:

- The University provided health insurance at no cost to the employee, spouse and dependent children.

### RE 2010 & 2011 & 2012 cost-shares in 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12 MOU/BPOs:

- A three-year agreement was reached.
- Faculty agreed to pay 10% of health insurance premiums in 2010, 2011 and 2012.
- Faculty cost would not increase by more than 6% in 2011 and 2012.

### RE 2013 cost-shares in the 2012-13 MOU/BPO:

- A one-year agreement was reached.
- Faculty agreed to pay 10% of health insurance premiums in 2013.
- In spite of widespread faculty disapproval of agreeing to pay 10% of an unknown number (the effect of having no cap on the increase), and with time running out in the academic year, the faculty approved an MOU/BPO without a cap on the increase.
- In Fall 2012, we learned that faculty costs in 2013 would increase by 11%.

### RE 2014 cost-shares in the 2013-14 MOU/BPO:

- The administration wanted faculty to pay more than 10% of premiums.
- The administration proposed that faculty cost-shares increase to 20% in exchange for an offset into the base that would cover, on average, about half of the increase (making the increase “feel like” going from 10% to 15%.)
- The administration calculated this offset to be \$920/employee.
- In making this calculation, the administration assumed health care costs would be increasing by about 7%. The administration assured the FSC that this was a reasonable projection based on robust data and supplied by their trusted consultant, William Gallagher Associates.
- The FSC surveyed the faculty and reported that a very small majority were willing to have cost-shares increase to 12%. Faculty were not willing, by a large majority, to pay any more than 12%.
- As a result of the survey, the FSC proposed to the administration that faculty cost-shares increase to 20% in exchange for an offset into the base that would cover on average 4/5 of the increase (making the increase “feel like” going from 10% to 12%.)
- The FSC calculated this offset to be \$1480/employee. The FSC used the same projection (robust data, trusted consultant, etc.) as the administration
- **The FSC’s offset followed from the administration’s proposed offset by simple arithmetic.**
- A one-year agreement was reached.
- In spring 2013, faculty approved an MOU/BPO that had faculty paying 20% of health insurance premiums in 2014 in exchange for an offset into the base of \$1480 that was calculated to make the effective increase, on average, 12% of health insurance premiums.
- The following table, shared with the administration and presented to the General Faculty in spring 2013, shows what we (faculty and administration) expected cost-shares to be in 2014:

Option 1	ACTUAL	PROJECTED	
	2013	2014	less offset
EE	\$905	\$1,937	\$457
EE +1	\$1,835	\$3,927	\$2,447
EE + >1	\$2,457	\$5,258	\$3,778

- 
- August 1, 2013: Kevin Lawlor became Executive Vice President.
  - Summer 2013: Fairfield changed health care consultants - no longer employing William Gallagher Associates, and hiring Mercer.
- 
- In September, 2013, an *ad hoc* Health Care Review Committee (Mulvey, Rakowitz, Tucker) met with EVP Lawlor and the administration's consultant from Mercer.
  - In that meeting, we were informed that the previous consultant's projections were wrong, and that instead of the 7% increase that the FSC and the administration had used to calculate the offset, health care premiums needed to increase by 22% because, according to Mercer, in writing, "Current premium equivalent rates have not been adjusted over the years to keep in line with cost increases." FSC asked multiple times and in writing for an explanation - in writing - for this startling assertion. No explanation or supporting data has ever been provided.
  - Members of this *ad hoc* Committee and the FSC strongly objected to this increase that was completely inconsistent with the agreements reached in the 2013-14 collegial discussions, and the 2014 rates were set as we expected.
  - Throughout 2013-14, the administration continued to claim that "you are not at 20%" and the FSC pointed out that "we are where we should be given the carefully calculated offset of \$1,480". Throughout 2013-14, the faculty reiterated:
    - ★ If premiums need to be increased to bring the faculty portion to 20%, that requires an additional offset into the base.
    - ★ If there is no additional offset into the base, then faculty are paying what we agreed to pay.
    - ★ Going forward, following our agreement to pay 20% of premiums in exchange for the carefully calculated offset, faculty costs and University's costs must increase at the same rate.
  - And now, here we are in 2014-15. The administration says there are two parts to the health insurance increase: "(1) a projected 4.9% increase on medical/Rx costs, and (2) realizing an 80-20% cost-share distribution for the base plans offered." Hence, the employee's share will increase by 15% and the University's share will increase by 2.5%.
  - Our response continues to be the starred items directly above. Agreements reached by the hard work in the collegial discussions, and approved by the administration and General Faculty must be honored.



Many thanks to our faculty colleagues for writing this timeline and serving on the FSC over the last three years: Joe Dennin, Bryan Crandall, Bob Epstein, Walter Hlawitschka, Sonya Huber, Dennis Keenan, John Miecznikowski, Irene Mulvey, Ryan Munden, Marcie Patton, & Deb Strauss.

**The Faculty Welfare Committee/AAUP at Fairfield University is an *ad hoc* committee of the General Faculty and an affiliate of the national AAUP. About 70% of the full-time faculty at Fairfield are members of the FWC. If you aren't a member, please consider joining. The FWC promotes 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:**

The following committee was approved by the General Faculty on May 17, 2014, and approved by the administration and is entered into our Journal of Record.

#### **Trigger Committee**

##### **Background.**

Fairfield University is currently self-insured. On an annual basis, health care costs may change based on numerous factors including changing demographics, employee usage patterns, and changes in stop-loss insurance costs.

##### **Membership**

Two members of the Faculty Salary Committee (FSC) and two members of the faculty appointed by the FSC.

##### **Purpose**

In any year when health insurance premiums are proposed to increase by 6% or more, this committee is convened. The committee reviews all relevant data in order to determine if the increase is justified. The figure of 6% is significant to the faculty due to historical data and the calculation of offsets based upon it, but does not represent a specific contractual commitment on the part of the administration. The administration does not subscribe to or make any representation as to the significance of this percentage. The Trigger Committee will work collegially with the Health Care Committee.

##### **Specific Duties**

1. To receive from the administration in a timely manner data, assumptions, trends, and other information that underlie the annual health care contribution rate calculations;
2. To understand through reasonable inquiry and discussion with the administration how the rates have been calculated;
3. To ensure that the rates have been developed accurately and are consistent with prior years;
4. To report their findings to the faculty through the Faculty Salary Committee before the rates take effect.

**FWC/AAUP Executive Committee: Rona Preli, President; Jocelyn Boryczka, Vice-President; Bill Abbott, Secretary; Irene Mulvey, Treasurer; At-large members Betsy Bowen, Sonya Huber, Anna Lawrence, Deb Strauss. Membership Director: Stephanie**

Faculty Welfare Committee/AAUP  
Rona Preli, President  
Fairfield University  
1073 North Benson Road  
Fairfield, CT 06824

