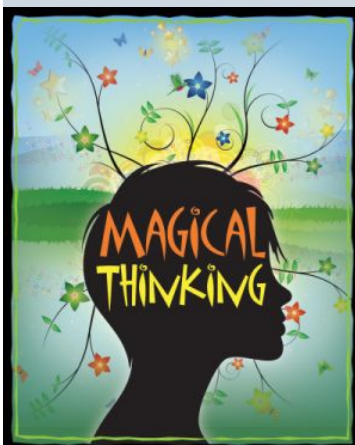


Faculty Welfare Committee/AAUP Newsletter

Excellence in Education



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From the FWC/AAUP President.

Dear Colleagues,

It has been a true honor to serve as your FWC/AAUP President for the last four years. Of course, I will remain in whatever capacity is most helpful to the new leadership for as long (and only as long) as they wish. I'm not even sure how many consecutive years I've been on the FWC/AAUP EC, since I was Treasurer for more terms than I can remember. I'll miss being an elected leader on the FWC/AAUP EC even while looking forward to my new challenges.

I'm proud of the work the chapter did in helping to get discussions about re-opening back in front of elected faculty governance bodies, and I know the new leadership will continue to fight for faculty to be able to provide the most appropriate educational experience for their students in a setting that doesn't just "prioritize health and safety," but demands that the **number one priority be the health and safety of all campus and community members**. I am grateful to the many faculty members who contacted me after the last Provost Town Hall to thank me for asking if the administration had estimates on the number of community members who may become infected or die as a result of our reopening in Fall 2020. I'm still surprised at the answer. It seems to me that if the University is attempting to address a risk, the first step should be a very accurate assessment of the actual risk, which would include estimates of how many people are likely to become infected, become sick, or even die. Colleagues at institutions in states with pandemic statistics very similar to CT have emailed me the estimates their institutions are using and where they come from. I remain surprised and very concerned that our Task Force isn't doing this same kind of modeling.

With regard to our delayed contracts, I am disappointed in myself for not realizing that the delay was because the administration had approached the FSC to renegotiate our current GF- approved contract, which was supposed to have been in effect through 2020-2021. The administration did not contact the FSC about breaking the current contract until mid-June when it was too late to engage the GF before we all went off contract on June 30. This appears to be deliberate on the part of the administration since they knew at the March Board of Trustees meeting that there were problems. (cont'd p.2)

From the FWC President (continued from page 1)

And, while I appreciate the very hard work our colleagues on FSC did over the summer, there was a disconnect between FSC and FWC EC over this contract re-opening. I certainly did not know contract renegotiation was a possibility and, certainly once it became clear there would need to be a consultation with our attorney, the FWC EC should have been notified. Contracts were not on my radar this year, given the mutually- approved MOU extension through June 2021. Moreover, it would be inappropriate in a union setting for the FSC to open negotiations without authorization to do so from the GF who elected them to engage in collegial discussions on behalf of the GF. As FWC President, I regret that I did not anticipate that the administration would seek to change our contract. Moving forward, I encourage the FWC EC and the FSC to keep in closer contact on any matter where the FWC may be needed to provide any kind of support.

As you will hear at the GF Zoom meeting on August 17, the FWC EC did arrange to have the contractual documents reviewed by our attorney and so, as always, **THANK YOU** to the dues-paying members of the FWC/AAUP. Without the FWC/AAUP Treasury and the connections we have with our AAUP chapters in CT and beyond, we would be passing the hat and scrambling to be able to have this very necessary review of the documents negotiated by our FSC colleagues.

I've never been very good at endings, so I will leave it at this. All of my work with the amazing group of faculty I have met and worked with at Fairfield (past, present and *future* colleagues) has made my academic career incredibly rewarding and meaningful.

In Solidarity,
Irene Mulvey
FWC/AAUP President

**EDUCATION IS NOT A PRODUCT
STUDENTS ARE NOT CUSTOMERS
PROFESSORS ARE NOT TOOLS
FACULTIES ARE NOT FACTORIES**



Call for Questions and Concerns on Re-opening

We appreciate the Provost Town Halls that have been held this summer but acknowledge that the Town Hall format can be less than ideal for understanding all of the concerns, and the extent of those concerns, about all the various aspects of re-opening. We also appreciate how hard our colleagues on the AC have been working all summer, but without being on campus and without being in physical community with each other, it can be hard for faculty concerns to reach the AC.

The FWC/AAUP EC would like to facilitate getting faculty questions on re-opening to our administration and elected faculty bodies. To do this, the FWC/AAUP EC will receive questions, concerns, and comments, organize them, and send them along to elected bodies and the administration with a request for responses in writing.

Send any question, comment or concern to FWC/AAUP Vice President Maggie Labinski at mlabinski@fairfield.edu with the subject line "FACULTY WELFARE". While we welcome your feedback at any point during the coming term, we ask that you send initial concerns by August 21st. We will not disclose identities outside of the members of the FWC EC who work on this project.

...but without our brain and muscle not a single wheel can turn...

-from Solidarity Forever by Pete Seeger

Higher Ed COVID-19 News From Around the Web

June 8, 2020: Acknowledging that the structure and expectations for research productivity overwhelmingly privilege individuals who are not largely responsible for child care and/or elder care, and as well as how this inequity is exacerbated by the COVID-19 global pandemic, the Center for the Study of Women in Society at the University of Oregon (csws.uoregon.edu) organizes *The Campaign for Caregivers* and calls for specific actions from the administration. <https://csws.uoregon.edu/labor-inequities-covid-19/>

July 17, 2020: A trigger for the immediate closure of UT: death of a student from COVID. Not on the list of triggers for immediate closure: employee death from COVID. https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/jgxxv8b/university-of-texas-will-close-if-students-not-employees-die-from-covid-19

July 31, 2020: Study indicates that there may be a way to reopen colleges safely by screening *every* student *every* two days, and adhering to strict social distancing. (This analytical modeling study considered a hypothetical cohort of 4990 college-age students with 10 asymptomatic infected students, not an entire college community which would include custodial staff in dormitories and food service workers as well as faculty). <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2768923>

August 14, 2020: After dark on a Wednesday evening, a few hundred Villanova students gathered in and around a tent that had been set up to serve as an outdoor classroom space. Villanova Public Safety officers responded, and the crowd dispersed. The following morning, the university president emailed the students reminding them to follow safety guidelines. <https://www.nbcphiladelphia.com/news/local/videos-of-large-crowd-of-villanova-students-prompt-safety-concerns/2501291/>

August 15, 2020: UNC reports another COVID-19 cluster, on top of two reported earlier this week. <https://www.wral.com/coronavirus/unc-reports-another-covid-19-cluster-on-top-of-2-reported-earlier-this-week/19237613/>

Faculty Welfare Committee/AAUP Leadership Transition

Congratulations and a roll-up-your-sleeves-and-get-to-work welcome to the new Faculty Welfare Committee/AAUP leadership team. Our constitution calls for an election in the spring semester of even-numbered years to elect four officers and four at-large members to serve two-year terms on the FWC/AAUP Executive Committee. The transition was delayed this year due to the COVID-19 global pandemic and our campus being shut down for the last half of the spring 2020 semester. Nevertheless, we had multiple calls for nominations by email and in our newsletters, and have exactly the same number of nominees as openings. Hence, we applaud for their election by acclamation to two-year terms the new chapter leadership:

Dave Crawford, President
Maggie Labinski, Vice-President
Bill Abbott, Secretary
Paul Baginski, Treasurer
Jen Adair, At-large member
Peter Bayers, At-large member
Anita Fernandez, At-large member
Shannon Kelley, At-large member
Irene Mulvey, Immediate Past President, *ex officio*



Outgoing and incoming leadership have agreed on a leadership transition date (delayed due to the pandemic) of August 21. We are grateful to Prof. Crawford for understanding the need to step up in acknowledgement of the colleagues who have served before him. We are delighted to welcome brand new members Profs. Adair and Kelley to the leadership cohort, and we are thrilled that Profs. Labinski, Abbott, Baginski, Bayers, and Fernandez have agreed to serve an additional term. We have the best of both worlds - fresh ideas and energy combined with continuity and institutional memory. Of course, the new leadership knows to start mentoring and grooming their successors *immediately*; that's one mark of a strong chapter. Interested in leadership? Contact any member of the EC.

Another mark of a strong chapter is evident in the fact that ~70% of our full-time faculty are members of the FWC and that we have no trouble recruiting individuals to take a turn on the Executive Committee. Our chapter members understand the importance of the AAUP and its work at the local, state, and national levels, and are willing to put their money where their mouth is in paying the dues that support all this important work. In addition, we have faculty members - overworked and stressed as faculty are everywhere - who understand the need to step up and take a turn in the leadership, promoting faculty welfare, advancing the economic and professional status of Fairfield faculty, encouraging faculty participation in governance, informing our community about AAUP standards and policy statements, and holding our own administration to account by insisting that Fairfield faculty play their appropriate decision-making role in all areas over which faculty have primary responsibility.

Congratulations to the new team as well as **gratitude** to our colleagues who started this incredible chapter over 31 years ago in the hope that it would continue and strengthen and grow. They would be exceedingly proud that their venture has turned into a model for faculty organizing everywhere.

