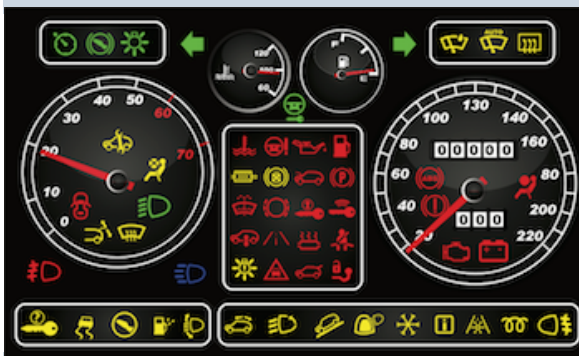


# Faculty Welfare Committee AAUP Excellence in Education



## This Week in Campus COVID:

Dear Colleagues,

This past week brought us some good news: our Covid dashboard is up, finally, after several weeks of waiting, and so far it has not indicated a single positive test among faculty and staff. That said, we at the FWC have concerns and these start with the decision to only update the dashboard twice weekly.

We believe that the point of a "dashboard" is to build something that provides real-time feedback so that one can navigate safely. The dashboard in your car, for instance, tells you how fast you're going and how much gas you have left, and it has multiple lights and buzzers to alert you when something is going wrong. Fairfield's Covid dashboard does not function like that. Instead, it's as if we're going for a collective drive someplace a week away, say across the country, and our dashboard is covered with duct tape most of the way. The administration will peel back the tape once in Pennsylvania and again some time around Utah. The rest of the time we drive blind. Put another way, the Fairfield dashboard tells you about your driving last week. This is not a safe, rational way to proceed.

To be clear, the information is available. The university administration knows how many positive

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**(This Week in Campus COVID**, continued from page 1) They know exactly how many students are in isolation on campus, and how many are in quarantine in a nearby hotel. The administration has up-to-the-minute data. They have chosen to share it twice a week.

The only rationale we have heard for this odd situation is that the "surveillance" testing occurs periodically, previously once a week and now twice. But only two cases have been found by surveillance testing. **Forty** are the result of "diagnostic / contract traced" testing. We had positive cases on the 11th, 12th, 14th, 15th, and 16th. We reported these on the afternoon of the 17th. There is no rational, public health reason for this. Since the students often voluntarily report their positive tests to their professors, we are in a situation where we can hear the alarms going off, but the dashboard provides no clue what they mean. For professors with six, seven, or more positives in one class, this quite naturally induces panic. Students are taking responsibility for real-time reporting to ensure the safety of their classmates, but this is not ideal.

According to our colleagues in nursing, transparent decision making and clear communication are key to managing a public health crisis. Currently there are no elected faculty representatives on the main Covid-19 task force despite the fact that members of the Academic Council have asked expressed concern about the lack of faculty on the committee since July. Perhaps this is why our policy is so muddled and our communication so poor. Those of us who bear the brunt of the decisions, those of us in the classroom and tents with the students, have no effective influence on policy. We believe this should change.

**We believe anyone in our community who feels sick, or who believes they have been compromised, has a right to a Covid test. Sick students should not be sent out into the community seeking Covid tests. We believe the dashboard should be updated with new information as soon as we have it. We believe the people bearing the risk, the people in the classrooms and tents, should be involved in deciding policy through elected faculty representation on the COVID-19 Task Force. We believe that since positive Covid cases impact pedagogy, faculty must have a voice in how that information is collated and communicated. We have called on President Nemeck to make these changes with all possible speed.**

In solidarity,  
Dave Crawford, President  
Faculty Welfare Committee/AAUP



## FWC/AAUP Mission

We promote faculty welfare, broadly defined, through chapter programs and activities designed to advance academic freedom, advance the economic and professional status of the faculty, encourage faculty participation in governance, and inform the community about AAUP standards and policy statements to ensure higher education's contribution to the common good.

## AAUP News & Updates

### Recommendations of the AAUP Committee on

#### Contingency and the Profession:

The AAUP's Committee on Contingency and the Profession provided recommendations to the higher education community about how to address the unique challenges contingent faculty face during the pandemic. These recommendations are followed by resources that can help chapters fighting for contingent faculty to get paid sick leave, to increase their job security in the fall, to apply for unemployment benefits, to retain their intellectual property rights after the emergency transition to remote instruction, to protect their academic freedom, and to gain better access to shared governance structures. [Read more here.](#)

#### COVID-19 Chapter Toolkit:

AAUP members have been pushing back against the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic for months, and the fall semester is now underway or about to begin for many members. To best support your work this term, the Department of Organizing and Services is introducing three new resources in our [COVID-19 Chapter Toolkit](#)—a recorded roundtable discussion on approaches to remote organizing, a best practices guide for dealing with financial exigency, and a summary of some of the effects of COVID-19 on higher education that you may want to address in negotiations.

#### From the Academe Blog:

Recently, Princeton University President Eisgruber acknowledged that racism is embedded in the university structures and history. Surely, a good faith effort to address systemic racism. The result? An investigation by the Department of Education “concerned” that Princeton’s nondiscrimination and equal opportunity claims since 2013 may have been false as a result of its “admitted racism.” Professor Jennifer Ruth responds with “**The Department of Education as Right-Wing Troll**” on the Academe Blog: <https://academeblog.org/2020/09/17/the-department-of-education-as-right-wing-troll/>

FWC/AAUP Executive Committee: Dave Crawford, President; Maggie Labinski, Vice-President; Bill Abbott, Secretary; Paul Baginski, Treasurer; At-large members: Jen Adair, Peter Bayers, Anita Fernandez, Shannon Kelley. Immediate Past-President Irene Mulvey