

AAUP

Voice

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"Academic freedom for a free society"

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Bargaining for New Contract Begins

Over the past several months, the AAUP has been developing contract proposals for bargaining with the University for a new collective bargaining agreement. The current contract runs through June 2008. Members of the Executive Council and the Bargaining Team prepared preliminary proposals after thoroughly reviewing existing provisions in the contract, considering provisions in comparable contracts between other AAUP chapters and their Universities, analyzing results from the survey conducted last semester, and engaging in discussions with faculty across the campus. These proposals were brought to the Steering Committee on February 12 when they were discussed, revised and approved. Based on the proposals coming out of the Steering Committee meeting, the bargaining teams representing the AAUP and the University began the negotiation process on February 18.

At this time, the AAUP has not developed a salary proposal. Our salary proposal will be based, in part, on data from the National AAUP. These data enable us to formulate a proposal based on comparisons with a group of other institutions. Typically, salary data from National AAUP becomes available in late February. We look forward to formulating a salary proposal when data from National AAUP become available.

This newsletter summarizes key proposals for this year's contract negotiations. As contract negotiations proceed, there will be meetings scheduled to keep the Steering Committee informed and to seek advice on how to proceed. In the effort to maximize involvement of AAUP leaders and members of the bargaining unit, future meetings will include department representatives. *A Steering Committee meeting that includes department representatives is scheduled for March 3 at 2:30PM in Room 203 McDowell Hall.*

Summary of Contract Proposals

The contract proposals approved by the Steering Committee aim at securing faculty rights in shared governance, enforcing essential procedures during tenure decisions, and enhancing the faculty's economic status. The proposals include strengthening medical and retirement benefits that the faculty indicated were very high priorities on the faculty survey. In addition, the proposals aim at enhancing institutional resources that will enable the AAUP to be even more effective in improving working conditions.

The Role of the Faculty in the Appointment of Department Chair

Article 5.9 requires that there be an advisory formal vote by the majority of the faculty in a department for the appointment or reappointment of the chair. The faculty is to determine how that vote is taken. This provision has not been consistently applied across the University. When votes have not been taken, the use of the Grievance Procedure cannot rectify the breaches that have occurred. In order to insure that this provision is applied, the AAUP proposes that faculty members be informed of the required formal vote by the dean of the college in which the depart-

ment in located. In addition, the AAUP shall be informed that a formal vote in the department has been taken.

Information To Be Provided to the AAUP

Getting information about the implementation of University procedures and contract provisions in a timely fashion is fundamental to protecting faculty rights. This is especially true during the tenure process when adequate remedies are often difficult to formulate through the grievance procedure.

The AAUP proposes that the University will provide the AAUP with the names and departments of all faculty members who have had two and four-year peer reviews in the preceding academic year. It will also provide the names and departments of all faculty members scheduled for two and four-year reviews in the next academic year.

Major Medical Insurance, the Dental Plan, and University Pension Benefits

The current *Collective Bargaining Agreement* states that major medical provision of the insurance program is maintained at a maximum benefit level of \$2,000,000. Under the state medical insurance contract, there is no maximum cap. The next collective bargaining agreement will reflect current state medical insurance contract.

Dental Insurance maximums were established more than ten years ago. The AAUP is proposing increases in these maximums. Just over 50% of the faculty survey respondents indicated that the health plan benefits were the most important portion of the benefits package they want to see improved.

The University's contribution to each faculty member's University Pension Benefits is currently at 11% of the individuals base salary. This level of contribution was established in 1982. Based on a review of such contributions in other AAUP contracts, we are proposing an increase in the University's contribution. In addition, the AAUP is proposing that a joint AAUP/Administration Committee be established to review and make recommendations regarding options available to faculty members to use funds accumulated in their Pension Benefits Accounts. Improvements in University Pension Benefits were supported by 69.9% of the faculty survey respondents.

Eligibility for Retirement Benefits

During the last contract negotiation, the Administration requested and the AAUP agreed to participate in a committee to recommend changes for eligibility for retirement benefits. As reported in the October 2006 *AAUP VOICE*, the Executive Council of the AAUP agreed to support these recommendations which were approved by the Steering Committee for inclusion in the AAUP's contract proposals. The requirements are as follows:

All faculty members hired after July 2008 qualify for retirement benefits at age 55 with 20 years of service, at 60 with 15 years of service, at 65 with 10 years of service, and at any age with 30 years of service. Faculty members appointed prior to July 2008 will continue to qualify for retirement benefits under the requirements in effect at their time of appointment until 2013 at which point they will be required to meet the same requirements as faculty members hired after July 2008.

AAUP Voice

Gerry Turkel, Editor

The AAUP Voice is the official newsletter of the University of Delaware Chapter of the American Association of University Professors.

The Voice is published monthly, September through June of each academic year.

The Executive Council acts as editorial board. During contract negotiations or when otherwise warranted, Bargaining Team members also participate on the board.

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Hours: M-TH (9 a.m.-2 p.m.)

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In order to assure that all faculty members are treated fairly, the AAUP proposes that the AAUP and the University formulate the policies through which the eligibility requirements for retirement are implemented. Upon retirement, full medical benefits have been preserved as a result of this agreement.

One-Time Retirement Payment

The current contract provides for payment of two percent of the faculty member's of the annual base salary for faculty electing retirement. The percentage of base salary was established in 1996. The AAUP proposes that this percentage of base salary for the one-time payment be increased. In addition, this one-time payment should be provided to faculty eligible for retirement either upon retirement or upon death. Should an eligible faculty member die before retirement, the payment will go either to the designated beneficiary of the deceased faculty member or to her/his estate.

Family Medical Leave, Childbirth and Adoption

Under the current contract, the tenure clock stops for faculty members who are primary caregivers for children, whether through birth or adoption, for the semester they are relieved of teaching responsibilities. The AAUP proposes that the tenure clock be stopped for faculty members who are granted a Family Medical Leave, whatever the reason for that leave. In addition, the AAUP proposes strengthening the language granting administered teaching loads for faculty members who are the primary caregivers for children whether through childbirth or adoption.

Salary Equity Study

The AAUP proposes that a salary equity study be conducted during fall semester 2008 and every first year of succeeding collective bargaining agreements. The formula for the study will be reviewed by an AAUP/Administration Committee and approved by the AAUP Executive Council.

Nontenure Track Faculty

The AAUP proposes that language regulating the appointment of nontenure track faculty from the *Faculty Handbook* be incorporated in the collective bargaining agreement. The *Faculty Handbook* states that the focus of appointments is to hire "tenure track" faculty. Within the context of this primary commitment, non-tenure track faculty will be hired to supplement capacity in programs with special needs that justify these types of appointments. Further, a joint AAUP/Administration Committee should be established to develop policies to implement this new provision.

Making the AAUP More Effective: Institutional Resources

Under article 5.8, AAUP members may take course reductions for doing AAUP work. As this provision now stands, the academic departments of the faculty taking these course reductions are not compensated for the courses lost. As a result, faculty members have not taken full advantage of these course reductions since they do not want their departments to lose course offerings or to increase the instructional burdens of their colleagues. This, in turn, leads to a diminution of resources for the AAUP. In this light, the AAUP proposes that the University compensate the departments of faculty members taking these course reductions through s-contracts.

Successful Negotiations Depend on You!

The AAUP leadership is deeply committed to enhancing faculty rights and working conditions through these ongoing contract negotiations. Ultimately, the ability of the leadership to negotiate successfully depends upon faculty support and involvement in this process. If you are not an AAUP member, fill out the dues deduction card and build the bargaining strength of the AAUP by increasing our numbers. *Remember, local dues are free for the first year for current faculty and national and local dues are free for the first year for faculty employed less than one year.*

Keep abreast of the status of negotiations through your Department Representative and/or Steering Committee members. Feel free to contact Gerry Turkel, Chief Negotiator, with any concerns, suggestions, or questions. The success of these negotiations depend not only on improvements in the contract but also in the professional solidarity of the faculty and on the relations we build with the Administration to make the University of Delaware an even better community of scholars with resources devoted to fulfilling our educational and research missions.

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Steering Committee Members

In addition to the members of the Executive Council, the following AAUP members are serving on the Steering Committee.

Arts and Sciences

Benito Aguirre (Sabbatical Leave)
John Bieber
R. John Brockman (Replacing B. Aguirre)
Peter Cole (Sabbatical Leave)
Joan DelFattore
Nik Gross
Vince Martin
Russell Murray
Marion Palley
Harris Ross
Andrew Seraphin

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Sherry Kitto
Palaniappa Krishnan

Business and Economics

Andrew Fields
Howard Garland

Engineering and Marine Studies

Fouad Kiamilev
Kenneth Barner

Health Sciences

Nancy Getchell
Lee Raymond

Human Services, Education, and Public Policy

Frances Mayhew
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