

# NEWS

## AAUP & administration start FACT discussion of program chair workload

Representatives of Cincinnati State AAUP and the College administration met on Nov. 15 to start discussion of possible revisions to the contract language that describes how workload units are assigned for program chair responsibilities.

This topic was one of several assigned to FACT (Faculty / Administration Communication Team) during negotiations for the current AAUP Unit 1 contract.

Members of the AAUP FACT team for the program chair workload discussion are Pam Ecker, Greg Klein, Betsy LaSorella, Marianne Niese, and Abbey Yee.

The administration's FACT members are Provost Robbin Hoopes, VP of Administration Lawra Baumann, and Dean Janelle McCord.

Pam said the initial FACT meeting was productive, and another meeting is scheduled for Dec. 5.

"At the meeting, we reviewed the reasons that the current formula for program chair units might not fully cover the wide range of responsibilities that program chairs have," Pam said.

"During bargaining in 2018, the AAUP proposed making changes to the chair formula, but we couldn't reach agreement on changes, and instead agreed to continue discussing this topic in FACT," Pam said.

At the Nov. 15 FACT meeting, the faculty team shared with administrators some data collected by AAUP in a program chair survey conducted in Summer 2019.

Greg said, "We asked the chairs to try to quantify several aspects of their responsibilities, as described in the contract language that defines the program chair role, Article 9-K."

"These activities can include advising fully-admitted and pathway-admit students, working on curriculum-related issues, dealing with adjunct faculty matters, and taking on tasks related to program marketing and recruiting," Greg said.

"The survey data from the chairs is self-reported and not the result of a formal audit, but we think it helps provide understanding of the many roles and responsibilities that chairs carry out," Greg added.

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## AAUP officers begin planning for bargaining; new At-Large officer to be elected in Spring

The officers of Cincinnati State AAUP have started planning for the contract negotiations that are expected to begin in late Spring or early Summer semester of 2020.

The collective bargaining agreements for faculty bargaining Units 1 and 2 both will expire on Aug. 23, 2020.

Chapter President Pam Ecker, said, "The AAUP Executive Committee members have been discussing bargaining-related matters since Fall semester started."

"We started by reviewing the responses to the short bargaining issues survey that AAUP sent to faculty early in the semester," Pam added.

Nearly 100 faculty members completed the survey.

Pam said the Executive Committee's discussion of the structure of the Negotiation Team and the Bargaining Council is still in progress.

"With Chapter officers in place

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## Program chair workload / continued from 1

Marianne said, "It's particularly challenging to fulfill all of the responsibilities when the program has only one full-time faculty member, which is the case for many of our programs."

"At the next meeting, we anticipate more discussion of elements of program chair work that may not be fully reflected in the current program chair workload formula," Pam said.

Faculty FACT members said they also expect more discussion of the workload units assigned to "stand-alone" certificates that are not associated with a degree program.

### Background: What is FACT?

The Faculty / Administration Communication Team (FACT) was established as part of the first AAUP contract in 1990 as a mechanism for ongoing discussion of contractual matters and other issues of mutual concern to faculty and administration.

FACT has addressed a variety of topics over the years, including some past efforts to make adjustments to contract language or reach agreement on implementation of contract provisions.

During the 2018-19 academic year, FACT members from AAUP and the administration completed one of the tasks that was assigned to FACT during 2018 negotiations by establishing the charges for two new College-wide committees: the College Credit Plus Committee and the Learning Outcomes/Program Assessment Committee.

In Fall 2019, the Faculty Senate completed appointments for the faculty members who serve on these committees, and both are in operation.

### Background:

#### How are program chair workload units calculated?

Workload for program chairs is described in Article 9-K of the AAUP Unit 1 contract.

The contract states that each program chair receives a "base" of four workload units, for a program of up to and including 40 FTEs of fully-admitted students (AD admission status only, and not including PA admission status).

An FTE (full-time equivalent) is a student registered for an average of 15 credit hours each semester, including Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters, as counted on the 14th day of the semester.

Additional workload units are awarded:

- if the program has more than 40 FTE students, in increments

of one additional unit for (up to) every 20 FTEs.

- if the program has additional "options" or "majors" approved by the Ohio Department of Higher Education.

- under special circumstances such as conducting an external accreditation process.

According to the contract, a program with fewer than 20 FTE students may be designated as a "small program" that receives fewer than four base workload units.

The administration must inform the Faculty Senate and the AAUP if a small program designation is applied and program workload units are reduced.

**-- Save the Date --**

## **AAUP Bargaining Issues Forum**

**Feb. 3, 2020 - 3 to 5 p.m.  
(Common Time)**

**Clifton Campus  
Conference Center**

# AAUP establishes Contract Compliance Committee

The Cincinnati State AAUP Executive Committee has appointed a Contract Compliance Committee, headed by Compliance Officer Greg Klein. The other members of the committee are Jason Caudill and Marianne Niese.

Greg said the committee was established to help the Chapter better serve all faculty members in the bargaining units.

The members of the Compliance Committee will work with faculty members who have concerns about possible violations or misapplications of the contracts for Bargaining Units 1 and 2.

The Compliance Committee members also will discuss contract issues and make recommendations to the Executive Committee for additional action, if needed.

Bargaining unit members with contractual concerns can contact any of the Compliance Committee members:

Greg - [gregory.klein@cincinnatiastate.edu](mailto:gregory.klein@cincinnatiastate.edu) or 513.569.5785

Jason – [jason.caudill@cincinnatiastate.edu](mailto:jason.caudill@cincinnatiastate.edu) or 513.569.1777

Marianne – [marianne.niese@cincinnatiastate.edu](mailto:marianne.niese@cincinnatiastate.edu) or 513.217.3712

Contract compliance activities include investigating contractual concerns and problems identified by faculty members, and then discussing with faculty and administrators how to resolve these problems while maintaining the integrity of the contract.

Greg said over the past 12 months, AAUP contract compliance work has involved responding to over 80 individual

or group concerns. Topics included:

- Formal disciplinary actions by the College administration affecting bargaining unit faculty members

- Interpretation of the Workload article

- Timeline and exit compensation for retiring faculty members

- Application of longevity increases and overload compensation

- Concerns about correcting errors in the College's reporting of data to STRS

- Questions about application of contract provisions related to office hours, sick time, personal days, and FMLA

- Questions about the scope of academic freedom

- Questions about the tenure process

- Questions about tuition reimbursement (for classes taken outside of Cincinnati State) and tuition remission (for classes taken at Cincinnati State)

Greg said most concerns raised by faculty members are resolved without using the formal contractual grievance steps described in Article 4 of the contract.

"Our AAUP chapter has a long history of working effectively with College administrators to deal with concerns and resolve problems together," Greg said.

"Most problems don't need formal grievance steps to reach an appropriate solution."

## AAUP filed formal grievance in Spring 2019 re: tenure process

The AAUP filed a formal grievance in Spring 2019, after

a faculty member who was recommended by the Tenure Committee to receive tenure was denied tenure by the College's Board of Trustees.

The grievance focused on contract Article 14-C-4, which describes the process used by the College President to transmit information about tenure candidates to the Board of Trustees (after the tenure application materials have been reviewed by the faculty Tenure Committee, the Dean, the Provost, and the College President).

The Board members' vote to award tenure is the final step in the tenure process.

The administration's response to the AAUP grievance stated that no contract violation had occurred, and that the process used in Spring 2019 to transmit information from the President to the Board was comparable to processes used in past years.

Greg said, "We reviewed the administration's response with our Chapter attorney. After more discussion, the Chapter Executive Committee decided not to advance the grievance to the next process step."

Greg added, "For several years, including as recently as this October, AAUP and the administration have conducted a 'debriefing' meeting to discuss elements of the tenure process and timeline."

"Representatives of the Tenure Committee and the Peer Mentoring Committee also attend the debriefing," he said.

"We expect to continue working toward shared understanding of all steps that factor into whether tenure is awarded to a faculty member," Greg said.

## National AAUP restructuring goes into effect Jan. 1, 2020

On Jan. 1, 2020, the National AAUP will begin operating under a new organizational structure.

The new structure, which was approved in June 2019, merges the activities of the AAUP CBC (Collective Bargaining Congress) into the National AAUP.

Retired Cincinnati State faculty member Paul Davis, the current Chair of the AAUP CBC, said the new streamlined structure “will ensure that AAUP uses its resources to support our chapters and conferences.”

Although the AAUP CBC will cease to exist after Dec. 31, Paul will continue to serve on the National AAUP’s Council (governing board) as part of the planned transition from the old to the new structure.

At the CBC Meeting and the AAUP Annual Meeting in June 2019, a new AAUP Constitution was approved, along with a package of implementation steps for the transition.

Key changes, in addition

to eliminating the CBC as a separate entity, include reducing the number of elected officers of the Association, and changing from an Annual to a Biennial (every two years) national membership meeting.

Under the old structure, which includes the Association of State Conferences and the CBC as sub-entities, AAUP has 53 elected leaders for a membership of about 41,000.

The new structure will have a governing board of three officers, five regional members, and three at-large members, plus the organization’s past president.

This governance structure is similar to the leadership structure for similarly sized unions and professional organizations and allows for more effective decision-making.

Also, National AAUP officers will be elected by voting at the Biennial Meeting, rather than conducting elections by mail.

Voting by mail is expensive, and participation rates have been low for many years.

Under the new structure, chapters that are located in the same state and have fewer than 250 members can form a “section” to elect delegates who will attend the Biennial Meeting and cast votes on behalf of chapters that don’t send their own delegate.

Dues formerly paid by CBC member chapters will be rolled into the overall AAUP dues payment where applicable.

This means there will be no change in dues payments forwarded to National AAUP by the Cincinnati State Chapter.

More information about the restructuring is available on the National AAUP website at <https://www.aaup.org/restructuring-information>.

The first AAUP Biennial Meeting and Conference will take place June 18-20, 2020, in Crystal City (outside Washington, DC).

Members of the Cincinnati State Chapter with interest in attending the Biennial Meeting should get in touch with Chapter President Pam Ecker.

## STRS adjustments for faculty accounts have been completed

In October 2019, Cincinnati State’s Chief Financial Officer, Chris Calvert, informed AAUP officers that all adjustments to STRS records (for years going back to 2012-13) were completed and forwarded to the State Teachers Retirement System office in Columbus.

Faculty members who participate in the STRS retirement system, and have been employed by Cincinnati State since 2012 or earlier, might have noticed some debits and credits in their STRS annual report.

The adjustments were needed because of problems in the way that the College reported annual earnings to STRS.

The College’s reporting process wasn’t fully aligned with the STRS system.

The problems have been corrected and all reporting of faculty earnings to STRS is now accurate.

The College administration was informed during Fall semester that the Ohio Auditor of State completed an audit of the College’s STRS contributions for the most recent fiscal year

and certified that no errors were found.

AAUP Chapter President Pam Ecker said, “We appreciate that the College administration was able to complete the STRS correction process this fall, and bring a long-standing problem to resolution.”

Any faculty member who wants more information about adjustments made to their own STRS account may schedule a meeting with Chris Calvert to review the details.

Other questions may be directed to AAUP Contract Compliance Officer Greg Klein.



## Ohio House Bill 164 puts restrictions on grading in K-12 schools; Ohio AAUP asks faculty to contact State Senators and oppose this bill

In mid-November, the Ohio House of Representatives passed House Bill 164 — titled the “Student Religious Liberties Act.”

If this bill is passed by the Ohio Senate and signed into law, it would prohibit K-12 teachers from penalizing students for giving incorrect answers on tests or other schoolwork, if those facts conflict with their religious beliefs.

The bill states (in part) “Assignment grades and scores shall be calculated using ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance, including any legitimate pedagogical concerns, and shall not penalize or reward a student based on the religious content of a student’s work.”

The bill’s sponsor, State Representative Timothy Ginter (R-Shelby), said the intent of the bill is to clarify a student’s rights to religious expression.

According to a [report published by WKRC-TV](#) on Nov. 14, Rep. Ginter said, “Students will still have to answer questions based on what they’re taught at school.”

The Ohio Federation of Teachers issued a statement calling the bill “unnecessary,” and stating that it “has the potential to infringe on the academic integrity of our public schools.”

You can read the full bill on the Ohio Senate website at <https://www.ohiosenate.gov/legislation/GA133-HB-164>.

The bill has implications for higher education.

As noted by the AAUP Ohio Conference, “Students exiting the K-12 system need to be critical thinkers and understand scientific fact.”

“Ohio is setting up students for failure by preventing teachers from correcting factually-incorrect answers.”

The bill could also have an impact on College Credit Plus courses taught by high school faculty or college and university professors.

This bill does not apply to post-secondary courses, but as the Ohio Conference observed, “Bad ideas get traction if they are not countered.”

The Ohio Conference urges faculty members to contact their Ohio Senators to ask them to oppose this legislation.

You can send an email message via the Ohio Action Network at <https://actionnetwork.org/letters/protect-science-oppose-hb-164>. This service will route your message to your state Senator, based on your address.

If you don’t live in Ohio, you may send a message to State Senator Cecil Thomas, whose district includes Cincinnati State’s Clifton Campus.

His email address is [thomas@ohiosenate.gov](mailto:thomas@ohiosenate.gov).

## Tuition reimbursement fund is used up for 2019-20

All funds available this academic year for tuition reimbursement to faculty members working on advanced degrees were disbursed to eligible faculty in Fall semester.

A total of 11 faculty members received reimbursements from the \$60,000 allocated for the 2019-2020 year.

In most instances, the Fall 2019 reimbursement covered tuition for coursework completed by the faculty member in 2017 or 2018.

The process for tuition reimbursement is described in Article 15-B of the Unit 1 contract.

To receive reimbursement, the faculty member working on an advanced degree must submit documentation verifying that they earned a grade of B or higher (or “passing” in ungraded classes).

The reimbursement rate is 75% of the current tuition for faculty in an equivalent program at the University of Cincinnati, or 75% of tuition paid, whichever is less.

The faculty member’s educational program must be approved in advance based on “anticipated career contributions of the faculty member to the College.”

AAUP Chapter President

Pam Ecker said, “AAUP has tried to increase the amount available for reimbursement-- and shorten the waiting time-- but the reimbursement fund has remained at \$60,000 per year for several years.”

During bargaining in 2018, the administration agreed that the pool would be “no less than” \$60K, and said additional reimbursement might be made if other College professional development funds (allocated for non-faculty tuition reimbursement) were available at the end of the fiscal year.

A few faculty members received reimbursements in Summer 2019 from these funds.

## Bargaining planning / continued from 1

following our elections, we're now ready to pick up the pace on preparations for bargaining," Pam said.

In the voting that concluded in late October, Pam was re-elected as Chapter President.

Newly-elected Chapter officers are Treasurer Tracey Stivers and Membership Chair Peggy Rolfsen.

Pam thanked Scott Freeman for his service as past Chapter Treasurer and thanked Alyce Thompson for service as past Membership Chair.

### Additional At-Large officer to be elected in Spring

After Spring semester is underway, AAUP will call for nominations and conduct

an election for a new At-Large member of the Chapter Executive Committee, who will serve a 1-year term.

Pam said, "The Chapter Constitution calls for election of an additional At-Large officer when the position of Past President is vacant."

"Since Paul Davis retired, we have no active Chapter member in the past president role," Pam said.

"Paul is continuing to pay dues as a Retired Member, but is no longer eligible to be an elected officer."

"We look forward to adding another officer to the AAUP leadership team early in 2020," Pam said.

Also in early 2020, Chapter members will be asked to vote on revisions to the Chapter Constitution.

"Because National AAUP has changed its structure, some portions of our Chapter Constitution need to be updated," Pam said.

(See the article on p. 4 for more about the National AAUP restructuring.)

Chapter members will have the opportunity to review and comment on proposed changes before voting takes place.

Anyone with questions about the election and constitutional changes can get in touch with Pam or another Chapter officer.



*Cincinnati State AAUP wishes to all a Joyous Holiday Season  
and a Refreshing Winter Break*

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