

NEWS

AAUP and Faculty Senate leaders shared faculty concerns at meeting with College Trustees

The third in a series of meetings between faculty leaders and College Trustees took place Nov. 9, 2022, via Zoom.

Cincinnati State AAUP President Marianne Niese and Contract Compliance Officer Greg Klein attended along with Faculty Senate President Milene Donlin.

Trustees participating in the series of meetings are Justin Howe, who will serve as Vice Chairperson of the Board starting in January, and Cynthia Booth, who will become Board Secretary in January.

President Monica Posey and Provost Robbin Hoopes also attended the meeting.

During the November meeting, the faculty members used a slide presentation to share information and help Trustees understand changes and challenges in faculty experiences over the past several years.

Greg and Marianne also shared information about how the AAUP is preparing for contract negotiations in 2023, including what AAUP has learned through surveys and

“AAUP Office Hour” meetings with full-time faculty members to learn more about their current concerns.

Marianne said, “In our presentation, we shared with the Board members what AAUP has been hearing from faculty this semester-- including a lot of expressions of exhaustion and declining morale.”

“A recurring theme in faculty conversations is that the College needs to invest in our employees, and offer wages that will allow Cincinnati State to

attract and retain employees in a competitive job market.”

“Investing in employees also means providing additional support to help our faculty keep up or even become leaders in educational innovation,” Milene said.

“Our students’ needs, both academic and personal, are greater than ever before, and faculty aren’t able to fill all of the gaps,” Marianne said.

“It’s not a sustainable approach, and in some cases—as

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AAUP officers elected; terms start in January

AAUP Chapter officer elections were completed in November, with the following results:

- Vice President - Abbey Yee was re-elected for a 2-year term
- Secretary - Meredith Effler was re-elected for a 2-year term
- Member-at-Large - Ryan Schmidt will start a 2-year term on January 17, 2023

Chapter President Marianne Niese thanked all of the Chapter members who agreed to place their names on the ballot for

officer positions.

“We appreciate that many of our Chapter members are willing to consider serving in a leadership role,” Marianne said.

Marianne offered special thanks to Jackie Turner, who is completing a 2-year term in the Member-at-Large role.

“Jackie has added valuable insights during our officer meetings, and we expect that she’ll continue to lend a hand during the upcoming bargaining year,” Marianne said.

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when counseling or other kinds of crisis support are needed—it’s not appropriate to expect faculty to provide all of the specialized services our students may need.”

The faculty representatives also explained to the Trustees how perceptions of the College’s budget priorities contribute to feelings of frustration and low morale among faculty.

The chart below was used in the presentation to the Trustees.

“For several years in a row, the financial reports of the College have emphasized strong positive year-end balances, and a high Senate Bill 6 score,” Greg said.

“Yet faculty have received either no increase in compensation, or a very low increase during most years.”

(The *Senate Bill 6 score* is a measure of fiscal health used by the State of Ohio to assess higher education institutions, using a 5-point scale. A score below 1.75 can lead to intervention by the Ohio Department of Higher Education.)

Greg added, “Faculty at many other institutions receive annual cost-of-living increases even if other changes to compensation

are small, but Cincinnati State faculty don’t receive any cost-of-living adjustments.”

“Meanwhile, the expectations for faculty have increased in relation to services we provide both inside and outside the classroom,” Marianne said.

“Also, the constant ‘College crisis’ situations faculty must respond and adapt to are causing more and more of our colleagues to tell us they feel exhausted and burned out—or that they have decided to leave Cincinnati State.”

The meeting with the Trustees also included some discussion of Faculty Senate’s recommendation to provide an increase in compensation for adjunct faculty.

“The Senate’s recommendation has been forwarded to Dr. Posey and the College Executive Team for additional study and consideration,” Milene said.

“We look forward to more conversation about this topic as well as other recommendations from the Senate and its committees,” Milene added.

At the Board of Trustees meeting on Dec. 6, 2022, Provost Hoopes reported briefly on

the meetings with faculty and Trustees as part of his Academic Update.

Provost Hoopes said the meetings are giving “a different look into the great work of our faculty and the challenges faced by faculty.”

Mr. Howe said the meetings have been “collaborative and very informative.”

Mrs. Booth commented that the meetings are “off to a good start” and that she anticipates future meetings will “look at how to enhance faculty experience.”

Marianne said she expects the meetings with Mr. Howe and Mrs. Booth will continue in Spring Semester, although the date for the next meeting has not been set.

This series of meetings started in June 2022, at the request of the Board. The second meeting took place in September 2022.

These recent meetings are the first time since 2011 that Trustees have met directly with faculty representatives.

The meetings in 2011-2012 followed AAUP contract negotiations that finished after a 1-week strike by Cincinnati State faculty.

College Year-End Financial Position Compared to Full-Time Faculty Compensation, Fiscal Years 2018-2022

	Year-to-Year Cash	(Interim) Net Surplus	Senate Bill 6 Score	Faculty Raise
FY18	\$950,338	---	2.3	0%
FY19	\$3,730,289	\$1,991,799	2.7	0%
FY20	\$3,776,180	\$7,445,833	3.9	0%
FY21	\$4,300,215	\$7,256,016	4.2	3%
FY22	\$6,671,282	\$4,805,816	4.5	1%
Total		\$21,499,464		

Data from Cincinnati State Board of Trustees Minutes

AAUP filed a record number of formal grievances in Fall '22

During the 33-year history of Cincinnati State AAUP, filing formal grievances against the College administration has been rare. The majority of grievances have been resolved through informal steps described in Article 4-C of the AAUP contract.

However, during Fall Semester 2022 AAUP has filed a record number of formal grievances—four in total, including two that have already advanced to the second step of the contractual grievance process.

The contractual timelines for dealing with some grievances have been extended, by mutual agreement between AAUP and the administration, to provide more time for reaching possible resolution.

Contract Compliance Officer Greg Klein said AAUP has filed these formal grievances for two reasons:

- In some cases, the grievances represent problems

that have occurred multiple times in the recent past.

- In other cases, the contractual problem is having a severe negative impact on one or more faculty members.

“Unfortunately, filing formal grievances seems to be the best way for us to let the administration know that solving these problems is an urgent matter,” Greg said.

“It’s possible we’ll need to file at least one other formal grievance before this semester ends, since some recurring problems still haven’t stopped,” Greg said.

The topics of the formal grievances include issues related to faculty use of leave time, disciplinary procedures, reimbursement owed to faculty members who are working on advanced degrees, sabbatical processes, and other contractual concerns.

“Since filing the grievances, we have made progress toward

resolving several of these concerns,” Greg said. “We’re hopeful that all can be brought to an appropriate conclusion without having to go through the lengthy and expensive process of formal arbitration.”

“However, the AAUP officers will consider all steps needed to enforce the contract language that protects faculty members’ contractual rights,” Greg said.

In addition to the formal grievances, Greg said AAUP has been involved in numerous attempts to resolve other problems informally.

Topics of these ongoing discussions include insurance coverage, longevity raises, paycheck corrections, and hiring processes.

Greg said AAUP advocacy also contributed to restarting meetings of the College Safety Committee and reconvening the Academic Response Team (ART) to deal with problems and communications related to the network outage.

AFT member services are available to AAUP members

All members of Cincinnati State’s AAUP Chapter are also members of American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Local 6789, as a result of the affiliation of the two national organizations in summer 2022.

AFT member benefits available to dues-paying AAUP members include:

- various types of insurance, including car insurance and professional liability insurance
- discounts on travel, entertainment, computers, and other products
- scholarships for members and their dependents

- financial and legal assistance
- health and wellness services

See the full range of member benefits at <https://www.aft.org/member-benefits>.

If you didn’t receive your AFT membership card with your AFT member number, you can complete the form at <https://awa.knack.aft.org/aftdatasupport#members-only-help>.

- Select “Ohio” and “Cincinnati State”

- Enter your name, postal address, and email address

- For the “problem” enter “New / Replacement Membership Card Request”

Then you’ll receive additional information from AFT.

If you’re a new member of the Cincinnati State AAUP Chapter, thank you for joining the 96% of CState faculty who are AAUP dues-paying members!

For new members of the Chapter, it’s possible AFT won’t yet have your information on file. The Chapter sends periodic membership updates to national AAUP, which are then shared with AFT.



Bargaining preparations will continue in Spring Semester

Fall Semester activities that helped the Chapter officers prepare for collective bargaining negotiations have included:

- AAUP Fall Chapter Meeting
- Survey on faculty concerns
- “AAUP Office Hours” on topics revealed through the survey responses

Preparations for bargaining a new contract will continue in Spring Semester and will include:

- AAUP Officer Strategic Planning Retreat prior to the start of Spring classes
- Chapter Meeting during Common Time on Feb. 27, 2023
- Establishing the Bargaining Council, with work groups for specific topics and issues
- Appointing the Bargaining Team members
- Additional surveys to refine understanding of faculty concerns

- Additional “AAUP Office Hours” for discussion of faculty concerns

- Additional Chapter Meetings and reports as bargaining progresses

The Chapter officers also hope many of our colleagues will join us for AAUP Happy Hours during Spring Semester-- look for a reminder of dates and locations when Spring Semester starts!



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