

# NEWS

## Faculty leaders continue discussions of morale, salaries, & more with Board members & administrators

At the most recent meeting between faculty leaders and representatives of the College's Board of Trustees, on April 6, 2023, the primary discussion topic was compensation.

This was the fifth meeting of faculty leaders and Board members since June 2022.

Cincinnati State AAUP Chapter President Abbey Yee said, "We shared a lot of information showing that Cincinnati State faculty salaries and overload rates are lower than comparable Ohio community colleges."

"Also, our faculty raises have lagged far behind increases in cost-of-living expenses, as seen in comparisons to data like the Consumer Price Index reported by the U.S. Department of Labor," Abbey added.

"The Board members asked a lot of good questions, and this discussion is likely to continue

at the next meeting," Abbey said.

The next meeting of the group is scheduled for May 11.

Other faculty representatives attending the meeting were AAUP Contract Compliance Officer Greg Klein and Faculty Senate President Milene Donlin.

Robbin Hoopes.

"The tone of the discussions has been positive," Greg said.

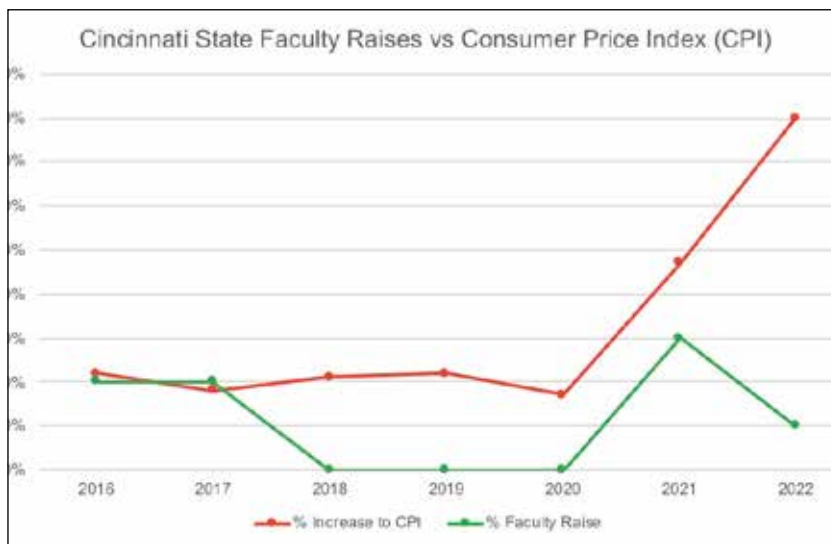
"Mr. Howe and Mrs. Booth said they appreciated the time and effort we put into answering questions they had asked at the previous meeting," Greg said.

"The Board members as well as Dr. Posey asked questions about the data sources we are using to make comparisons of faculty salaries at Cincinnati State to schools like Sinclair, Columbus State, and Cuyahoga," Greg said.

"In some cases, it can be challenging to get 'apples-to-

apples' comparisons, because of the ways that various institutions report their salary data," Greg continued.

"Several other institutions have annual cost-of-living raises, see *Faculty & BOT discussion* / 2



The Trustees attending were Board Vice-Chairperson Justin Howe and Board Secretary Cynthia Booth. Both have attended the prior meetings with faculty leaders.

Also attending were President Monica Posey and Provost

## Faculty & BOT discussion / continued from 1

promotion increases to salary, or other compensation that isn't necessarily part of what they report when annual raises are awarded or negotiated with faculty unions," Greg said.

"One example where comparisons are clear is the overload rate," Greg said. "Cincinnati State's current rate of \$700 per contact hour is the lowest of any of the schools we examined."

"The average overload pay for the six other schools we researched was \$885 per unit," Greg said.

In addition to discussing compensation, the faculty presented some of the results from the AAUP Faculty Morale Survey that was completed by 72% of the full-time faculty.

"The data we shared with the Board members and administrators gives substantive support for the concerns we have described at previous meetings where we talked about faculty burn-out and disengagement," Abbey said.

## More than 500 opponents of Senate Bill 83 testified at hearing

The Ohio Conference of AAUP reported that over 500 people submitted testimony in opposition to **Senate Bill 83 (SB83)**, new legislation that would "micro-manage higher education" by imposing numerous requirements and limitations on public and some private education in Ohio.

Over 100 people, including faculty members, students, and members of labor unions, were prepared to offer in-person testimony during the Ohio Senate hearing on April 19, 2023.

Ohio AAUP said the committee hearing room and overflow spaces at the Capitol were "packed" with

"Faculty are struggling to meet student needs, and they are frustrated at College budget planning that doesn't seem to prioritize people," Abbey added.

"When we met with Board members in March, Mr. Howe asked us what faculty think the budget priorities should be," Abbey said. "So we added that question to AAUP's Multi-Topic Survey."

Abbey said almost 100 full-time faculty replied to the survey. The top three budget priorities were:

- Meaningful raises for full-time faculty (77% of respondents)
- Meaningful raises for adjunct faculty (48% of respondents)



- Add full-time faculty to programs and departments (40% of respondents)

"Other faculty priorities included improving the Clifton Campus building interior, and improving services for students such as counseling and tutoring," Abbey said.

"We believe the Board members and administrators listened closely to our report on faculty concerns," Abbey said. "We hope we'll see responses to those concerns in the future."

Abbey said AAUP Chapter members will be receiving a detailed report on the results of the Morale Survey soon.

those opposing the bill and its provisions that would "cause harm to student success and learning, academic freedom, and labor rights" in Ohio.

An opinion column in the *Columbus Dispatch* recently described the bill as "a dumpster fire that threatens to incinerate free speech at Ohio's colleges."

More than 9,000 people have used the Action Network website (<https://actionnetwork.org/letters/stop-sb-83>) to send messages opposing SB 83 to Ohio Senators.

However, the bill's sponsor, Republican Senator Jerry

Cirino, said he plans to move the bill forward with some amendments.

Companion legislation is expected to be introduced soon in the Ohio House of Representatives, and messages sent through the Action Network are now directed to members of Ohio House and Senate committees that are considering these bills.

*To learn more about the Senate hearings and how you, as well as friends and family members, can continue to take action to oppose Senate Bill 83, visit the AAUP Ohio Conference website at <http://ocaaup.org>.*

# Why I'm leaving Cincinnati State

## -- Mindy Piles, Program Chair, Exercise Science

*(Editor's note: The letter that follows was sent to the Cincinnati State Human Resources Office, and is published here with Mindy's permission. In the past 18 months, 12 tenure-track and tenured mid-career faculty members have resigned from the College, including four program chairs.)*

I am resigning from my role as a tenured professor and Program Chair of Exercise Science. My last day with Cincinnati State will be August 15, 2023.

This was not an easy decision, but serving for five years as

the lone faculty member for an academic department created a working environment with an insurmountable number of responsibilities.

As Program Chair, I have to fulfill the roles of teaching faculty, program chair, internship/clinical coordinator, and College Credit Plus coordinator. The job is overwhelming and leads to burnout.

I will be joining the Exercise Science Department at the University of Cincinnati. As one of five full-time faculty members for the department, I will share responsibilities with a team working toward achieving a shared vision.

For equivalent pay, my new role will only require teaching responsibilities. There is also a stepladder promotion structure, with significant salary increases for each promotion.

I'm committed to making the transition as smooth as possible and will work with my dean to discuss how best to hand off my responsibilities.

I greatly appreciate the knowledge and experience I have gained by working with the amazing faculty here at Cincinnati State. I wish Cincinnati State success in the future.

## President-to-President meetings focus on budget transparency

President Monica Posey, AAUP President Abbey Yee, and Faculty Senate President Milene Donlin have met twice in the past two months to discuss faculty concerns.

The most recent meeting, on April 7, included discussion of transparency in building the College budget for Fiscal Year 2024, which begins July 1, 2023.

"The faculty members who serve on the Budget Advisory Team (BAT) have told Faculty Senate there have been few meetings this year, and so far, faculty have not had an opportunity for significant input into budget planning," Milene said.

The Budget Advisory Committee is an administrative committee with five faculty members who are appointed by the Faculty Senate.

The purpose of BAT, as described in Article 6 of the AAUP contract, is to "provide

ongoing input into the College's budget-building process."

Abbey said Dr. Posey affirmed that providing transparency about the College's budget planning is still a priority for the administration.

## AAUP members help Spring students "Finish Strong"

On April 25, 26, and 27, AAUP faculty members greeted students as they arrived at the Overlook Cafe and gave the students handwritten cards with messages of encouragement and support for the final days of the semester.

More than 200 "Finish Strong" cards were prepared by faculty members, with help from some other College employees.

Along with the messages of support, students received candy and some information about Cincinnati State AAUP.

AAUP Chapter Secretary Meredith Effler, who coordinated the "Finish

"Dr. Posey told us she would try to take steps to ensure that faculty can contribute to the budget planning process," Abbey said.

Strong" activities, said students appreciated the treat and the extra encouragement from their instructors.

"Several students told us the cards were 'cool,'" Meredith said.

"We know all faculty members do many things to assist students during the final weeks of the semester," Meredith said.

"AAUP thanks those who contributed additional time and effort to make and distribute well wishes to our students through the 'Finish Strong' card project," Meredith added.

# AAUP contract compliance monitoring continues

Five formal grievances against the College administration were resolved during Spring Semester in favor of AAUP faculty members, at the second step of the formal grievance process described in Article 4-C of the AAUP contract.

The grievances related to contractual processes for sabbaticals, tuition reimbursement, and FMLA/ADA leave, and to a faculty disciplinary issue.

AAUP Contract Compliance Officer Greg Klein said additional contract compliance activity has been ongoing throughout the semester.

“Not every faculty concern that is brought to the attention of AAUP becomes a formal grievance, but AAUP is spending a considerable amount of time investigating and trying to resolve problems,” Greg said.

Some of the topics addressed by AAUP include:

- Assisting faculty facing potential disciplinary actions by administrators.

- Reaching agreement with senior administration (through a formal Memorandum of Understanding) on the parameters of a new academic administrator position, Business Manager, that does not supervise faculty.

- Enforcing and helping administrators correctly apply contract language related to faculty workload, office hours, and compensation (including raises for longevity and for completing advanced degrees).

- Investigating, elevating to administration, and helping to resolve faculty concerns about workplace safety.

- Taking steps to enforce contract language related to hiring processes, as described in contract Article 7.

- Taking steps to enforce contract language related to the role of the Budget Advisory Team, as described in Article 6.

- Elevating to senior administration and helping to resolve concerns related to changes to federal tax withholding.

- Elevating to senior administration and helping to resolve concerns related to changes to health insurance processes.



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