

# AAUP

# Voice

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September 2015

"Academic freedom for a free society"

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## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE COMING YEAR: Be There or Be Square

This academic year provides challenges and opportunities for the faculty and for the AAUP leadership. The University community is engaged in a search for a new president, contract negotiations are scheduled for a new collective bargaining agreement in the spring, new policies for Continuing Track (CT) faculty members, formerly CNTT, will go into effect, and a host of issues affecting individual colleges and departments are at various stages of resolution.

All of these activities are taking place during a time of fiscal challenges to public higher education across the country, including in Delaware, as state funding continues to be a smaller portion of operating revenues than in the past. Moreover, higher education, including the University of Delaware, continues to become more corporate in its approach to budgeting and to administration. Financial pressures at the level of departments have been increasing along with the relative power of deans to shape decisions in academic units. Assessment of faculty activities and accomplishments is becoming both more quantified and centralized as new data management systems are put into effect. These conditions have serious implications for the ways in which faculty members conduct their teaching, scholarship, and engagement with colleagues and the wider community.

Faculty must become more knowledgeable and active at all organizational levels to meet these challenges to their professional autonomy so that shared governance and academic freedom can be meaningfully maintained. In order to be successful this year, the AAUP needs faculty who are not members to join and for all faculty members to be engaged in the only organization on campus that exclusively represents them. You are crucial for building bargaining power.

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### President Harker's Op Ed

Last year, the AAUP assumed leadership positions on key issues facing the University. After the publication of former President Harker's OpEd in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the AAUP held an open faculty meeting that led to the writing and distribution of a faculty-centered response to major themes in the OpEd. In our response, we focused on the critical role that faculty play in the core missions of the University, teaching and research. We stressed the importance of faculty involvement in decision-making and in maintaining the highest standards of shared governance befitting an institution of the University of Delaware's stature. We will continue to stand for academic freedom and shared governance in the year ahead.

### The Search for a New President

As the University community began to discuss the search for a new president, the AAUP Steering Committee discussed and voted to fully support a University Senate resolution calling for an open search and, in particular, calling for finalists in the search to meet with faculty members. The search for a new president is occurring during a time of low faculty morale, as indicated by surveys conducted by the AAUP and by the University Faculty Senate. We strongly believe that it would be of great benefit to the search process, the finalists, and the affirmation of shared governance to have as open a process as possible when finalists are selected.

### Continuing Track Faculty

For the past four years, the conditions of employment of full-time nontenure track faculty have been the subject of discussion and a variety of proposals. The long duration of this discussion, and some of the proposals that were made, were very distressing to CT faculty members. Throughout this period, the AAUP has strongly supported the full participation of CT faculty in the life of the University, to have employment security, opportunities for professional development and promotion, and full protection of salary and benefits under the *Collective Bargaining Agreement*. Continuing Track faculty members are fully represented by the AAUP, and the AAUP has been adamant in articulating and defending the rights of CT faculty members through the collective bargain process and the grievance procedure.

It appears that many of these issues are now reaching a positive resolution. The AAUP leadership met with the CNTT Commission established by the University Faculty Senate, and two members of the AAUP Executive

## **AAUP Voice**

A. Timothy Spaulding  
VOICE Editor

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

The Voice appears four times a year, twice in the fall semester and twice in the spring semester.

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

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#### AAUP Executive Council:

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Tom Powers, Vice President  
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Prasad Dhurjati, At-Large  
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Council served on the commission. The AAUP strongly endorsed the proposals made by the commission and is very pleased that they were endorsed by the senate and are being implemented by the Provost's office. We look forward to participating in the implementation of the changes in CT policies and in giving them full backing of the CBA.

The CT Caucus, a functioning group on campus that advocates for CT faculty, has elected officers. Terry Harvey, Department of Computer and Information Sciences, and Beth Morling, Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences, are co-chairs of the CT Caucus.

### *The Coming Contract Negotiations*

As we look forward to bargaining for a new agreement with the University, there are two elements that we believe must be central: (1) The AAUP must bargain with the University and not with individual colleges. While RBB has given much greater financial autonomy and responsibility to deans, the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement and the proposals that the AAUP will advance apply to all faculty members and are University wide. How the University goes about budgeting should not and cannot serve to decentralize collective bargaining; and (2) We cannot create a two or three tier system of salary and benefits for faculty. All faculty must be treated equally and not face different conditions of employment and retirement.

We have no doubt that in the coming negotiations the University will claim that state appropriations are declining, tuition is stable, and costs are increasing. While these claims must be carefully evaluated, it must also be recognized that salary increases in the current contract were much lower than in past years, were below the average increases nationally, and that how the University uses its resources must also be considered. We believe that there are ample resources at the University for a fair and reasonable contract that recognizes and compensates the faculty members for the central roles we play in fulfilling the core missions of the University.

### *In Closing*

While the AAUP has been involved in litigation with the University following a grievance that has raised crucial issues regarding the interpretation of the *Collective Bargaining Agreement*, we have maintained cordial and productive relationships with our colleagues in the Administration. As we enter this academic year, the AAUP leadership is very pleased that Dr. Nancy Targett is serving as Acting President. Dr. Targett has served in many important capacities at the University. She has been Dean of the College of Earth, Ocean and Environment, and has served on the past two University Bargaining Teams in collective bargaining. She is thoughtful, seeks to understand all sides of issues, has a calm and deliberate approach to faculty matters, and brings an outgoing, open style of leadership to the presidency.

To reiterate, it is crucial that faculty engage in the institutional life of the University to make shared governance and academic freedom a continuing reality. Participate in the AAUP. A membership form is attached.