

AAUP

Voice

Read About

Steering Committee
Approves Contract
Proposals
p. 1

AAUP Proposals:
Principles and Sources
p. 1

An Overview of AAUP
Proposals
p. 2

Support and Join the
AAUP
p. 3

March 2013

"Academic freedom for a free society"

FROM THE AAUP BARGAINING TEAM

Steering Committee Approves Contract Proposals

During January, members of the AAUP Bargaining developed a draft of proposals to bring to the bargaining table. These proposals were thoroughly discussed and refined by the Executive Council at its meeting on February 8. The proposals approved by the Executive Council were sent to members of the Steering Committee well in advance of its February 20 meeting in order to have a fully informed discussion. The proposals were presented in full at the meeting and vetted by members of the Steering Committee. The discussion was analytical, robust, and led to additions and improvements to the proposals before they were unanimously approved by the Steering Committee. In the view of several long-time veterans of AAUP contract negotiations, this was one of the most thorough and productive meetings ever held by a Steering Committee. The Bargaining Team is grateful for the careful reading, numerous suggestions, patience, and collegial exchanges that took place at the Steering Committee meeting. Our negotiations will greatly benefit from the attentive work and engagement by the Steering Committee.

AAUP Proposals: Principles and Sources

The proposals developed for contract negotiations are rooted in principles and sources that inform the work of faculty members both at the University of Delaware and in the national and international contexts of academic life. These principles and sources include: (1) The experience of AAUP activists and officers in implementing the contract and working to make the contract provisions a reality in the lives of faculty members and for the University as a whole; (2) National AAUP reports, statements, and policy directions developed by various committees, especially the Committee on Academic

Cont. on Page 2

Freedom and Tenure and the Committee on Governance of Colleges and Universities, of national AAUP. These detailed and well formulated documents represent state-of-the-art thinking on the conditions of academic life; (3) The deep values that faculty members have for academic freedom in all its dimensions, including scholarship and research, teaching, engagement in public issues outside the confines of campus, and shared governance at all institutional levels, from departments to colleges to the University Faculty Senate; and (4) The strong commitment to the employment security of all faculty members, including tenured and tenure-track and continuing non-tenure track, as a condition necessary for academic freedom. Part of this commitment is the need for an ongoing effort to clarify and implement the policies through which faculty members are evaluated, come up for promotion, and fulfill their potentials; and (5) The AAUP's ongoing commitment to enhance the economic status of the faculty and to secure and improve the variety of benefits that have been developed through collective bargaining.

An Overview of AAUP Proposals

Since the early 1970s when faculty collective bargaining began at the University of Delaware, the AAUP and the University have agreed it would be detrimental to the bargaining process and to the collegial bonds that have been formed between the AAUP and the Administration that enable a full, candid, and mutually respectful discussion of issues to publicly announce bargaining proposals. At this early stage of bargaining, faculty interested in the AAUP's proposals are encouraged to contact the Steering Committee members for their college. Steering committee members, bound by discretion and good judgment, are free to inform their colleagues about the proposals. Indeed, this is an important part of the process since it enables Steering Committee members to bring issues and concerns expressed by the faculty to the attention of the Bargaining Team. As bargaining proceeds and, hopefully, agreements are made between the AAUP and the University, specifics of new provisions will be presented both in the *AAUP VOICE* and at an open meeting. Members of the AAUP have the ultimate power to accept or reject a proposed contract and will have all the information necessary to make an informed decision.

With this proviso, it is important for the AAUP leadership to provide a general overview of the major proposals that have been brought to our colleagues on the University bargaining team. The areas of concern for the proposals include:

[Continued on Page 3](#)

AAUP Voice

A. Timothy Spaulding

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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Hours: M-F 8:00 - noon

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1. **More specific and detailed information so that the contract may be fully implemented.** There are a variety of provisions, from the use of part-time and temporary full-time faculty to the requirement that there be an advisory vote by faculty in departments and schools for the appointment and reappointment of chairs, that necessitate information gathered by the University be reported in a timely fashion to the AAUP. Without such information, it is not possible to know whether contract provisions are being implemented.
 2. **Ensuring that meaningful faculty participation in searches, a key feature of shared governance and academic freedom, is realized at the University.** Faculty responsibility for hiring other faculty and the faculty's role in providing advice for the appointment of academic administrators necessitate that meaningful information be provided to faculty members and that searches be conducted in a manner that is fully transparent and participatory.
 3. **Greater clarity in the definition and meanings of teaching workload.** The educational and teaching activities of faculty vary widely from one-on-one instruction to large lectures to online. Enable faculty members in their departments and schools to develop a common currency for and a clearer understanding of teaching so that workloads meaningfully reflect what faculty actually do.
 4. **Ensure that benefits provided to faculty members meet the conditions they face in their lives.** Over the course of many contract negotiations, the AAUP and the University have developed excellent benefits for faculty members. Some of these benefits can and should be improved. For example, the 2.5 percent of base salary for each year of active service should be provided to the beneficiaries of a deceased faculty member eligible for retirement even if he or she did not sign retirement papers.
 5. **Faculty employment security.** Tenure and the Continuing Non-Tenure Track Faculty Policy in the *Faculty Handbook* underlie the security of employment that national AAUP has seen as a bedrock of academic freedom since it was founded in 1915. Provisions in the *Collective Bargaining Agreement* must be brought into line with this core value of academic life.

SUPPORT AND JOIN THE AAUP

The AAUP Bargaining Team and all of the AAUP leadership will be diligent in their representation of the faculty as bargaining proceeds. It is crucial that faculty members follow the process, keep informed, and contact leaders with concerns and questions.

If you are not a member of the AAUP, we urge you to join. Greater membership builds bargaining power. And you must be a member of the AAUP to vote when a contract comes up for ratification.

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