

NEWSLETTER

University of Iowa Chapter – AAUP

October 7, 2015

Lois Cox, Newsletter Editor

Volume 13, Number 1

Important Message from the Executive Committee

As all of you know, our campus is currently in the midst of a crisis of governance. For more than a month now, the disagreement between the Board of Regents, on one hand, and the representative bodies of students, staff, and faculty, including this AAUP chapter, on the other, regarding the process of appointing Mr. Bruce Harreld to be the next president of the university has been in the newspapers on almost a daily basis, frequently more than once per day. Though many members of the community have shared their viewpoints as disclosures emerged regarding events leading up to and surrounding that appointment, today's Daily Iowan headline, "AAUP Takes Aim at Regents," requires immediate clarification from us. Our chapter has been in contact with the national office of AAUP to discuss what seem to be obvious violations of AAUP policy on shared governance in connection with Mr. Harreld's appointment. As a result of those conversations, the extensive local and national press coverage of events here, and the century-long commitment of AAUP to university shared governance, the national office has chosen to begin an investigative process here.

Investigative process-

As discussed in the DI article and in today's Cedar Rapids Gazette, AAUP's national office will send two representatives here on October 16 and 17 to conduct a very preliminary investigation of our situation. BOR President Bruce Rastetter, Interim President Jean Robillard, and Mr. Harreld or their designees were invited to meet with the AAUP representatives, as were Faculty Senate leadership and the leadership of our chapter. To date, Pres. Robillard and representatives of the BOR have declined to meet. The Faculty Senate leadership has agreed to meet as, of course, have members of our Executive Committee. To our knowledge, Mr. Harreld has not replied. But it is important to understand that this is the first, and a very preliminary, step in what may become a full-blown AAUP investigation into shared governance processes here. Though it is certainly possible that a more extensive investigation will follow, and it is possible that that investigation could lead to AAUP censure, that outcome is remote for now and many intervening steps would have to occur prior to any censure. We'll be sure to keep you posted and to seek your input.

Strengthening our chapter-

In further news, our forum on Sept. 17 was well attended. Many of you were there and can attest that the conversation was wide-ranging and useful. As news accounts of the forum stated, a number of attendees expressed interest in collective bargaining for faculty. Many also mentioned the importance of the role AAUP played in collecting and collating quantifiable data on responses to the presidential

candidates' town hall meetings. No other group collected such data, and its importance in demonstrating violations of shared governance was remarked on repeatedly. Partially in response to views expressed at the forum, but more importantly in response to the need for our chapter to be strong and active in order to play a leadership role in the ongoing governance crisis, the national AAUP office has dispatched a staff person to our campus. Ms. Kira Schuman has been in Iowa City several times since the forum, and is on campus this week. She may visit some of you and/or some of your colleagues. Her primary purpose is to hear your views and to help us increase our chapter membership as an advocacy (i.e. non-collective bargaining) chapter. However, she may also inquire about members' interest in collective bargaining, given the level of interest at the forum. But it bears repeating that our chapter is not now involved in a union organizing drive.

We have learned that some colleges, in what seems at best a premature reaction, have started to inform DEOs about the provisions of Iowa law on union organizing in the public sector. At this time, there is no ongoing campaign to turn our advocacy chapter into a collective bargaining chapter. If the level of interest is high enough, and if it persists, that may happen in the future. But it's not happening now. At present, our focus is on strengthening our chapter to permit us to respond vigorously and appropriately to what seems to us an ominous breach of a core principle: university shared governance.

Membership-

Increased attention from the national office has brought to our attention that many recipients of this newsletter are not current dues payers. An up to date membership form is attached. If you are in doubt as to the status of your membership, please contact our treasurer, Kathy Clark, at mary-clark@uiowa.edu to inquire. If you are not a current member, we really hope that you'll become one by using the attached form. Also, please share it with colleagues who want to join us in ensuring that the University of Iowa adheres to AAUP principles and policies.

Cordially,

Lois Cox

Committee A chairperson and Newsletter Editor

On behalf of the Executive Committee

Please put the state meeting on your calendar!

The University of Iowa AAUP chapter will host the statewide meeting of Iowa AAUP affiliates on Saturday, Oct. 24. All sessions will be in Art Building West. The day will begin at 9:00 a.m. with light refreshments, followed by a brief business meeting at 9:30. Panels will begin at 10:00 a.m. More detail will follow in a later announcement, but we now plan to schedule two panels, one before and one after the lunch break. Shared governance will be covered in one panel, while the other will be devoted to the pros and cons of advocacy chapters and collective bargaining chapters respectively. Colleges and universities around the state, including our sister chapter at UNI, will be represented on the panels, as

will representatives of the national AAUP headquarters. The program should conclude by about 2:30 p.m. We hope to see a large contingent of our members. Watch this space and our new website (see below) for more information.

New website under construction

Our chapter is in the process of re-locating and re-constructing our website. Please visit it at www.aaup-uiowa.org.

Committee A

The David C. Baldus Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure exists to provide advice and assistance to members of the university community, both faculty and staff, who encounter procedural unfairness in connection with their employment. Committee A meets privately with those who seek its assistance. If you could benefit from Committee A's advice, or if you know someone who could, the person to contact is committee chairperson Lois Cox at lois-cox@uiowa.edu.

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We live in interesting times!