

## Calendar Shift Quality Team to meet this week

The first meeting of the newly-formed Calendar Shift Quality Team is scheduled for Friday, Nov. 22.

The Team was formed at the request of President Ron Wright. Team co-chairs are George Armstrong and Dr. Monica Posey. The facilitator for this Quality Team is Dr. Jan Donley.

Initial discussion of forming this team began in Summer, and continued in Early Fall. Acting Academic Vice President Monica Posey met with the Faculty Senate to discuss possible ways to structure this Quality Team, and later the Senate appointed 10 faculty members to serve on the Team.

At a meeting of the President's Quality Council on Oct. 30, the

following Project Statement was reviewed:

*The Calendar Shift Quality Team will review options and issues, gain consensus, and make a recommendation concerning the feasibility of and the process for making a permanent shift to the term beginning and ending dates for the 5-term, 45-instructional-day calendar, so that Late Fall Term can end before the December holidays. If warranted, the Team will develop recommendations for a transition plan and identify workload issues and other contractual issues related to implementing this change.*

At the Oct. 30 Quality Council meeting, Dr. Posey said that the work of this Quality Team will include trying to achieve these goals:

- Redesign the Late Fall term to

end before the winter holiday season.

- Ensure that classes for each term end on a Thursday or Friday.
- Create a longer break for winter and/or spring holidays.
- End the Summer term earlier in August.

Dr. Posey and others present at the Oct. 30 meeting also identified "constraints" and "considerations" that the Calendar Shift Team must deal with, including:

- Allow adequate time for between-term processing, for all College stakeholders.
- Maintain the integrity of cooperative education.
- Recognize financial aid considerations.
- Recognize the intersections of Cincinnati State's calendar with the calendars of area elementary and secondary schools, as well as other higher educational institutions.

Co-chair George Armstrong said, "The activities of this team will be a test of whether quality management processes really

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### Announcements/Reminders for AAUP Chapter Members

- The "Froggie Forum on Hiring" scheduled for Nov. 21 has been moved because of a large number of conflicting events. The Forum will take place on Dec. 12.
- The deadline for returning ballots for the AAUP Member-at-Large run-off election is 4 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 22.
- The deadline for submitting proposals for salary equity adjustments is Friday, Dec. 13. **Human Resources Director Gene Breyer has announced that he will make decisions in the order in which proposals are submitted to him.**

# National AAUP investigates possible AFL-CIO affiliation

The Collective Bargaining Congress of the National AAUP is investigating a possible affiliation with the AFL-CIO.

Chapter President Pam Ecker said discussion of this issue will be a major agenda item at the upcoming meeting of the AAUP Collective Bargaining Congress on Dec. 6 and 7 in Washington, D.C. Four Cincinnati State AAUP chapter members will attend this meeting: Pam Ecker, Bob Eveslage, Marcha Hunley, and Ken Stoll.

"The AAUP Collective Bargaining Congress (CBC) includes representatives of the 70 AAUP chapters that are also the collective bargaining agent for their faculty," Pam said. "The CBC meets twice a year, and activities generally include training sessions and networking, as well as conducting business that is relevant to all of AAUP's collective bargaining chapters."

Pam said that discussion of possible connections between the AAUP and other unions has taken place in the past, and the Executive Committee of the CBC was authorized to "explore a possible affiliation" with the AFL-CIO.

According to information provided by the AAUP CBC, a

possible affiliation would include these elements:

- Only the Collective Bargaining Congress of AAUP would affiliate with the AFL-CIO, not the entire AAUP organization.
- The relationship would be a direct affiliation by the CBC with the AFL-CIO; not an AAUP connection to any existing AFL-CIO union. (The AAUP CBC would not, for instance, become part of the American Federation of Teachers, which is an AFL-CIO-affiliated union.)
- As a condition of affiliation, all AAUP CB chapters would become part of the AFL-CIO; individual AAUP chapters could not "opt out."
- As AFL-CIO members, AAUP-CBC members would be able to partake in benefits offered by the AFL-CIO such as its Union Privilege programs (for more information see [www.unionprivilege.org](http://www.unionprivilege.org)).
- The AAUP CBC would have the option of also becoming part of the AFL-CIO's Department for Professional Employees, which includes unions that represent a range of professional and technical

fields such as accounting, engineering, medicine, information technologies, broadcasting, counseling, and many other fields (for more information see [www.dpeaflcio.org](http://www.dpeaflcio.org)).

- In order for the affiliation to take place, it would have to be approved through AAUP's usual decision-making structure, including the AAUP as a whole, not just the CBC chapters. The affiliation would also have to be approved by the AFL-CIO through its usual decision-making structures.
- If the affiliation is approved, the cost would average about \$8 to \$19 per chapter member, depending on the location of the individual AAUP chapter and the level of participation in various national, state, and local components of the AFL-CIO.

"Cincinnati State faculty members with questions or concerns about this issue should let me know," Pam said. "Of course, we will keep the members of Cincinnati State AAUP informed about this possible change in the structure of the National AAUP."

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work at Cincinnati State. It will be very important to make sure that everyone on the Team, and everyone else who has an interest in this Team's activities, gets a real opportunity to be heard before decisions and recommendations are made."

The Faculty members appointed by the Faculty Senate to serve on this Team are George Armstrong, Marc Baskind, John Buttlerwerth, Jason Caudill, Ron Craig, Maggie Davis, Joan Jackson, Debbie Lierl, Linda Schaffeld, and Tracy Stivers.

Other Team members will include representatives of academic administration, admissions, finance, financial aid, the registrar's office, building services, human resources, and the employee unions.

Students and co-op employers are expected to be involved in the process through focus groups and surveys.

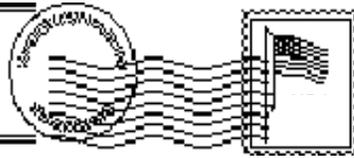
Another new Quality Team established in Early Fall is the Welcome Center Team. This

group, which is led by Executive Vice President Carolyn Anderson, has just started meeting. A Quality Team on Building Retrofit is expected to be established soon.

The Parking Quality Team that was formed in Spring of 2002 made a number of recommendations in Summer and is continuing to meet regularly.

Information about Cincinnati State Quality Teams can be found on the SharePoint site <http://teams/qms>.

# Letters



needed. It would be interesting to know that.

In the middle of the lobby of the Main Building at Cincinnati State, there is a structure labeled "Welcome Center." According to senior administrators, the College paid approximately \$50,000 for the structure, which has never been used to welcome anyone.

How did it happen? Here's what I could observe of the process.

About a year ago the College community was invited to a meeting to give "input" on a proposal to move and reorganize various functions of Admissions, the Registrar's Office, and Financial Aid.

At the meeting Dean Bill Russell and then-Vice President Myrtle Dorsey displayed floor plans for the new arrangements and talked about creating a Welcome Center. They told us that employees who had been specially cross-trained in Registration and Financial Aid and Admissions functions would staff the Welcome Center. Exactly what these employees would do was never explained.

Dr. Wright responded to the presentations by saying that he had not yet seen full financial data on the new ideas. I believe he said then that the idea was "set in oatmeal," a phrase Dr. Wright often uses to indicate that a plan is still tentative.

Several of those who attended the presentation voiced concerns or gave suggestions for alternatives to consider.

Then, Mr. Russell announced that the Welcome Center structure would be delivered within the month.

I have no idea who signed the purchase order for a structure we had not yet decided we

A few weeks later the structure was assembled in the Main Lobby. And there it has stood—almost always unused—for about a year.

The Welcome Center has been put to use twice. It was used for a few hours last spring to distribute extra tickets for Commencement. It was used for a few more hours this fall to distribute Student Handbooks.

So far, the cost of using the Welcome Center for anything except "decoration" has been about \$10,000 per hour.

The Welcome Center has also cost some of us a great deal of worry. The structure clearly presents a safety hazard if we ever had to empty the Gym or the Cafeteria in a hurry. It is a relief that it is not being used, because it would cause more congestion and present a greater danger to students and employees if it were actually in use.

There is little chance of that, of course, because, according to administrators charged with doing the research, it would cost at least \$20,000 more to make the structure useable in its current location.

It seems that when the structure was purchased no one thought about problems of air circulation, sound quality, and security, which would need to be addressed. (Not to mention the posture problems incurred by students of average height who must kneel to converse through the "windows" of the Welcome Center.)

Recently a Welcome Center Quality Team was appointed to decide what we should do about welcoming new students and visitors to Cincinnati State. I am sure the members of the Quality

Team will do a great job. And, they may even find a way to use at least part of the \$50,000 mistake in the lobby.

What troubles me is the notion that we would spend \$50,000 on a whim and with no real plan.

As an employee of the College, it worries me that in tough economic times, when state budgets have been cut once and new cuts are threatened, we seem to be wasting big chunks of money.

The money spent on the Welcome Center could have been used to pay another faculty member for a year to provide more classes.

It might have paid two customer service employees who could have been helping students. It might have been used to solve some of the problems and errors in Colleague that plague us all every day. It could have purchased a lot of badly needed equipment.

Instead, \$50,000 was used to purchase a useless structure that has been getting in everyone's way for a year.

As a taxpayer, I wonder why my state tax dollars are being wasted when the needs in higher education in Ohio are so very great.

Most of all I wonder how this could have happened in an institution that claims to use quality management techniques and how we are going to prevent such a thing from happening again.

It always surprises me that the Board of Trustees is willing to approve a College budget based on a single sheet of not-very-detailed information.

It surprises me even more now that we have large unsightly evidence that money is being wasted in large quantities.

Joyce Rimlinger, Humanities

# Contract clarification question: how do “virtual office hours” work?

Some faculty members have asked for clarification of the “virtual office hours” provision of the current collective bargaining Agreement.

Article VIII (F) (1) states: *A faculty member whose work is measured in units must also be available for eight (8) office hours per week, two (2) of which may be “virtual” office hours, but the faculty members must be present in the building for a minimum of six (6) office hours per week.*

AAUP Grievance Officer John Battistone said, “The concept of ‘virtual office hours’ means that faculty members can establish designated times when they are available to students by e-mail, or perhaps by telephone.”

“Faculty members don’t necessarily need to be physically present on the College campus to conduct ‘virtual’ office hours,” John said.

“For faculty members who are teaching distance education courses, virtual office hours are an essential part of conducting

these classes,” John said.

John added, “Virtual office hours’ may also be implemented by faculty members who use e-mail for regular communication and consultation with students in their traditional classes. We’re aware of many faculty members who have established ‘online office hours’ for their courses that are taught in conventional classrooms and labs.”

John said a key to implementing “virtual office hours” is that the availability of these hours must be known to

students and to academic administrators and office staff members who regularly have access to faculty member’s schedules.

“It would not be appropriate for a faculty member to simply add up all the time throughout the week that he or she might spend reading student e-mail and sending responses, and claim that the accumulated time equaled a total of two virtual office hours,” John said.

“Virtual office hours, like conventional ‘physical’ office hours, have to be clearly identifiable by students and others who have a legitimate need for information about faculty availability,” John said.

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