

AAUP

NEWS



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Spring workload rules in chaos; Faculty cautioned to check carefully before making agreements

The Cincinnati State AAUP Executive Committee is advising faculty members to be cautious in assessing their Spring Term workloads, because of a very high level of uncertainty among some College administrators about how to calculate workload in light of new directives from upper-level administrators.

AAUP Chapter President Pam Ecker said, "The Academic Vice President and the Director of Human Resources have issued a memo to the Deans on how to interpret the contractual workload provisions and apply the provisions to faculty loads for Spring Term."

"These new interpretations fly in the face of nearly 15 years of shared understanding between the faculty and administration about how appropriate faculty workloads are established," Pam said.

"During the past week, the AAUP has been trying to clarify a number of specific workload issues," Pam said. "We've discovered that some of the things being said by some administrators about the 'new rules' are not consistent with past practice, and in some cases

are even contradictory with the administration's own new directives."

"It's alarming, but faculty members need to be aware that just because the Dean might have offered an 'extra class' or 'some special project units' for particular faculty work in Spring, it doesn't necessarily mean it's safe to assume you will be paid additional compensation for doing that work," Pam said.

"Right now, it appears that administrators have different interpretations of how faculty workload units are 'counted,' and in what situations overload payments actually are made," Pam said.

"The AAUP is continuing to seek official clarification from

the administration of its new contract interpretations and how they might apply to each workload situation that has been brought to our attention," Pam said. "As yet, we have no definitive answers."

"Faculty members with questions about their load or their compensation definitely should check with the Chapter Grievance Officer before making any assumptions," Pam said.

AAUP and administration reps meet

AAUP Chapter President Pam Ecker and Grievance Officer John Battistone met on March 16 with Academic Vice President Monica Posey and Human Resources Director Gene Breyer.

see *Workload chaos!* 4

**AAUP invites Faculty
to share Pizza and Conversation
before the Board of Trustees meeting**



**Tuesday, March 23
4:30 to 5:15 p.m.
Room 376, Main Building**

BOT meeting in the Conference Center, 5:30 p.m.

Faculty Senate Statement to the Board of Trustees

Sent March 12, 2004

(See related story on p. 4)

Thank you for providing this opportunity to communicate to you some of the key faculty concerns during this time of financial uncertainty.

We look forward to meeting with you to continue exploring long-term solutions to College problems that will ensure continued excellence in fulfilling our mission.

- Faculty have been told by Dr. Wright that we have a projected deficit of \$1.7 million for this fiscal year. We also have been told this is a “temporary” problem which will be addressed through immediate budgetary cutbacks.

Because the root causes of our financial difficulties have not been identified, we have no confidence that the College will be able to avert the same crisis next year.

- Faculty are puzzled by the fact that the College is experiencing a financial crisis after years of record enrollments. We were told that at least 80% of our costs are totally predictable personnel costs. College administrators have experience projecting enrollments.

We are aware that some components of the financial picture (such as state subsidies) are not as easy to predict, but most of our operating costs can, presumably, be estimated accurately. Therefore, it is inexplicable to us how the College arrived at this point of financial crisis, especially after finishing the 2003 fiscal year in a deficit.

- Faculty are very concerned that, in President Wright’s words, there is “no plan” for the future. The financial year 2003 finished in the red. Despite extreme measures now being implemented, financial year 2004 could finish in the red.

Why is there no planning? Why aren’t senior administrators held accountable for this task? As always, faculty stand ready to participate and to contribute our expertise to such planning.

- Faculty are troubled that the focus of the “temporary” financial adjustments seems to deal only with the cost side of the financial equation. We recognize that costs must be held in line. However, revenue is the other side of the equation.

Why have reasonable, occasional tuition increases been rejected in the past as a possible component of budget planning? Is consideration being given to raising tuition immediately to help address the crisis now, especially given state subsidy cuts?

- Faculty are troubled that the awarding of tenure seems to have been linked to short-term financial assessments.

The longevity and continued success of Cincinnati State depends on the human resources we invest in. The morale of many faculty members has been dampened by the Board’s deferral of action for seven tenure candidates.

Discussion of possible future changes to the tenure process should not be linked to the assessment of the qualifications of this year’s tenure candidates.

- Faculty are alarmed that one of the premier cooperative education institutions in the nation must lay off most of our co-op student employees. These measures seriously damage the reputation of our College and cause significant difficulties for our students.

- As you may remember from Diane Stump’s reports, a team of faculty members with expertise in financial assessment and planning is currently examining the financial condition of the College, using College auditor’s reports and other published data. We look forward to sharing our assessment with you soon.

Faculty members understand, probably better than any other stakeholders in the College, that teaching and learning is our “core business.”

We stand ready to meet with the Chair and other members of the Board at any time to explore problems and, most importantly, to develop long-term solutions.

Letters



To the Editor:

I've been cleaning my office. I do that at least once a decade.

While I was cleaning, I found a copy of the Cincinnati State publication *Currents*, dated May 2, 2003. This article caught my eye:

Budget Scenarios Explained to Trustees

At its meeting in April, the Cincinnati State Board of Trustees heard from Dr. Ron Wright about scenarios for the College's budget for the next two years, and steps that will be taken to develop the budget and keep it in balance.

Among the initiatives Dr. Wright proposed are:

- *Maintaining tuition at its current level.*
- *Conducting a budget summit with College stakeholders.*
- *Reclassifying the status of two varsity sports.*
- *Identifying supplementary revenue streams.*
- *Reserving \$1 million for operation of the new Advanced Technology & Learning Center in fiscal 2004.*
- *Implementing course fee differentials for selected programs.*

That's about the top quarter of the article.

It seems that once upon a time we had a plan, or at least a plan for having a plan. So how much of this plan did we carry through?

According to *Currents*, the State budget was unknown at the time of the April 2003 Board meeting. Again according to the *Currents* article, Dr. Wright said that some of the budget

scenarios being discussed in Columbus could cause a severe long-term impact, and might necessitate a tuition increase at Cincinnati State. Why did it take us 10 months to see how deep the hole was?

Did we have the budget summit? I believe that some open meetings took place where administrators discussed their budget projections, but I don't recall any faculty leaders being invited to speak at this event. Despite administration claims to practice TQM, non-administrators are notoriously shut out of decision-making

In addition, it's my understanding that even the Deans don't see the total budget like they did in the past—they only get the section that describes their portion of the budget.

If all stakeholders really had fully participated in a budget summit, would we have developed a budget so unrealistic that it would leave us without money for basic

To the Editor:

In the 27 years I've been at Cincinnati State, I have always been amazed at our faculty who, in their last few years before retirement, continue to teach with the same enthusiasm they brought to the College ten, twenty, even thirty years ago.

These faculty members continue to serve on committees, mentor new faculty, help revise curricula they'll never teach and help select textbooks they'll never teach from.

In short, senior faculty members continue to serve the

teaching and learning supplies in March 2004?

Did we reserve funds for the new building? Dr. Wright said at the Faculty Forum on March 3 that we had no plan for operating the ATLC. Was he forgetting that in April 2003 he said we would take appropriate steps to prepare for operating this building? Is there a document to be unveiled in a spring cleaning of his office?

I have heard some discussion of differential fees for some programs. But I would have expected an idea that is a major change to the way we do business, that was seriously contemplated almost a year ago, to have created more of a buzz.

Not quite a year after steps were supposedly taken to keep College finances on track, we are again in crisis mode. This year's crisis appear to be far worse than last year's. I have no confidence that the planning supposedly being done now will protect us from a still worse crisis next year.

Maybe it's time for more spring cleaning.

Debbie Bogenschutz, Library

best interests of the College through activities that go far beyond the minimum required by their contracts.

Now we're facing a financial crisis which would be best weathered in an atmosphere of cooperation.

If I were an administrator, I would not choose now to alienate this faculty. It doesn't help the crisis and, ultimately, it will hurt the students.

Catherine Rahmes,
Humanities

Workload chaos/ continued from 1

Pam said the administration gave the AAUP a memorandum stating that the administration would begin to “narrowly interpret and strictly enforce its rights” regarding the workload article of the contract.

According to Pam, the administrators said that their new interpretations would correct what they believe to have been past mistakes in calculating workload for some faculty members.

AAUP will work to enforce contract

John said that the AAUP will take whatever action is necessary to enforce the contract

provisions agreed upon through 15 years of collective bargaining negotiations.

“We’re not yet sure about all of the ramifications of the administration’s new ‘strict interpretation’ of the contract, especially in relation to overload and special project units,” John said.

“Their so-called ‘mistakes’ in workload calculations appear to be changes to agreed-upon practices for calculating faculty loads that have been in place since our first contract,” John said.

“The workload article we have today is the culmination of

a decade and a half of faculty / administration collaboration on how to establish appropriate measures for faculty work,” John said.

“These workload article provisions make sure that faculty can provide a quality educational experience for our students,” John said. “The provisions establish appropriate limits, recognize unique differences in faculty work, and also make sure that when faculty take on additional duties, they are appropriately compensated for that work.”

Faculty Senate sends concerns to BOT

The Faculty Senate has sent a statement of concerns to Board of Trustees Chairperson Annette Smith Tarver, and plans to send additional financial analysis information as well.

Faculty Senate President Diane Stump said the Senate list of concerns (see p. 2) was sent to Mrs. Smith Tarver by e-mail on Mar. 12, and was e-mailed to all faculty members on Mar. 16.

Diane said Mrs. Smith Tarver had expressed interest in receiving information about faculty concerns prior to the Board’s “retreat” that was held Mar. 15. According to Diane, Mrs. Smith Tarver said the Senate’s concerns would be shared with all Board members.

Diane said the Senate also will send to Mrs. Smith Tarver and to College administrators on Mar. 22 a report from the

Senate’s Committee on Institutional Funding, primarily addressing issues related to raising tuition.

Diane said, “Mrs. Smith Tarver told me she is very interested in receiving input and analysis from faculty members.”

“I’m expecting to hear responses to some of our shared concerns at the Board meeting on Tuesday,” Diane said.

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