

TENNESSEE

CONFERENCE

July 2009

NEWSLETTER

Tenure:

The Topic for the Fall Meeting

October 30 – 31, 2009 are the dates for the fall meeting. Recent moves against tenure are truly frightening. Perhaps Halloween is an appropriate day to deliberate on measures to strengthen and protect tenure. We are inviting faculty from Kentucky to join us for the meeting which will include a panel discussion and conversation among participants. More details regarding the program will be available in the September newsletter.

Professor David Palmer, Vice President of Community Colleges, is trying to organize a forum for faculty of community colleges in conjunction with the conference meeting on Saturday. Contact him at dpalmer@mccc.edu to express your interest and provide input for the forum.

The Spring Meeting in Review at Tennessee State University

We are grateful for the work of Dr. Anthony Blasi who served as the Program Chair for the spring meeting on March 27-28. On Friday evening we had a delightful dinner and ceremony honoring long-term members.

Saturday morning began with the conference business meeting. Then Dr. Kathleen McEnerney, Interim VP for Academic Affairs at TSU welcomed us to the campus. Dr. Richard Rhoda spoke on the possible reorganization of the state systems of higher education. Following Dr. Rhoda's presentation, there were two concurrent sessions.

Session A, for public institutions, was a round table discussion regarding funding and reorganization issues under consideration by the Committees on Higher Education. Dr. Phillip Kemmerly, APSU,

served as the moderator. The panelists included: Dr. Kurt Eisen, Tennessee Tech University, Dr. David Lee of UT Knoxville, Dr. Rich Rhoda, Executive Director of THEC, Representative Beth Harwell, Republican, and Representative Joe Pitts, Democrat.

Dr. Jennifer Nichols, from the national office, conducted an excellent workshop on accessing and analyzing I 990 forms for faculty from private institutions.

The afternoon session, conducted by Jennifer Nichols, focused on chapter building and organizational efforts. The session stimulated discussion between faculty seeking to establish an AAUP chapter on their campus, those seeking to revitalize and build their membership, as well as those with vibrant, well-established chapters.

New Conference Leaders

Based on the revised constitution, two new offices have been established. At the spring meeting an election was held to fill those positions. Professor David Palmer of Motlow State Community College was selected as the Vice President of Community Colleges. He will lead the way in helping to bring the particular experiences, contributions and issues of faculty at community colleges to the table.

Professor Nathan Garner of Cleveland State Community College was selected to serve as Secretary of the Conference. He has already begun serving in that capacity. This has freed Dr. Pippa Holloway to focus her efforts on the position of Treasurer.

Dr. Kurt Eisen of Tennessee Tech University has served the conference well for years as the Chair of the Government Relations Committee. Since he now serves as an administrator, it was time for him to give up this important position. Dr. Phillip Kemmerly agreed to lead the Government Relations Committee. He has worked closely with our lobbyist, Coley McGinnis, and is interested in expanding the membership of the Committee. If you would like to serve on the Government Relations Committee, you may contact him at KemmerlyP@apsu.edu.

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Coley's Corner

Coley McGinnis TN-AAUP Lobbyist

This is a critical time for higher education, given the looming budget crisis (postponed for a couple of years only by the stimulus). It seems that this has provided impetus for the legislature to take a close look at the structure in TN, something Rep. Beth Harwell (R-Nashville) has been interested in for a long time. She's clearly a key player in this exercise and can give us an entree into the process by which some kind of proposal emerges in January. We will continue to pursue action on this front, much of which will take place over the next six months. But this focus on legislative action cannot divert our attention from what is happening on the campuses (where crucial budget decisions are being made, with significant differences among institutions as to how much real shared governance there has been). So the organization needs to realize it is in a two-front battle. This situation should provide a prime recruiting and organizational opportunity for the AAUP, but there is an awful lot of frustration out there among faculty who simply don't see any opportunity for them to be involved in governance at any level. The word needs to get out of where (apparently at MTSU, for example) the faculty has carved out a meaningful role, and what lessons can be learned from that success. I guess I also have to keep reminding everyone that the key to any lobbyist's ability to get an ear of the legislators is work done at the campus level to develop relationships with their own representatives. Most legislators do tend to look out for their own institutions as the pie is carved up, but that doesn't mean they have much awareness of what share of that pie goes to instruction on each campus--i.e., that what is good for the president (or the governing body) isn't necessarily what's good for the faculty (or the students), most of whom are constituents themselves.

Recognition of Long-term Members

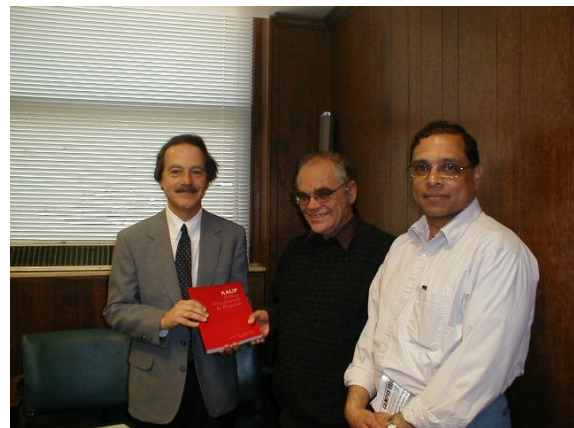
At the spring meeting we began with a dinner and recognition ceremony at Café Coco's Italian Market & Kitchen. Faculty members who have been members for 25, 40, 45, or 50 years were honored along with our longest serving member, Dr.

Gideon W. Fryer. Dr. Jim Williams (MTSU), Chair of the Membership Committee, shared news stories of challenges faced by academia for the year that each of the honorees joined the AAUP. Some of the stories clearly showed how far we have come. Others reminded us that some challenges tend to reappear again and again.

Dr. Femi Ajanaku of LeMoyne-Owen College shared reflections on Sankofa in the context of honoring those who have served so long. Sankofa is an African term that expresses the sentiment that we cannot know where we are going until we know where we have been. The image is a bird flying forward while looking backward.

Dr. Ballal of Tennessee Tech University and Dr. Norman Ferris of MTSU have both been members for 45 years. They each shared dramatic stories of challenges they have faced, camaraderie among faculty and the changes that they have observed over the years. It was refreshing to see younger faculty take in the legacy that has preceded them.

Dr. Robert Frankle of the University of Memphis has been a member for 40 years. He was unable to attend the spring meeting, but Dr. Pinaki Bose, President of the U of M Chapter, held a campus meeting to honor him. Conference President Delphia Harris presented the honor and was accompanied by six LeMoyne-Owen faculty members to witness this special occasion. A Redbook was presented to the incoming President of the Faculty Senate, Dr. Jeffrey Berman, in honor of Dr. Frankle. The legacy continues.



From left to right: Jeffrey Berman, Robert Frankle and Pinaki Bose.

Photograph by Sherry Painter of LeMoyne-Owen

Other campuses may be planning to honor their long-term members. If so, please share the events by sending pictures and stories to Delphia Harris for the benefit of the broader membership.

Professors Are People, Too!

What do professors really do? How do the commonly-held perceptions and stereotypes of our daily lives differ from the reality from the classroom to the computer screen to the committee meeting? The Tennessee Tech Chapter of the AAUP in cooperation with the Tech Players and the Backdoor Playhouse seek stories, ideas, interviews, emails, anecdotes about the real nature of your professional and personal life in the world of higher education. We seek your tales of humor, of humiliation, and of hope for a production tentatively titled Professors Are People, Too. You may choose to remain anonymous, or you may seek full credit. Contributions will be compiled and converted into monologues to be performed by actors at the Backdoor Playhouse. Our goal is to raise public consciousness about the real nature of the academic professions, much in the way that Eve Ensler raised consciousness around women's issues. Submissions are open and ongoing until October 1. Please place "Professors Are People, Too" in the subject line when corresponding by email. Asmith@tntech.edu

Tennessee Conference Small Grants

A resolution was passed at the spring meeting to provide assistance to campuses with a chapter or interest in forming a chapter. The purpose of the assistance would be to help reimburse funds for events or activities designed to raise awareness of the AAUP and its principles, and/or attract new members. The application process would include a written description of the activity and a budget. Applications for the small grants should be submitted to Dr. Jim Williams, Chair of the Membership Committee, at jhwillia@mtsu.edu. Amounts up to \$250 are available.

Mary Burgan, Past General Secretary, Will Speak at the University of Memphis

The Marcus Orr Faculty Senate Lecture is an annual event. This year the invited speaker is Mary Burgan, Past General Secretary of the AAUP, who will be giving a presentation entitled "A Perfect Union: Shared Governance and the University" at 6pm on Thursday, September 17, in the Fogelman Executive Center room 136 on the University of Memphis campus. Faculty Senate President Jeffrey Berman has encouraged us to bring this lecture to the attention of AAUP members and let them know that the event is open to everyone.

Changes and Concerns Continue at JSCC

By Pamela Xanthopoulos, JSCC-AAUP President

Jackson State Community College formed an AAUP chapter in late March, the culmination of discussion amongst our faculty over several years about having a local branch of a professional association. On May 8th, guest speakers Pippa Holloway and Jim Williams, our TN-AAUP and Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) colleagues, generously provided information and answers regarding the benefits and nature of AAUP to an enthusiastic group at our first open-invitation meeting. About thirty percent of JSCC's over a hundred faculty attended, several subsequently joining AAUP. Thanks again, Pippa and Jim.



Pippa Presents the Benefits of the AAUP
Photograph by Jim Williams of MTSU.

This past spring, seven JSCC faculty—six from Arts & Sciences and one from Professional & Technical, our two divisions at that time—took the proffered buyout, surrendering their long-time tenured positions, despite JSCC's buyout plan offering less of a package than some sister institutions' buyout plans did. Affected disciplines include biology, computer information systems, education (2), English, mathematics, and psychology. Only two of those positions (biology and computer information systems) have subsequently been advertized—though no longer as tenure track.

Also, our only full-time faculty member teaching physics and physical science, and our only faculty member teaching and directing theatre, each received a letter in March, saying their services will no longer be needed as of May 2010. Both are tenure-track faculty. Neither was given a reason, neither in person nor in the letter, as to why they were losing their jobs. Some colleagues have

expressed concern as to what no full-time physics instruction may mean for advising and teaching our community college students desiring transfer into engineering, physical therapy, and other suchlike programs requiring a physics background. Others have worried aloud about what no theatre full-time teaching and directing means for JSCC's community/public relations and our status/image as a university-parallel transfer institution. These losses symbolize a dimming of overall prospects for the better life of residents in our service area, particularly given the well-paying jobs in mathematical, engineering, medical, and other sciences that require physics, and given the cultural enrichment provided by theatre courses and productions. The administration clearly counts on contingent faculty covering any unassigned classes. However, questions about discipline-related advisement, as well as our institutional profile and broad-based mission hang in the air, unanswered.

In a situation superficially different though similar in its lack of transparency regarding administrative motivation, a tenured colleague was denied promotion to full professor this spring, despite having met or (far) exceeded all published TBR requirements for a full professorship. During an appeal appointment the applicant subsequently, as per TBR policy, set up with the college's president in order to learn the reason(s) for the denial, the president provided no specifics. No guidance for improvement and no justification of the decision were stated. In fact, no evidence was presented to indicate that the president had personally reviewed this colleague's application and supporting materials. Consequently, the faculty member does not know what to improve upon prior to reapplying this coming year for the promotion. That status continues.

Effective July 1, JSCC has a new organization chart. Its development was in process before the official budget crisis, but the new chart has since been presented as more cost-effective than the previous one. JSCC's eleven academic departments and their chairs no longer appear (four departments' chairs took the buyout), having been replaced by one dean and three assistant deans. (The latter positions are entirely new, offering the same amount of reassigned time that department chairs had had, but more pay and a one-month-longer contract.) Thus, two full-time academic dean positions have increased to three. Also, four colleagues who held faculty rank and Faculty Council representation have had their status changed from "faculty" to "professional-technical." And, at least two former non-faculty positions within Academic Affairs have had titles moved up from "Director" to "Dean."

These examples amount to a sampling of our organizational changes.

Plus, our faculty's handbook is undergoing extensive revision. A subcommittee appointed by the Faculty Council, as directed by our Vice President for Academic Affairs, made suggestions this summer for revisions to the document proposed by the administration in late spring, including requests for greater clarity. Further discussion and review will occur this fall. However, some intent of the administration's original changes to the handbook appears to be in preparation for a tightening budget. This fall's final product will provide greater insights as to our future direction.

Certainly with so much that is new being implemented simultaneously, not every financial and other implication of the above changes can be clear at this point. Our enrollment trend looks positive for this coming fall, so that is one hopeful sign. However, given this high number of changes in times that are themselves rife with uncertainty, we faculty at JSCC are left to wonder where indeed all of this will take us. Time will tell, as will no doubt our next installment in this newsletter.

Report on the 95th Annual AAUP Meeting

By Nathan Garner, Cleveland State C C

At the Spring 2009 Meeting of the TN Conference, I was honored to be chosen as Secretary for the TN Conference of the AAUP. Delphia also suggested that I may want to attend one of the summer national meetings of the AAUP. I was able to attend the 95th Annual AAUP Meeting in Washington D.C. from June 11th-15th. The meeting was held concurrently with the AAUP's International Conference on Globalization, Shared Governance, and Academic Freedom. What follows are summaries of the most notable events at the annual meeting. I extend my thanks to the TN Conference for their support and special thanks to Delphia for her encouragement.

Motions voted on at the Annual Meeting along with one or two line summaries of the motions:

- Nicholls State University (Louisiana) – Censure Approved for dismissal of a contingent faculty member after 12 years of service. No reason provided by administration. The AAUP investigating committee determined that the only reason

they could determine for the termination was the administration's displeasure with the large number of failing grades the instructor gave to college algebra students, thereby violating the instructor's academic freedom.

- Cedarville University (Ohio) – Censure Approved for dismissal of a tenured faculty member without demonstrating cause in an adjudicative hearing before peers.
- North Idaho College – Censure Approved for the dismissal of a part time adjunct instructor after thirteen consecutive semesters of employment and available courses in the following semester. No reason was given for the termination and no faculty review was allowed.
- Stillman College (Alabama) – Censure Approved for the dismissal of a tenured assistant professor after 28 years of service for violating faculty handbook prescriptions against “malicious gossip or public verbal abuse.”
- Olivet Nazarene University (Illinois) – Issue has been resolved. No action taken.
- University of New Haven (Connecticut) – Censure lifted on recommendation of Committee A.
- Tulane University – Committee A was granted the ability to lift censure from Tulane if the issues are resolved during the year. This was a controversial motion and ended with a hand count in favor.

Assembly of State Conferences Business Meeting:

- ASC Officers Elected for 2009-10:
 - o Chair – Judith Johnston, Rider University (New Jersey)
 - o Vice-Chair – Purificación Martínez, East Carolina University (North Carolina)

- o At-Large – Jeffrey Kraus, Wagner College (New York)

- Gary Rhodes proposed a simplified dues structure combining state and national dues that is tiered based on income , details can be found at:
<http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/about/bus/arch/ive/2009/>
- Dr. Rhodes proposed that state conferences could hold their elections simultaneously with the national office and take advantage of their new electronic voting service and reduce our election costs. There would be no charge for this service.

Other impressions from the meeting:

One session I attended was an idea sharing session regarding state lobbying efforts being employed by other conferences. A couple of suggestions that came from this session were presenting a “Friend of Higher Education Award” to deserving state legislators and organizing lobbying days at the state legislature. The lobbying days would involve AAUP members meeting the representatives from their home counties.

It was apparent from several speakers that the AAUP National Office has been unresponsive and over budget for several years. Gary Rhodes intends to focus the national office on:

- Staying within their budget (currently they are under budget for the year)
- Providing timely responses to chapters and state conferences
- Streamlining dues collection and distribution
- Increasing membership and activism

One phrase that really stuck with me after the meeting was General Secretary Gary Rhodes' comment regarding contingent faculty appointments: “It's not non-renewal, it's dismissal.” His rephrasing helped me rethink a situation that I previously accepted as normal. Department secretaries, administrators and campus electricians all expect that they will be returning to work in January when they go home for the holidays. After

several consecutive appointments, shouldn't contingent faculty members be able to count on continued employment with the institution even though they have been away during the summer break as well? The question facing an administration that has chosen to terminate an established relationship with a contingent faculty member should be "Why has Professor Jones been fired?" not "Why didn't we renew Professor Jones' contract?" or worse yet "I wonder why Professor Jones isn't teaching this semester."

If college administrations are held to higher standards of treatment for contingent faculty, then there will be little incentive for them to continue reducing the ranks of tenured faculty.

Chapter News

These updates are based on reports from local chapters. Please send your chapter news to Delphia Harris by September 4th for inclusion in the fall 2009 newsletter.

Austin Peay State University

The spring at APSU was a busy time for the chapter. A major recruiting effort was mounted but the results of the effort will not be known until the fall term. It has been difficult to recruit new members particularly this spring because the impact of the state's budget woes on faculty has fortunately been minimal compared to some of our sister campuses and colleagues. APSU has undergone such remarkable growth rates for the last five years that we have a better budget cushion to ride out the state's financial crisis. We of course have had to take cutbacks but none of those cutbacks have affected at this juncture either faculty or staff.

The AAUP leadership has worked very closely with our faculty senate and served on the university budget committee for each of the last two years. Our president insists upon faculty leadership on the budget committee being involved in actual decision making as the campus deals with the budget shortfalls and their continued projection through the next two years. Never in our chapter's history have there been such strong and productive ties with the university administration. This relationship stems from the management styles of the administration with the president and provost setting the tone; however, during the last two years the AAUP chapter also has developed an effective working relationship with the faculty senate.

The faculty senate has had strong leadership over the last two years and is expected to continue

during the 2009-2010 academic year. Our incoming faculty senate president is an active AAUP member, serving on our AAUP executive committee for the last two years. The executive committee believes that with the current administration our faculty will continue to have a role in decision making as the campus and state weathers the expected long and apparently deep recession.

Christian Brothers University

We have a new president arriving on campus. That raises the question of what the fall will bring. There are no indications yet.

LeMoyne-Owen College

As for most institutions, we will have a reduction in the budget for the 2009-2010 academic year. The Board of Trustees established a required decrease in the overall budget. This could have precipitated conflict, but instead of defining how the goal should be reached the approach this year was to empower the campus to develop the plan. For example, the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees made it clear that the Dean in conjunction with the Faculty would need to determine how the academic budget should be revised. Division Chairs and the President of the Faculty Senate met with the Dean and developed a proposed budget. It included a combination of cost-saving measures, without sacrificing quality, and increased income projected in growth areas. The academic budget was accepted and passed by the Board as proposed in the College budget.

At LeMoyne-Owen we continue to work toward true shared governance. It is a path that requires constant attention both within the campus dynamics and in interactions with the Board. The budget process this year was less stressful on Trustees and resulted in a viable plan that is widely supported. It only happened, however, because faculty members as well as other campus constituencies were willing to take on the difficult work and shared burden of shared governance.

Tennessee State University

The budget crisis was particularly difficult at Tennessee State University because the TBR-mandated tuition increases caused a reduction of the out-of-state student population in August 2008, upon which the institution has been historically reliant. In addition, delays with the installation of "Banner," a new student information software system, caused a delay and in many cases a loss of student loans. The

University administration failed to develop an in-state recruitment plan, let alone a local Nashville one, and failed to insist upon a rescheduling of the Banner installation from late summer. The result was catastrophic for the University. The University provost, already undercut by bureaucratic politics from the President's office, was made to take the fall.

An "academic master plan" that ignored Nashville and its local students had already been developed without genuine faculty involvement. After the Fall 2008 debacle the University President had a "strategic plan" drawn up by a visiting administrative fellow, again without faculty involvement. Once most of the faculty was out of town in May 2009, program cuts were deliberated upon in secret, with the elimination of three degree programs announced in early July. The impression among many faculty is that the administration lacks experience in academic matters, operates in secret in order to prevent its inadequacy from being exposed to the public, and is dismissive in general of a talented faculty about which it is uninformed. Summer meetings of faculty have focused on the necessity of a "regime change."

Volunteer State Community College

Volunteer State Community College in Gallatin has started the process of forming an AAUP chapter. Several faculty from Volunteer State, including Speaker of the Faculty Council Len Assante and Vice Speaker Nancy Blomgren, attended the Tennessee spring conference at TSU. Upon returning to campus, they began a recruitment drive. In just a few weeks, over 10% of the full time faculty joined AAUP, assuring Vol State of more than enough members to start a chapter. Volunteer State faculty will begin the process of forming a chapter in the Fall, 2009 semester and hope to host the spring 2010 meeting on campus. Volunteer State would like to thank AAUP for extending a special introductory membership rate to the college's faculty.

Tennessee Conference Committees

The conference is seeking additional members who will actively participate on each of its committees. We seek broad representation from various institutions across the state in each committee. If you are interested in joining a

committee or would like additional information, contact Delphia Harris. A list of the Conference committees follows:

Committee A (Academic Freedom and Tenure)
 Committee on Membership and Dues
 Committee on Part-Time & Non-Tenure-Track
 Appointments
 Committee on Government Relations
 Committee on College and University
 Government
 Committee on Junior and Community Colleges
 Committee on Status of Women
 Claxton Award Committee

Conference Officers

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Pete Stoddard, Austin Peay State University
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VICE PRESIDENT FOR PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS

Pat Papachristou, Christian Brothers University
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SECRETARY

Nathan Garner, Cleveland State Community College
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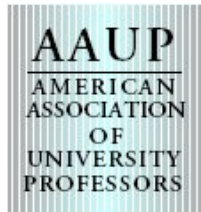
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About the Chapter Service Program

The Tennessee Conference Chapter Service Program, with support from the Assembly of State Conferences, is designed to aid AAUP chapters in promoting a program on their campuses that will reflect the standards of professional development associated with the AAUP. The AAUP has developed the standards for academic practice long recognized by professors, governing bodies, and administrators in higher education. Each local chapter should have as one of its goals a commitment to see that these standards are adhered to on their campus. Please contact Conference officers for help and services in the following areas:

- Recruitment and retention of members
- Tenure and academic freedom
- Faculty governance
- Chapter leadership training
- Conference web site
- Attorney referral list
- Economic welfare of the professoriate
- Lobbying activities



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