

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

Marcus White Hall, Rooms 305, 307 & 310
New Britain, CT 06050 • (860) 832-3790

Volume 33, Issue 5
November 2005

Proposed Dues Increase

By Cindy White, CCSU-AAUP President

Colleagues,

As President of the CCSU-AAUP, I want to urge you to make an informed vote regarding the CSU-AAUP Council's recommendation to increase the dues rate from 0.75% to 1%. The Council has been charged with the constitutional responsibility of reviewing the dues structure annually and making recommendations to the membership if changes are necessary. The union is recommending this increase because we believe it is essential to our mission of representing the professional and economic interests of our members.

AAUP has successfully fought off a number of threats in recent years, most notably a budget cut and tuition freeze which would have cost the university system \$7 million in 2006 and \$11 million in 2007. The union also successfully negotiated a 5% increase in salary and special funds for the 2006-07 academic year.

A position paper, a copy of our expenditures, and the most recent auditor's report have already been circulated (also available at www.ccsu.edu/aaup/csu). I do not want to restate our arguments. Instead I would like to address some of the concerns which have been raised by colleagues regarding this proposal.

Several people have questioned why the increase the Council recommended, as a proportional ratio, is so large. The Council sought an increase to 1% because it raises revenue to the level necessary to continue to best serve our membership. The Council considered the dollar amount of this increase and

believes it is reasonable. It has been argued that a 33.3% increase is too large, but increasing the dues rate to 1% of salary (not including longevity, summer pay or intersession pay) would be an additional \$8.97 per paycheck for our highest salaried member. The Council did not think this was an extraordinary increase for someone who makes nearly \$100,000 a year. We understand that the costs of living have increased across the board and some people may feel this increase is too much. Keep in mind that the organization's costs have also increased significantly over the past thirty years and this is the first percentage increase that has been recommended.

Another subject that has brought about discussion is the contingency fund. CSU-AAUP's contingency fund was established in 1976, upon recommendation of the National AAUP, to cover unforeseen costs which had not been budgeted for at the beginning of the fiscal year and as a safeguard in a crisis. CSU-AAUP has been withdrawing money from the contingency fund to apply towards the budget deficit for the past four years. While the contingency fund remains substantial, it will be

necessary to continue to draw from it from it to simply maintain current services. **Without an increase in dues, we will either need to reduce the services we currently provide or continue to withdraw from the contingency fund, with no means of replenishing the funds we are withdrawing.** It is not fiscally sound to continue to operate in this manner.

Finally, there have been concerns raised about our lobbying efforts not being in the best interests of all of our members. The Council expects there to be some significant funding threats facing public higher education as early as next fiscal year. The increased revenue generated by the dues increase will allow us to combat these threats with lobbying and public relations campaigns. **These campaigns will work in the best interests of all of our members because their goals will be to generate more funding for CSU.**

If you have additional questions about the dues increase, please contact the CSU-AAUP office at (860) 832-3790 and we'll be happy to assist you.

Campus Equity Week

Campus Equity Week (CEW), often referred to as Fair Employment Week (FEW), has been held regularly since 2001 across the United States, Canada and Mexico. CEW was designed to educate the campus communities, public and policymakers, focusing attention on contingent academic employment issues of fairness and quality of education.

CCSU celebrated Campus Equity Week from October 31-November 4. AAUP

helped to organize a button campaign in an effort to publicize the diverse working conditions that part-time and full-time members encounter. There were over 45 participants in the campaign, including part-time and full-time faculty, librarians, coaches and counselors.

We would like to thank all the participants, and we hope it served as an educational event for your colleagues, co-workers and students.

Grievance Corner

By Michael Gendron, Grievance Co-Chair

This column is meant to inform you about what the CCSU-AAUP Grievance and Contract Administration Committee does for you, and to educate you about the grievance process in general. In the future, you may read about fictitious grievances, and some actual cases that have been settled. In this inaugural column, we will first focus on the definition of a grievance and then tell you about a few significant settlements.

So what is a grievance? I often hear my colleagues say things like "Can I file a grievance against so and so because of such and such?" Fill in so and so with the person you are currently upset with and such and such with a situation you feel is unjust. Grievances do not work exactly that way. AAUP does not grieve individuals. A grievance is an allegation that a specific article of the Collective Bargaining Agreement has been violated. While a member may feel something is unjust, it may not be grievable. Often that distinction is unclear and you are urged to contact either myself (gendronm@ccsu.edu) or Caryl Schiff-Greatorex (greatorexc@ccsu.edu) to discuss your issue. Additionally, sometimes an issue may not be covered in the Collective Bargaining Agreement, but rather may be a general employment issue that we can help with (e.g. unsafe working conditions). Often times Contract language is unclear and filing a grievance is the way we clarify an interpretation of the language with Management. We urge you to contact us if you have questions.

The following are highlights of a few significant grievance settlements over the recent past.

- During the 2004-2005 academic year several members were not given the opportunity to appear before the Sabbatical Leave Committee prior to it's making a decision on the merits of their proposals, nor was a reason communicated to them for their denial by the Sabbatical Leave Committee. This was a violation of Article 13.7 and the Faculty Handbook. The members in question were allowed to resubmit their materials, the Sabbatical Leave Committee was reconvened, and one member was awarded a year-long sabbatical.
- Last semester the CCSU Counseling and Wellness Center was moved into space that, pursuant to Article 15.5.2 was unacceptable. It did not provide appropriate sound proofing, and thus was not private. Because of this grievance, appropriate temporary space was found while the new location was retrofitted to make it soundproof.
- Over the summer of 2005, a part-time faculty member had their contract cancelled after it had been signed by them and the administration. While the part-time contract allows some contingencies for cancellation of classes, the reasons for canceling this particular class/contract was a violation of Appendix D, and the grievant was paid for the class that was cancelled.

The officers and staff of CCSU-AAUP and CSU-AAUP are working tirelessly to protect your rights under the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Keep in mind that it is a

joint document between the AAUP and Management. Both parties have a responsibility to enforce and uphold its provisions. Again, please feel free to contact Michael Gendron, Grievance and Contract Administration Co-Chairman, Caryl Schiff-Greatorex, Director of Member Services or Chapter President Cindy White if you have any questions.

Upcoming Events

**Monday, November 7 to Friday,
November 18 noon**—CSU-AAUP
vote regarding dues rate proposal

**Wednesday, November 23 to
Monday, November 28**—
Thanksgiving Recess

Tuesday, December 6—Holiday Social,
4:00 to 6:00 pm Memorial Hall,
Connecticut Room

Order Your Books Early and Your Students Will Benefit!

The issue of textbook pricing received national attention this summer when a federal study found that costs have nearly tripled from 1986 to 2004. Last month the State of Connecticut held a summit to discuss the rising costs of college textbooks. One way locally we can help to relieve our students of these high costs is to place our textbook orders for next semester early.

Ordering early benefits students in two respects. One, it allows the bookstore to assess a higher buyback value for textbooks that are required for courses in the following semester. Two, it provides next term's students with a wider selection of used books, which can be purchased at a fraction of the original cost.

CCSU is in the top 10% of over 500 college bookstores in providing the highest buyback return to students. Last year, the bookstore returned more than \$700,000 in book buybacks, the largest cash return in its history, and with only 65% of the book orders on hand. It is hoping to exceed \$1 million for the new academic year.

The bookstore's deadline for textbook orders was Monday, October 31. However, its overall goal is to have 100% of the orders before the December buyback period, which runs concurrently with finals week. If you have not yet placed your textbook order for next semester, please consider this a friendly reminder. Your students will thank you!