

The Faculty Voice

Volume 1, Issue 2

March 30, 2009

AAUP-KSU

Executive Committee

President

Lee Fox-Cardamone

First Vice-President

Kara Robinson

Second Vice-President

Tim Smith

Secretary

Paul Fehrman

Treasurer

Paul Abraham

Grievance Chair

Deborah Smith

Nominations & Elections Chair

Eric Mintz

Membership Chair

Joel Hughes

Committee W Chair

Mary Rooks

Racial & Ethnic

Concerns Chair

Vickie Ellison

Past President

Cheryl Casper

AAUP-KSU

Staff

Chapter Coordinator

Coleen Casey

Office Coordinator

Shannon Mangrum

IT Coordinator

Brian Horton

The President's Perspective

Dear Colleagues,

By the time you receive this newsletter, spring break will be but a distant memory. Instead, we will all be focused on those last weeks before the end of the semester – and as always, it will be a case of “too much to do and too little time to do it!” But before the semester comes to an end, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for all of your help and support over the past three years that I have been President of AAUP-KSU. Without your encouragement, nagging and occasional push, we might not have accomplished all that we did. I'd like to take this opportunity to recap just a few of the highlights of those accomplishments, as well as thank the people who contributed to them.

One of the biggest things that any collective bargaining unit does is negotiate the terms and conditions of employment for its members. This past summer, our own “Dream Team” of AAUP negotiators was successful in putting together a contract that looked good then – and looks even better now, given the current state of the economy. **Cheryl Casper, Kara Robinson, Kathy Wilson, Jennifer Larson, Paul Abraham, Eric Mintz and Will Ward** have my ongoing thanks for dedicating their collective skills (and a great deal of time) on behalf of

their Faculty colleagues.

Certainly the biggest ongoing challenge for the TT unit is the enforcement of contract provisions. This is a job requiring herculean effort, but we have been fortunate over the years to have talented and dedicated Grievance Chairs who give up a big portion of their lives, and sometimes their sanity, to protect the rights of the rest of us. When I began as

President, **Jennifer Larson** was both an exceptional Grievance Chair and a trusted advisor. Her decision to resume her full

Faculty duties in the MCLS department left a gaping hole in the AAUP-KSU leadership. Fortunately, after a bit of pleading (and some minor coercion), we convinced **Deb Smith** to take on the role of Grievance Chair, and over the past two years she has approached that role with passion and integrity. I am grateful to have had both of these individuals as part of our leadership team.

The day-to-day running of any organization requires dedicated and knowledgeable individuals. For AAUP-KSU, the contributions of our field staff enable the faculty leadership to focus on the academic and contractual issues that arise.

“I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for all of your help and support...”

Continued on page 3

Grievance Report

On March 9th, I sent an email to members of our collective bargaining unit concerning the University-wide decision to cancel Faculty Professional Improvement Leaves (FPIL). In it, I noted that the decision to cancel 22 cost neutral FPILs could not be justified by the tight economic times facing the University and that an information request had yielded no evidence to support the cost savings being touted by the Provost for canceling the remaining FPILs. I wrote, "It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Provost has used the current economic uncertainty to impose a new criterion for FPILs not contained in the University Policy: a requirement that a proposal be supported by substantial external funding."

That same day, Faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences who had been awarded Research and Creative Activity Appointments through the University Research Council (URC) for academic year 09/10 received a letter from Dean Timothy Moerland stating that he was suspending these leaves for Faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences. At this point, it is unknown whether the Deans of other Colleges or Campuses are following suit. What is clear is that on January 22, Vice President of RAGS, John West, met with the URC to discuss the possibility of canceling Research and Creative Activity Appointments for

academic year 09/10 University-wide.

Since early March, AAUP-KSU has received numerous calls and emails from concerned Faculty members urging us to file a grievance over the cancellation of FPIL and URC leaves even though a grievance would be unlikely to yield a remedy in time to make whole those affected. This unprecedented communication from our membership served to underscore the importance of these leaves to Faculty research and professional development and to the University's ability to attract and retain a world class Faculty. On March 30th, AAUP-KSU filed a formal grievance with the University on behalf of the entire TT Faculty for violations of the *Collective Bargaining Agreement*, Article XVIII, section 1 (Faculty Professional Improvement Leaves) and section 2 (Maintenance of Faculty Research Support).

In other grievance news, the University has refused to accept the result of final and binding arbitration in two recent cases. On February 17th, KSU filed with the Portage County Court of Common Pleas a motion to vacate the decision of Arbitrator Richard Sambuco in the case of combined grievances involving the denial of tenure to two Faculty members. Sambuco had ruled that the University violated the contract when President Lefton decided not to

accept two Joint Appeals Board panel recommendations that Faculty members be awarded tenure without citing compelling circumstances wherein the best interests of the University would not be served in accepting the recommendations. On March 9th, KSU filed with the Portage County Court of Common Pleas a motion to vacate the decision of Arbitrator Gerald Chattman in the case of grievance regarding the School of Fashion hire with tenure. Chattman had ruled that the University violated the contract when hiring an individual, who had not previously held the rank of Professor, with tenure at the time of appointment.

The Ohio Supreme Court has made clear that the purpose of arbitration would be undermined if courts had broad authority to vacate an arbitrator's award and that an arbitrator's award should stand so long as it "draws its essence from the collective bargaining agreement" and is not "unlawful, arbitrary or capricious." It is unfortunate that the University seems not to understand the words 'final' and 'binding' and has decided to devote considerable resources to fighting these awards.

This report is written by Deb Smith, the AAUP-KSU Tenure Track Grievance Chair.



The President's Perspective — Continued from Page 1

We have been fortunate to put together a field staff team consisting of **Shannon Mangrum, Coleen Casey, and Brian Horton**. Shannon and Coleen represent us to the public, and their considerable efforts have raised our standards of organization and professionalism. Those of you who have attended recent AAUP-KSU sponsored events like the membership meeting in January and the Faculty-Legislator exchange in February have seen the payoff to our organization in having bright and talented people who often operate behind-the-scenes. Brian Horton, our computer guru, works way behind-the-scenes. His accomplishments include moving us into the technological future on a number of fronts. To his everlasting credit, he does it with grace and patience for those of us who operate on a far lower technological level than he does.

A public thank-you as well to **Marsha Keith** who served as our office manager for almost a dozen years before deciding that she needed to pursue her artistic inclinations in New Mexico. We miss her.

The TT Executive Committee has remained fairly stable over the years that I have served as President. That has been enormously helpful to me, and I want to thank the people who have given freely of their time and talents – **Cheryl Casper, Tim Smith, Kara Robinson, Paul Fehrmann, Kathy Wilson, Paul Abraham, Deb Smith, Jennifer Larson, Eric Mintz, Joel Hughes, Mary Rooks, Vickie Ellison, Chris Williams, Molly Merryman, and Frank Lambert**. All have exhibited an extraordinary commitment to AAUP-KSU, and our organization is enriched as a result of their efforts.

The **TT Council** changes each year, as does the list of active Committee members. Because of that, I have been fortunate to work with dozens of talented and thoughtful individuals. While a comprehensive list of names would exceed my column space, I want to thank all of you who have worked with me and for the collective good, over the past 3 years.

AAUP-KSU is comprised of both the tenure-track unit and the non-tenure-track unit – together, our units have forged a formidable alliance. I have had the pleasure of working closely with a number of my NTT colleagues. **Tracy Laux, President of the NTT unit** has been invaluable to me – both in terms of social support, but also in terms of his knowledge regarding the Association. In addition, I have had the opportunity to work in various capacities with **Chris McVay, Kim Winebrenner, MaryLou Britton, Mahbobeh Vezvaei, Richard Mangrum and Walter Pechenuk**. I have enjoyed the opportunity to have worked with all of you in a variety of ways.

In the end, AAUP-KSU is all about team effort – and I've been honored to work with the very best of teams. We've accomplished a lot – far more than can be fit into this column. Thanks to all of you. It has been mostly fun and always a learning experience. It doesn't get any better than that!

Lee Fox

Chapter President

got ideas!

We want to know what you think! Our office is developing ideas for New Membership Benefits, and who best to tell us what you would like to see? Please send ideas and suggestions to us as soon as possible at office@aaupksu.org.

Thanks!

From the Desk of the Chapter Coordinator...

Hello!

I hope you are all enjoying the newly revitalized newsletter! I want you all to know that I greatly appreciate the feedback I have received and that I will continue to work hard to bring you regular communication from our office to yours.

As you have undoubtedly noticed, we finally have a name for the Tenure Track Faculty Newsletter. The idea for "The Faculty Voice" was a combined effort of Grievance Chair, Deborah Smith and our very own Office Coordinator, Shannon Mangrum. While all ideas submitted were unique and exciting, in the end, "The Faculty Voice" received the most votes submitted at the General Membership Meeting on January 23rd.

The new title denotes one of our core missions: to give you a voice. We are very excited about our new

endeavor to communicate even more with the membership and continue to ask for ideas, suggestions and comments.

For those who have already, or plan to send me ideas for consideration in the newsletter, I want you to know that I am currently working on development and hope to include as many as I can in future issues.

Again, I greatly appreciate all of your comments and suggestions, keep them coming! This is the second of many newsletters to come, and I want it to be yet another opportunity for you to have your voice heard. I looking forward to hearing from you all!

Coleen

Thank you Lee!



For all of your service to AAUP-KSU!

Priorities of University Spending

In a recent information request submitted to Kent State University under the Open Records Act, AAUP-KSU found that the University is spending a large sum of money on cell phones and cell phone plans for Administrators and Administrative employees.

The document received through the information request shows in Fiscal Year 2008, over \$48,000 was spent for the President's Office and over \$50,000 for the Academic

Affairs/Provost Office. Approximately \$322,000 was spent for offices including Administration, Human Resources, University Relations, Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, Information Services, Regional Development and Institutional Advancement. Additionally, a total of over \$32,000 was spent on the seven Regional Campuses.

The amount spent on cell phones and cell phone plans for the Kent

State University Administration totals \$453,272 for the past fiscal year.

The amount of money spent on cell phones and cell phone plans for the University's administration far exceeds AAUP-KSU's projection of cost savings for cancelling Faculty Professional Improvement Leaves.

With the current economic crisis, where are the priorities of the University regarding spending?

Membership Numbers are Up!

As of March 2009, AAUP-KSU membership is at 72.25%!

Become a member today and have a voice!

What You May Not Know About Summer Term Teaching Assignments

Did you know:

- You have the right to refuse an offer of summer teaching?
- The Tenure Track Faculty have priority for summer courses offered?
- For courses offered at the Kent Campus, Kent Campus Faculty of the academic unit have priority?
- For courses offered at regional campuses, resident Faculty at the campus have first priority, followed by Faculty of the Regional Campus System, then Kent Campus Faculty?
- Administrators cannot cancel a course section to be taught by a Faculty member and offer a new section taught by a part-time instructor?



AAUP-KSU

AAUP-KSU
1100 E. Summit Street
Research Building 1 - Suite 9
Kent, Ohio 44240

Phone: 330-673-9118
Fax: 330-673-2142
E-mail: office@aaupksu.org

We're online!
<http://www.aaupksu.org>

About AAUP-KSU...

The Kent State faculty have been represented for over 30 years by the KSU chapter of the American Association of University (AAUP-KSU). At the national level, the AAUP is known for its work in protecting faculty against attacks on tenure and academic freedom, as well as for promoting positive academic values and shared governance.

The local chapter of AAUP serves as your "union" with responsibility for negotiating the terms and conditions of employment for all full-time faculty at KSU's eight campuses. The Collective Bargaining Agreement that is negotiated every three years for all full-time faculty encompasses a wide array of salary and benefit provisions, grievance and appeal procedures, and outlines the fundamental principles for shared governance at Kent State at the department, school, college, and campus levels.

Becoming an AAUP-KSU Member

Through membership in AAUP-KSU, Kent State professors not only receive benefits through both AAUP-KSU and National AAUP, but moreover, a voice.

AAUP-KSU benefits include: information and assistance with faculty concerns, automatic membership in the National and Ohio Conference AAUP, reasonable dues, free legal consultations and notary services, and much more.

Becoming an AAUP-KSU member is easy. Simply go to the website and click

on the "Membership" link. Download the membership form and return a signed copy either through Campus Mail or by fax.

The website contains a more comprehensive list of member benefits as well as testimonials from current members.

For more information, please contact the AAUP-KSU office and ask for either Shannon or Coleen. We look forward to welcoming you as a member!

AAUP-KSU welcomes suggestions, ideas and articles!

If you have something you would like to see in the newsletter, submit it via email to: office@aaupksu.org

Be sure to include "Newsletter Input" in the subject line.