State Workers Helped Save $1 Billion and Counting

By Carmen Boudier, President, New England Health Care Employees Union, District 1199/SEIU, and Vijay Nair, Library, Western Connecticut State University; President, CSU–AAUP

Even before all the votes in the governor’s race were counted, some opinion leaders asked what state public service workers would do to help close next year’s anticipated deficit. This assumes that public workers and their families haven’t already contributed a significant share to closing the gap, an assumption that is flat wrong.

In May 2009, our coalition of state employee unions produced nearly $1 billion in savings in the current and previous biennial budgets by agreeing to deferred pension contributions, a one-year wage freeze, seven furlough days and changes in health benefits for new employees, and by accepting 4,000 retirements. This agreement with the Rell administration will continue to reduce costs by hundreds of millions annually, helping the new administration better deal with the continuing fallout from the economic crisis.

State employees will help reduce expected budget deficits by paying more for their health care coverage and prescription drugs. By giving up our negotiated contractual pay increases for a year, we will receive lower wages than expected in coming years, which will mean annual savings to the state payroll and pension fund.

Even so, less than a year after the agreement’s ratification, our coalition presented the Rell administration with a series of ideas that would do more than simply help reduce deficits. Our recommendations would bring policy-makers and state workers together to help jump-start Connecticut’s economy, put people back to work, recreate livable communities and build a sustainable future.

The real crisis we face is not a short-term drop in state revenues, but a long-term decline in the standard of living of nearly all Connecticut’s families. The goal was to show the outgoing administration how we could harness the energy of all state workers to not only provide vital public services more efficiently, but to help those services make a bigger difference for the people of Connecticut.

We proposed improving services by encouraging veteran workers to stay on the job during the current economic crisis. This also would produce savings by avoiding payment of retirement incentives and having employees continue to contribute to the pension fund and health plan.

We proposed expanding the state’s health plan, which could save millions for municipalities, small businesses and non-profit employers.

We proposed properly funding and staffing the State Contracting Standards Board, which could save taxpayers millions of dollars by thoroughly reviewing contracts for outside goods and services.

We, along with many others, including two Nobel Prize-winning economists, provided the Rell administration with evidence that more cuts to public services would prolong the economic crisis. Cutting public services would deepen the suffering of Connecticut’s people and small businesses, and extend the vicious economic cycle.

Our plan was to empower the state’s workforce to help keep people safer, help them achieve a better education and help them find jobs that offer the opportunity for self-sufficiency.

But our recommendations fell on deaf ears.

We look forward to more than just sharing our ideas with a governor who listens, and to working with a governor who listens, building an economy that works for all Connecticut workers will not be easy. The economic crisis at the heart of the state’s budget woes is the result not only of Wall Street’s excesses, but also of decades of failed revenue and economic policies.

These policies have permitted an unfair system where the percent of income paid by the very rich to support public services is half that of middle-class families. We have an upside-down economy in which huge corporations pay less in taxes than small businesses, and energy and insurance companies are allowed to gouge ratepayers and patients while encouraging CEOs to ship good jobs overseas.

And the income of the very rich has shot into the stratosphere while middle-class families’ wages and salaries have stagnated or declined.

Solving this problem will take unity of purpose, clarity of vision, consistent and sustained effort and the courage to stand up to the rich and elite few who benefit from the status quo.

Notes:

SEIU is the 13-union State Employee Bargaining Agent Coalition. This article was originally published in the November 14 Hartford Courant <courant.com/news/opinion/hc-ep-boudier-nair-unions-state-budge20101114,0,5795943.story> and is reprinted here with the permission of the Courant and of the authors. —Ed.
Editorial: To be jolly?

I have a small part in a play at the moment. I once worked with someone in community theater who claimed that the whole point of putting on a play was to have “Fun, Fun, Fun!” But that’s not the idea I got back in college from David Bru- baker, the dearly beloved director at Dickinson College who showed hundreds of us students over the years that the world is in fact a stage and the stage can be a wonder. I cherish the speech he gave the cast of A Midsummer Night’s Dream, my show with him: “If anybody is here to have fun,” he said, “you might as well leave right now. You will have great fun in the show, starting with the second performance. And the only way you will get that fun is by working very hard up till then.” His other mantra: “Don’t think on stage and make excuses. Yes, you’re ‘just’ students. But when you go out there and ask the audience to believe in you, you’re actors, not students, and you give it your best.” Well, I’ve pretty much followed all around those sentences, but I think he was likely more eloquent than that. Anyway, going to make matters much worse on the stage. I’ve learned fast that writing that can be the source of enormous pleasure—after the work has been put into it.

In my many years of teaching English I’ve been caught up in a number of initiatives that promised great fun for the student writers. I even had a colleague who spent several weeks having students paint on a quest for a piece of information that I’ve written a piece here that is as rich in the things that are important. The endless grammar drills of my junior-high and high-school English classes were fun in a way, at least for me who am a puzzle maven, but the language thing about which they gave me a confidence in my ability to control my own language. I had been a highly creative people with envy; but most of my highly creative friends hark back nostalgically to the “boring” exercises, the repetitious scales or sketches or proofs or bare rou- tines, that laid the firm foundation from which they took their magical leaps—the hard and sometimes te- dious work that turns into the joy of discovery. "Tis the season to be jolly...and before that, the Season of Student Evaluations. Of course I wonder how many of our students will rate me as “boring.” I know they think I’m “hard,” because they tell me that. I hope that, in my generation in fact, and wonder how some of them will have lost the thread of a conversa- tion while we tried to phrase a witty response or a penetrating question? And considering the number of students who on the first day of the semester present me with a piece of information concerning their struggles with Attention Deficit Disorder, the hope that bringing this kind of technology into the classroom is going to make matters much worse for them. In fact, I have been saying, only half in jest, that the Internet has given me A.D.D. Certainly I start off on a quest for a piece of information or an image, and an hour or two later I surface with all sorts of tag ends of things and no real recollection of what I had been trying to do in the first place or how I would end up where I wound up. I think about academic free- dom a lot, because it drives my given by sincere people who argued that English classes should abandon teaching the critical paper, the essay, academic style, and “let the students think what they want to think,” largely through blogging.

And a few months ago I was reading an article in the journal of Higher Education about profes- sors who have worked Twitter into their classrooms. Especially in large lecture-style classes, they were en- couraging students to Twitter during the presentations, setting up chan- nels specifically for the purpose; and either the faculty member or a graduate assistant was monitoring the Tweets and integrating them into the lecture as they arose. Yes, some students sent joke Tweets, they said, and some spent a lot of class time on Facebook; but most students felt engaged and asked some good questions they might otherwise not have asked...particularly because the Tweets were anonymous. I never was very forthcoming in class discussions with them, and I sympathize with students who are reluctant to speak. And I too have driven in front of a large class in a cavernous room and wondered how to encourage participation. But I re- ally never saw that many of other students think they prefer is really going to move them along a chal- lenging path to the kind of pleasure that comes from focused enquiry and argument. The online dialogue in re- sponse to the Chronicle article was pretty exciting, with strong voices raised on both sides of the ques- tion. I really tried to let myself be persuaded, because I know I have a Luddite streak that will trap me if I let it. But if writing while driving is dangerously distracting, I can’t help thinking Tweeting while trying to think— or listen—is going to be distracting too. How many of us have lost the thread of a conversa- tion while we tried to frame a witty response or a penetrating question? And considering the number of students who on the first day of the semester present me with a piece of information concerning their struggles with Attention Deficit Disorder, the hope that bringing this kind of technology into the classroom is going to make matters much worse for them. In fact, I have been saying, only half in jest, that the Internet has given me A.D.D. Certainly I start off on a quest for a piece of information or an image, and an hour or two later I surface with all sorts of tag ends of things and no real recollection of what I had been trying to do in the first place or how I would end up where I wound up. I think about academic free- dom a lot, because it drives my work and energies me. I don’t know, though, that seeking ways to make learning fun for students is necessarily going to give them academic freedom, or at least the tools to capitalize on it. My current first-year students are, for the most part, bright and energetic and gener- ous and willing, and they want to do well. But when I sit with them in my office, I see them ... working, so many of them seem to be on a hopeful meander through a landscape of earlier generations, and of my own generation in fact, and wonder how they will deal with the notoriety of carrying our pleasure, or let us tell them what we wanted to know. The endless grammar drills of my junior-high and high-school English classes were fun in a way, at least for me who am a puzzle maven, but the language thing about which they gave me a confidence in my ability to control my own language. I have been a highly creative people with envy; but most of my highly creative friends hark back nostalgically to the “boring” exercises, the repetitious scales or sketches or proofs or bare rou- tines, that laid the firm foundation from which they took their magical leaps—the hard and sometimes te- dious work that turns into the joy of discovery. "Tis the season to be jolly...and before that, the Season of Student Evaluations. Of course I wonder how many of our students will rate me as “boring.” I know they think I’m “hard,” because they tell me that. I hope that, in my generation in fact, and wonder how some of them will have lost the thread of a conversa- tion while we tried to frame a witty response or a penetrating question? And considering the number of students who on the first day of the semester present me with a piece of information concerning their struggles with Attention Deficit Disorder, the hope that bringing this kind of technology into the classroom is going to make matters much worse for them. In fact, I have been saying, only half in jest, that the Internet has given me A.D.D. Certainly I start off on a quest for a piece of information or an image, and an hour or two later I surface with all sorts of tag ends of things and no real recollection of what I had been trying to do in the first place or how I would end up where I wound up. I think about academic free- dom a lot, because it drives my
A report on the recent activities of CSC–AAUP Executive Committee members: the travel described is additional to CSC–AAUP Executive Committee meetings each month until the end of the academic year.

It has been a particularly busy year for members of the CT State Conference–AAUP Exec-utive Committee.…

January 16 and 17, New Haven, CT—Al Buatti, Andrew Fish, Jason Jones, Irene Mulvey, Vijay Nair, Mark French, and Flo Hatcher traveled to New Haven for the AAUP Committee on Col-lege and University Governance workshops: “Unions and Faculty Governance: Problems and Possibilities,” for CBC leadership training workshops, and for a series of CBC Executive Committee meetings. The governance work shop was held in conjunction with the Regional Meeting of the Collective Bargaining Congress on the Yale University campus at the First and Summerfield United Methodist Church (the Union Church-SEIU and G.E.S.O. maintain offices in the historic building). CSC–AAUP co-sponsored the Governance Workshops with a grant and also served as the local organizer for the entire two-day event. Irene Mulvey was a presenter at two of the workshops, along with sixty-six attendees from fourteen states; officers attended from eight local AAUP chapters, including the new UConn Health Center (the only AAUP chapter in a medical school). All members of the national Committee on College and Univer-sity Governance, officers of the CBC Execu tive Committee, officers and staff members of the national AAUP Department of Organizing and Services were in attendance and participated. February 25-26, New Haven, CT—Irene Mulvey and Flo Hatcher traveled to ASC New Leadership Training Seminars and ASC Executive Committee meetings. The events took place in the new national AAUP offices and were attended by members from across the United States; many from advocacy chapters. Rona Prell, Fairfield University, and Seth Rusczen from Anna Maria College (MA) attended. Vijay Nair consulted with Seth Rusczen regarding shared-governance issues in Fall 2009, and this event provided an opportunity to meet face-to-face. Irene and Flo made presentations in addition to two general sessions. They were joined by national AAUP staff members, including Gail Bradley, Jay Curtis, Bob Kreiser, Ra-venne, Irene and Flo made presentations in addi-tion to workshops and seminar presentations. Two hun-dred ninety-nine attendees traveled from all across the United States for concentrated sessions on topics confronting campus administrators and departed with innovative tools, strategies, and brilliant maneuvers to mount new organizing campaigns or to accomplish successful contract negotia-tions. Interactions with colleagues resulted in new friends and additional good ideas. There are plans for an East Coast location for 2011. August 20-22, Stevensville, MD—Irene Mulvey met with colleagues at the annual AAUP Ex-ecutive Committee Retreat. National AAUP staff members, including General Secretary Gary Rhoades, joined in the festivities.

September (various dates) New Haven, Wil-lington, New Britain, Hartford—Vijay Nair made a “listening tour” of the CSU campuses in his new role as CSU–AAUP President for a series of face-to-face meetings. He also met with State Employee Bargaining Agents Coalition (SEBAC) colleagues in preparation for the November legislative elections.

September 17, Paxton, MA—Irene Mulvey, Rick DeWitt, and other FWC/AAUP members traveled to Anna Maria College to consult with faculty senate members about shared-governance concerns. The two institutions have developed a collegial working relationship established by Vijay Nair in his role as CSC– AAUP Past President.

September 25, Villanova, PA—Irene Mulvey, Vijay Nair, and other AAUP colleagues were presenters, panelists, and attendees at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference on Leadership Skills. With Rick De Witt, Irene spoke about “Why Does a Strong Advocacy Chapter Look Like?”, and with Rich DeWitt, Pari Martinez (Eastern Carolina University, NC), and Harriet Guadin (Centenary College, NJ), Irene presented “De veloping and Maintaining Effective Chapter Leadership.”

October 9, Albuquerque, NM—Jason Jones and Vijay Nair gathered with collective bargain-ing colleagues at the Fall CBC Regional Meet ing. With Jennifer Lang (University of Akron) and Jason presented “Getting Our Message Across: On Campus and Beyond.” This was the second annual fall meeting, a new tradition that has taken the place of the former December busi-ness meeting. Expanded offerings included new Saturday afternoon workshops, in addition to the traditional Friday morning Kick-Off event; Friday night featured a banquet and keynote address. CBC Executive Committee officers will meet again at the end of the semester to conduct other workshops on relevant topics.

November 10, Boston, MA—Vijay Nair attend ed an arbitration workshop. The CSC–AAUP will begin preparations for 2011 contract negotia tions, and Vijay will be the CSU–AAUP lead negotiator.

November 12-14, Washington, D.C.—The AAUP Shared Governance Conference and Work shops, three days of presentations exploring all aspects of shared governance, offered an opportunity to network with governance leaders from across the country, plus expert lectures by CT AAUP governance leaders and those aspiring to positions of leadership. Irene Mulvey presented “The Rela-tion of AAUP Chapters to Senates” with Lomoe Beaky (La Guardia Community College, NY) and David Witt (University of Akron, OH).

November 17, Hartford, CT—Dave Bedding, Mort Tenzer, and Flo Hatcher participated in the CT Emeritus Assembly Meeting featuring Mark French, the CT State Board of Higher Education Associate Director for Financial Aid. “New Era in Student Aid: Money For Students at Work.” The program included impressive pre sentation that touched on all facets of the new SAFRA legislation and its impact on students,
A Counter-Conference: Strategies for Defending Higher Education
(posted to the Contingent Academics Mailing List <adj-l@adj-l.org> by Bob Samuels, President, UC-AFT)

This counter-conference will take place during the annual Modern Language Convention in Los Angeles, January 8, 2011, from 1:00 to 5:00 at Loyola Law School (919 Albany St). While thousands of people will be meeting at the traditional convention, we will hold a one-day event centered on discussing actual strategies for making higher education more just. Speakers will be presenting short papers on topics like the death of tenure, the corporatization of the university, the possibilities of unionization, direct social action, the use and abuse of graduate students, organizing contingent faculty, and taking back shared governance.

Schedule:

Remaking the University of California: 1:00–1:45
Catharine Liu, Chris Newfield, Joshua Clover
Defending the Humanities and Shared Governance: 1:45–2:30
Cary Nelson, Jeffrey Williams, Michelle Masse
Organizing Labor and the Academic Class War: 2:30–3:15
Marc Bousquet, Maria Maisto, Joe Berry
Quality, Access, and Affordability: 3:30–4:15
Murray Sperber and Bob Samuels

(We may also add a panel on student organizing)

Please RSVP to bobsamuels.us@yahoo.com if you plan to come; a $10 donation will be suggested but not required, and you do not have to be a member of MLA to attend.

CBC East Coast Regional Meeting
Saturday, January 29, 2011
Hilton Back Bay Hotel
40 Dalton Street…Boston, MA…(617) 236-1100
9:30 – 10:30am Registration Check-In
10:30 – 11:20am “Faculty Governance in an Era of Restructuring”
As institutions move to implement programmatic changes and cuts as drastic cost-saving measures, strong faculty governance in decision-making is critical to protect our students and our profession. Attendees will discuss chapters’ roles in effectively confronting the challenges posed by institutional restructuring plans.

10-Minute Break

11:30am – 12:20pm “Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Organizing: Building Support, Fighting Resistance, and Finding Common Ground” Whether in separate or combined units, the interests of non-tenure-track and tenure-track tenured faculty members are closely tied. How can we organize among both groups to address NTT concerns and overcome the divide-and-conquer tactics that hurt us all?

12:30 – 1:20 pm Lunch
Keynote Speakers: Cary Nelson, AAUP President
Gary Rhoades, AAUP General Secretary
1:30 – 2:20pm “Diagnosing Institutional Financial Health: A Brief Primer”
We will focus on how to understand and compute the most important metrics in determining the financial health of your institution. It is often the case that administrations claim they are broke, but in most cases this is far from the truth.

10-Minute Break

2:30 – 3:20pm “Winning Contract Campaigns”
Contract negotiations take place at the negotiating table, but very successful negotiations depend on a larger, broad-based contract campaign. This workshop offers several strategies chapters can use to activate faculty and make negotiations work to their favor.

10-Minute Break

3:30 – 4:20pm “Chapter to Chapter: A Bargaining Roundtable Discussion” This informal session offers attendees the opportunity to get advice from each other on specific chapter problems, share ideas, and showcase their success stories. To facilitate discussion, we will break up into small groups.

Call for Papers
“Defining the Future of Public Higher Education”
posted by Paola Espinosa, Ph.D. Student, Ecology and Evolution, State University of New York at Stony Brook <espinosa.pao@gmail.com> via the Coalition of Graduate Employee Unions

Friday, March 18th, 2011
State University of New York at Stony Brook Stony Brook, NY

The current financial crisis has aggravated the crisis in the Public Higher Education system. Instead of implementing measures oriented to protect and strengthen one of the most effective instruments of inclusion, development, and social justice, our representatives, legislators, and administrators are endorsing budgetary policies that seek to dismantle our public institutions. While some actors are announcing the end of public higher education and accepting the incorporation of private interests as the only reasonable solution for this conjuncture, others have decided to fight back in defense of what they believe is a social right that cannot and should not be privatized. As the recent protests and demonstrations in Puerto Rico, London, Athens, Louisiana, New York, Paris, and Sofia confirm, many students, educators, workers, activists, and citizens are ready to recover and rehabilitate the principle of public education by finding ways to construct alternative, socially oriented, non-private solutions to the crisis. We, undergraduate and graduate students at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, as citizens and members of the largest public higher educational institution in New York State, want to contribute to this movement.

Under the topic “Defining the Future of Public Higher Education” this conference seeks to gather critical, multidisciplinary reflections on the past, present, and future of Public Higher Education both in New York State and across the country. Convinced that the current financial crisis must be overcome by reinforcing and not dismantling our Public Higher Education systems, certain that the only way to address this crisis is through informed, co-ordinated, and systematic action, and aiming to restate the idea of education as a unalienable social right, we invite presenters to analyze and discuss topics such as:

- The Concept of the Public in Education
- Higher Public Education and Social Development
- Higher Public Education and Economic Development
- Private Interests in Education and Academic Research
- Education as a Social Right and a Tool for Social Equality
- Public Higher Education and Tax Reform
- The Crisis of Public Higher Education in Global Perspective
- Economic Creativity and Education
- Technocracy and Education

If you are interested in presenting, please send a 250 word abstract in English and in word format (.doc). The e-mail should include name, academic affiliation, and contact information.

Panel proposals and alternative, non-paper presentations will also be given consideration.

Please submit proposals and questions to <sunysb.publiceducation@gmail.com>.

Deadline: February 7, 2011

Call for Panels
LEFT FORUM 2011
"Toward a Politics of Solidarity"
March 18-21
Pace University
http://www.leftforum.org/conference/2011

Left Forum is now calling for panel proposals for the 2011 conference. This year’s theme is “Toward a Politics of Solidarity.” Early panel submissions are strongly encouraged. For inquiries, contact panels@leftforum.org.

Helpful links:
to see instructions on how to submit a panel: http://www.leftforum.org/panels/instructions
to see panels from last year’s conference: http://leftforum.org/conferenc/es/2010

About Left Forum:
Convening each spring in New York City, Left Forum is the largest annual international conference of its kind. Continuing a tradition begun in the 1960s, the conference involves a broad spectrum of intellectuals, organizers, academics, activists, and the general public from a wide range of Left political backgrounds who come together to share ideas and offer critical perspectives on the world. The Left Forum 2010 conference drew over 3,000 participants for 230 panels. In previous years, it has devoted several panels to academic labor, and is looking forward to open further space to these issues.

posted by Vicente Rubio, Hispanic Languages and Literature (graduate student), SUNY-Stonybrook; Instructor (part-time), Fordham University
Joseph Glavani coined the term “scholar gypsy” in his *The Vanity of Dogmatizing* (1661): Victorian poet Matthew Arnold turned the phrase to his own uses in two poems. Since many academic contingent workers describe themselves in the same way, we found its originator an apt pseudonymous byline for this column.

J. Glavani continue to report on issues affecting part-time, temporary, and non-tenure-track faculty.

**a report on COCAL IX—August 12-15, 2010**

Contingent Academic Labor Conference is planned for Mexico City in 2012. For updated information visit the COCAL site or AAUP’s website.<ref>

This was the 9th bi-annual COCAL (Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor), which started in 1996, and what has been accomplished? For one thing, contingents are on the map and, employing the Canadian term for contingents, are known as le precatariat, the precarious. It’s a world-wide phenomenon, and in 2009, New Unionism, a UK group, produced a report on tenure and teaching-intensive appointments for contingents, bears this out and was formally released this month. The AAUP, reporting on tenure and teaching-intensive appointments with monthly preparation meetings, noted that business leaders hate bad press—many actions can be planned to point out the outrageous violations and abuses in a university. Someone suggested that the language of environment studies and the justice movement should be used to describe and change the university. Viewing it as an ecosystem could point out imbalances and ultimately counter the prevailing consumer culture mindset. It could create a message based on values, gross national happiness, wellness, and how to have a different future.

The subject of the closing plenary was what has happened since the last COCAL conference in 2008 in San Diego. Presenters were Cary Nelson, Sandra Schroeder, Penni Stuart, Martha Teresa, and Jean Trudelle. Jean Trudelle, the president of the Coalition of Contingent Academic Labor in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, and the Mexican speakers attest to increased recognition of these trends throughout North America. In Latin America, neo-liberalism dominated years ago, along with concurrent resistance (as in Oaxaca and Bolivia). The U.S. has been fiercely suffering these pangs in the last decade; and Canada, which was farthest ahead, is fighting back now against the government and employer attempts to erase the gains they have made.
A Note from the President:

Irene T. Mulvey, Mathematics, Fairfield University

Planning for the CSC–AAUP Annual Meeting is proceeding apace. Last May our meeting subject was "The Kitchen Table in the Ivory Tower: The Personal and Professional Impact of Economic Hard Times" (see the logo, below). The meeting was well attended and the presentations were very well received. Given the recent emphasis on community colleges at the White House, the urgent needs of community college faculty and students, and the importance of the community college system, we are planning to make community colleges the focus this year. Watch the Conference website and the next issue of Vanguard for more information on what we hope will be another exciting CSC–AAUP Annual Meeting!

Funding for Academic Travel: About the Tenzer Fund

It is time to make plans for those important disciplinary conferences often held far away from your home institution. Requiring funds for travel and registration can place these gatherings out of reach for many, especially if your local funding is scarce or non-existent. Hosting guest speakers on your own campus can also be financially difficult in these times of budget constraints.

For full-time and part-time faculty alike, remaining current in one’s field is vital, as is maintaining academic relationships. The Connecticut State Conference–AAUP has travel funds available for academic purposes.

The Mort Tenzer Travel Fund was established by the Connecticut Conference of the AAUP in 2005 to assist chapters or academic departments in hosting guest speakers in the interests of advancing the AAUP principles of academic freedom and the common good. In 2009 the Executive Committee voted to extend the grants to cover travel by full- or part-time faculty for academic purposes.

You are encouraged to apply for a grant of up to $350 from the Tenzer Fund, or to request more information: contact Flo Hatcher at the Conference Office.

Regional News...

Emerson College Part-Time Faculty Union Achieves 'Fair Share'

AAUP press release

The Affiliated Faculty of Emerson College collective bargaining chapter of the AAUP scored a decisive victory when it announced that the chapter had met the November 1 deadline to achieve the 58 percent membership required to trigger the Fair Share provision of its latest contract. Chapter president David Kociemba notified the Emerson College administration that AFEAC-AAUP had achieved 68 percent membership among the nearly 220 part-time faculty at Emerson—10 percent more than necessary to activate fair share.

The provision, sometimes called agency fee, requires every faculty member covered by the contract to contribute to the cost of negotiating, administering, and enforcing it. "Fair share" is based on the premise that since everyone benefits from the contract—through legally binding pay increases, access to a grievance process and outside arbitration, and other rights—everyone should help to cover the costs incurred by the union, given the union’s legal responsibility to represent all members of the bargaining unit. The strong majority membership and fair-share provision will provide the resources necessary for the AFEAC-AAUP chapter to more effectively represent part-time faculty and enforce their contract. Emerson part-time faculty voted to unionize in 2001 and successfully negotiated their second contract in August 2009. The contract’s highlights include a professional development fund for faculty research and conference travel, annual pay increases of two to four percent, increased compensation for service work, access to health-care benefits, and a strong grievance procedure. The Emerson chapter’s victory follows a similar win at Suffolk University last fall, where the Suffolk Affiliated Faculty (SAF-AAUP) succeeded in triggering a similar contractual clause by achieving 55 percent membership among its nearly 360-person union. There are approximately 680,000 part-time faculty members in the US. About 35 percent of them are represented by one of the 399 unions nationwide that include part-time faculty in their bargaining units.

AAUP List of Censured Administrations: Connecticut

Academe regularly publishes the list of administrations that, investigation shows, “are not observing the generally recognized principles of academic freedom and tenure endorsed by the American Association of University Professors, the Association of American Colleges and Universities, and more than 160 other professional and educational organizations….Placing the name of an institution on this list does not mean that censure is visited either upon the whole of the institution or upon the faculty, but specifically upon its present administration. The term ‘administration’ includes the administrative officers and the governing board of the institution….Members of the Association have often considered it to be their duty, in order to indicate their support of the principles violated, to refrain from accepting appointment to an institution so long as it remains on the censure list….The Association leaves it to the discretion of the individual, possessed of the facts, to make the proper decision.”

The Connecticut Conference of AAUP decided in 1999 to publish the list of Connecticut institutions of higher learning under censure, together with the date of the censure decision, in each issue of Vanguard. Two Connecticut institutions are currently on the AAUP list:

Albertus Magnus College—under censure since June 2000
University of Bridgeport—under censure since June 1994

Save the date…

Annual Conference on the State of Higher Education

in conjunction with the National AAUP Annual Meeting

June 8-12, 2011
Omni Shoreham Hotel
Washington, D.C.

Among the questions the conference intends to explore:

The role of faculty in institutional decision making
Challenges to academic freedom in the United States and abroad
The exploitation of contingent labor in colleges and universities
The conflict between institutional rankings and traditional priorities
Strategic approaches to furloughs, cuts, and salary freezes
Funding and defunding public education
Increasing access to tenure
On-line education: the pros and cons
Assessment and accountability
The corporatization of teaching and research
Race, gender, and sexual orientation
Discrimination in hiring, promotion, and tenure
The 21st century curriculum
Teaching and writing about environmental issues

Watch the AAUP website for details as they become available.

The protection and exercise of academic freedom is an ongoing mission.
Join AAUP.