

# The Mills AAUP Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

December 2001

“The American Association of University Professors has guarded academic freedom, tenure, the faculty share in academic governance, and the economic interests of the profession for over eighty-five years. In the current era, when our institutions are being restructured so as to make faculty less autonomous and our work more ‘disposable,’ we faculty need to help one another more urgently than ever.”

—Mary Burgen, AAUP General Secretary

## Mills Faculty Salary Plan Negotiations Begin

On Tuesday, November 19<sup>th</sup> members of the Administration (Provost and dean of faculty Susan Steele, Elisabeth Acting Vice President and Treasurer Elisabeth Burwell, Ramon Torrechia, Vice President for Institutional Research) and a faculty negotiating team (Faculty Executive Committee members David Bernstein, John Brabson, and Tom Strychacz, MCAP representative Lisa Urry, economist Roger Sparks, and AAUP representative Bruce Pavlick) appointed by the Faculty Executive began discussions regarding possible changes to the College’s Faculty Salary plan. At issue are three topics: altering the list of peer institutions whose salary schedules are to be used as guides when setting compensation levels at Mills; granting greater administrative flexibility than the present step system allows in the writing of teaching contracts; and adding criteria and changing procedures for merit review that would take into account more factors than current practice recognizes. Any changes are slated to be minor. Still, the AAUP Steering Committee believes that “minor” and “important” are not antonyms, and that Chapter members and the entire faculty should take pains to attend all joint meetings called with MCAP and any special meetings of the faculty that may be called by the Executive Committee.

## Call for Membership

In order to be an effective forum, the Mills College Chapter of the AAUP needs your membership and support! All full-time and part-time Mills faculty members are invited to join our active group of thirty current members in addressing some of the most pressing issues of concern to Mills faculty, including faculty governance, compensation, fair practice in tenure and promotion, academic freedom, and educational excellence. Non-tenured faculty joining the AAUP for the first time can do so at a special reduced rate of \$64 per year (entrant category); the membership fee for part-time faculty is only \$33 per year. Regular full-time membership is \$125 per year. It may seem like a lot of money, but the membership dues support the valuable services of a powerful national organization devoted to defending the quality and integrity of higher education in our country. Please consider joining the AAUP or reactivating your lapsed membership by filling out the membership form on the last page of the newsletter and sending it directly to the AAUP, 1012 Fourteenth Street, NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005-3465.

**We need your voice to help our growing Chapter speak for the needs of the Mills College faculty.**

## AAUP California Update

—Marcus Harvey, AAUP Associate Secretary

Over the past two years, the national AAUP has made a concerted effort to increase our presence and effectiveness in California. Along with stationing national staff in the state and setting up a regional office in Berkeley, we have revitalized the AAUP’s California Conference. Mature state conferences—such as those in Ohio and New York—promote AAUP principles through lobbying,

communications, and chapter development programs. Although much remains to be done, we anticipate that the California conference will soon be positioned to offer similar assistance to our chapters in this state.

The California project is very much a work in progress. Our long-term success will be determined by growth and participation at the chapter level. Indeed, the AAUP's mission--to advance academic freedom and shared governance; to define fundamental professional values and standards for higher education; and to ensure higher education's contribution to the common good--cannot be realized without collective action on the part of faculty. Where we have seen activity at the local level, the AAUP has enjoyed considerable success in advancing faculty rights and prerogatives.

Leaving aside the examples set by our 70 or so collective bargaining chapters, our experience at several non-unionized campuses is illustrative. At Bennington College in Vermont, we organized a teach-in to support 17 fired faculty members. Drawing muscle from our powerful chapters at the University of Connecticut and the University of Rhode Island, we had almost 200 people attend the event on May 5th, 2000 and garnered national press coverage. We also got the attention of College administrators who quickly agreed to a +\$1,800,000 settlement with their former employees.

At Gordon College in Georgia, faculty established an AAUP chapter in 1999 to resist an administration that chapter members say showed little regard for due process, shared governance, or academic freedom. Looking for advice and support, the new chapter contacted the AAUP's Georgia Conference as well as the national AAUP office. To support that chapter's efforts, Martin Snyder (Director of the AAUP's Planning and Development Office) sent a letter to the state regents raising concerns about the violations alleged by Gordon faculty.

In short order, signs of change began to appear. An investigating team assessed the atmosphere on campus and initiated an audit of the administration's budget—which concluded that since 1996, \$8 million

had been improperly diverted from the "instructional mission of the college" to capital expenditures. The college president decided to retire and AAUP chapter leaders are now working with his successor to ensure the faculty a strong voice on campus.

Across the country, faculty rights and privileges are being rolled back as administrators seek to "manage" rather than collaborate with academic professionals. Those faculty who create and sustain strong AAUP chapters on their campuses give themselves the tools to preserve their own professional authority while materially helping their colleagues elsewhere to do the same.

## **Mills Chapter Bylaws**

### **Article I – Name**

The name of this organization is the Mills College chapter of the American Association of University Professors

### **Article II – Purposes**

The Purposes of this chapter are to:

1. Support the policies and goals of the Association as found in Article 1 of its national constitution.

Facilitate a more effective cooperation of teachers and research scholars in universities and colleges, and in professional schools of similar grade, for the promotion of the interests of higher education and research, and in general to increase the usefulness and advance the standards, ideals, and welfare of the profession.

2. Promote academic freedom at Mills College.

3. Uphold shared governance and encourage faculty participation in governance at Mills College

4. Protect and advance the professional status and interests of all faculty.

5. Facilitate the dissemination of information on higher education principles and practices.

6. Inform the academic community about AAUP standards and policy statements.

7. Participate in the state conference of chapters.

8. Develop necessary and proper chapter programs for the accomplishment of the aforementioned purposes.

In furtherance of the purposes described above, but not in limitation thereof, the chapter shall have power to conduct studies; to disseminate statistics and other information; to engage in various fund-raising activities; to conduct promotional activities, including advertising and publicity, in or by any suitable manner of media; to hold such property as is necessary to accomplish its purposes; and to employ individuals to represent the chapter in lawsuits, negotiations, and for other purposes. This AAUP chapter is organized and operated for the above stated purposes, and for other nonprofit purposes, and no part of any net earnings shall inure to the benefit of any member.

### **Article III - Members**

The membership of this chapter shall be limited to those persons who are National members of the American Association of University Professors with the status of Full-time, Entrant, Part-time, or Emeritus, Member. Chapter membership shall become effective upon payment of chapter dues in an amount determined by the Steering Committee and as approved by a two-thirds vote at a meeting of the chapter.

### **Article IV- Officers and Organization**

The officers of this organization shall be a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, membership chair, and a member in charge of special projects. The term of office shall not exceed two years. Persons so elected may serve two consecutive terms.

### **Article V- Dues**

1. Dues may be set or increased only by a secret ballot vote conducted among Association Active members in the chapter. The vote may be conducted either by mail ballot or, after reasonable notice, at a regular or special membership meeting.

2. Chapter dues shall be levied upon members in the amount to be determined annually at the meeting of the chapter. Payment of current national AAUP dues, conference dues in states with comprehensive dues, and chapter dues shall be a prerequisite for chapter members.

### **Article VI –Committees**

Steering Committee:

1. Meets regularly to enable response to any faculty members seeking assistance.

2. Conduct the business of the chapter between chapter meetings.

3. Regularly recruit members and encourage established members to maintain active membership.

4. Make necessary appointments to complete an unexpired term of any officer.

5. Set the agenda for chapter meetings.

6. Consult with appropriate Faculty Committees.

7. Consult regularly with the administration on matters of mutual interest.

8. Respond to inquiries from the press.

9. Supervise the preparation and distribution of a newsletter to inform members and other faculty of recent activities of local and national importance.

10. Promote the establishment of a dues deduction plan to encourage membership recruitment and membership maintenance.

**Nominating Committee:**

A Nominating Committee of four members, shall broadly represent faculty in the AAUP at Mills College. The secretary shall send the names of all candidates to members at least one month before a chapter election meeting. An active member of the chapter may submit additional nominations of candidates for elective office from the floor. A plurality of votes shall be required for election to any office.

**Article VII- Meetings**

The chapter shall hold regular meetings, not less than twice each academic year.

The President or a majority of the Steering Committee may call special meetings of the chapter.

The quorum required for the transaction of business at all meetings of the chapter shall consist of 20 percent of the active members of the chapter.

This constitution may be amended by the three-fourths (3/4) affirmative vote of a quorum of the chapter at a regular or special meeting, provided that a notice setting forth the proposed amendment or amendments with reasons thereof and setting forth any known objections thereto shall have been sent to each member at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting. A petition of ten (10) percent of the chapter membership may also initiate amendments. The approval of two-thirds (2/3) of the active membership responding to a written ballot under the preparatory conditions cited above shall also constitute approval.

**Article IX**

Roberts Rules of Order Revised shall be the authority for this chapter in matters of procedure not specified above.

**2001/2002 Steering Committee:**

David Bernstein, President

Carol George, Vice President

Stephen Ratcliffe, Secretary and Newsletter editor

John Harris, Treasurer

Michelle Fillion, Membership Chair

Bruce Pavlick, Special Projects