



NEWSLETTER

American Association of University Professors-Cuyahoga Community College Chapter

Spring 2024 Volume 2

Members Resources and Benefits

As a member of the AAUP, you have access to various resources on the National AAUP site including a subscription to *Academe*, the quarterly magazine of the AAUP that covers higher education issues from faculty members' perspectives.

In addition, the AAUP is now affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). The purpose of this affiliation is to strengthen both organizations and the professionals they represent. The AFT has greater resources and power to influence legislation and strengthen the position of AAUP's collective bargaining chapters. This joint membership allows AAUP members access to AFT benefits including discounts, insurance services, and educational scholarships.

AAUP Member Benefits

AAUP Tri-C Chapter Contact Information

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A Message from the Chapter President

Tri-C Faculty Colleagues,

The power of a union lies in our ability to come together with shared purpose and significant numbers. To illustrate the importance of faculty unity, I'll share two cases: one from Lakeland Community College (LCC), and one from a member here at Tri-C (see page 2, "A Unified Voice").

The faculty at Lakeland Community College sought a fair contract that provides affordable, quality benefits and investment in classroom priorities conducive to fostering a supportive learning environment. After hundreds of hours of bargaining, several mediation sessions, and a show of faculty unity through organized rallies, the faculty at LCC unanimously voted to authorize a 10-day strike notice. Hours later, an agreement was reached; a powerful example of how unity, solidarity, and focus on shared goals empower unions to overcome challenges.

Difficult contract negotiations are not unique to Lakeland Community College; rather, they signify a pivotal moment for organized labor across the country, particularly within the academic sphere. The last year has seen a wave of labor strikes, capturing the attention of news media. For academia, multiple legislative initiatives threaten academic freedom in many states. We can all agree that politicians should not govern what we do and don't do in our classrooms. CCC-AAUP leadership has been paying close attention to both National and State legislation and how these proposals may impact us. We have continued to work with our partners in higher education, including Ohio-AAUP on expressing our opposition to Senate Bill 83, and we submitted testimonies opposing the bill. We will continue to monitor this closely and update you.

The Executive Committee (EC) and the Labor Management Committee (LMC) have been working to address contractual violations through both formal and informal grievance procedures. The EC remains committed to safeguarding our contract, but *we rely on you to let us know of any violations*. Your campus VPs, representatives and I are also here to address concerns and offer guidance regarding our individual and collective rights.

I spoke at the Nov. 30 meeting of the Board of Trustees to introduce the AAUP leadership and to highlight our commitment to fostering a culture of collaboration and shared governance at the College. I invited the Board members to partake in the life of our academic communities by attending in-person class sessions. This is an opportunity for the board to see that our classes are not just spaces for learning but also windows into the diverse world of academics.

I, alongside members of your AAUP campus team, will hold forums at your campus on the specified dates listed below. This is an opportunity for faculty to come together, share thoughts and concerns, and engage in discussions on matters that impact us as a collective body. Your active involvement is critical to our strength and achieving our collective goals.

Haidy Kamel, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Chemistry

Spring 2024 AAUP Forums

Monday, March 4th, 2:00 pm - Westshore Campus

Tuesday, March 5th 2:30 pm - Metro Campus

Tuesday, March 19th 2:30 pm - West Campus

Wednesday, March 27th 2:30 pm - East Campus

Union News and Campus Updates

New LMS

Last week, the Board of Trustees voted to sign a contract with Brightspace D2L to adopt it as the new Learning Management System (LMS). Faculty reviewers have dedicated their time since the summer of 2022 to evaluate the three LMSs the college considered.

The Distance Learning Steering Contract Committee, co-chaired by Prof. George Kanieski, performed a comprehensive evaluation of each LMS, focusing on features such as course design, content migration, content authoring, and communication. The Committee also developed comprehensive surveys to capture quantitative and qualitative data. The Committee analyzed the data collected from all stakeholders and made their recommendations.

The process of LMS review and selection underscores the significance of shared governance in this critically important component of our jobs.

School Model and the New Academic Structure

Last semester, the AAUP engaged in many strategic conversations with the administration about academic restructuring (the new School Model). At the end of Fall 2023, the College posted the positions for the deans of the academic schools and the deans of Academic Success. As of January 2024, five academic school deans and the four campus deans of Academic Success have been selected and have accepted their positions. Searches for the remaining vacant school dean positions and associate dean positions are ongoing. Our thanks to the faculty who served on the search advisory committees to hire the deans. Our participation in these committees is crucial to representing faculty's voices and perspectives, an important principle of shared governance.

ABCs of CBAs: What Does “Collective” in Collective Bargaining Mean?

In the simplest terms, *collective* means “done by people acting as a group.” As it pertains to collective bargaining, *collective* refers to a unified and collaborative effort by a group of workers to negotiate working conditions and the terms of their employment. It means that as members of our union, we work together to negotiate a set of terms and conditions that most benefit us as a whole group. The AAUP [statement on collective bargaining](#) explains, “collective bargaining ensures that all academic professionals have an effective role in the governance of institutions.” One way we act *collectively* is by electing representatives whom we empower to represent us in dialogue with our employer. In the actual negotiation process, we form a bargaining team, and ultimately, vote as a group to approve a contract. Our collective voice holds greater influence than any one of us acting independently; our strength is derived from joining together and presenting a united front in discussions with our administration. Acting collectively is the best way to ensure the needs and aspirations of Tri-C faculty are heard within the larger institution and to make sure that a faculty perspective is accounted for in the institution. When we as a collective faculty speak and act in one voice, we demonstrate and show our commitment to our students, our community, and each other as colleagues. Our greatest power lies in the strength of our unified, collective voice.

Save the Date

CCC-AAUP Chapter meeting is scheduled for April ~~11~~¹⁰th, 2024. PLEASE ATTEND!
Please note the correct date is April 10th.

AAUP Campus Leadership

Justin Miller, East
David Bernatowicz, Metro
Lemuel Stewart, West
Bridget Kriner, Westshore

A Unified Vision

By George Kanieski

Serving as West Faculty Senate secretary and attending JFSC and Presidents Council meetings has shown me the issues facing our profession and deepened my connection with fellow faculty. Similarly, working with the AI Taskforce has enabled me to contribute in an area of serious, immediate need at the College and work with a highly-focused team of faculty and administration. However, I have experienced the strongest sense of focus, fulfillment, and solidarity on account of our colleague Tracy Greene.

When we lost Tracy on Sept. 30, his four in-person classes—all at capacity—required staffing. Because of the crisis in our adjunct pool, the deans were compelled to beg full-time faculty—with full loads and special projects in full swing—to help. Believing this was the right thing to do, four of us said yes, knowing that it would take all of us working together: more than one extra course would be unmanageable for any one of us alone. While working through the details, we heard that administration intended to prorate compensation because the course was already underway—even though this was essentially a new prep using someone else's syllabus, not to mention navigating a difficult situation. I contacted CCC-AAUP, and the Executive Committee supported us unanimously to demand full compensation or refuse to teach the courses. This resulted, quickly, in a favorable resolution for faculty and a strong precedent because we were united and held to our principles.

Despite that victory, this story has an unfortunate footnote. Tracy's vacant position was posted at West, then justifiably moved to East—and then withdrawn. I believe that together we can reclaim momentum for faculty hiring and the value of the profession if we continue to do our work with distinction, stand together for the values of the academy, and present a unified, persistent voice.

In the beginning of the year and when it ends,
We remember them.
When we are weary and in need of strength,
We remember them.

(From the Yizkor Service for Tracy Greene)