

# The Minnesota Academe

A Publication of the Minnesota Conference of the American Association of University Professors

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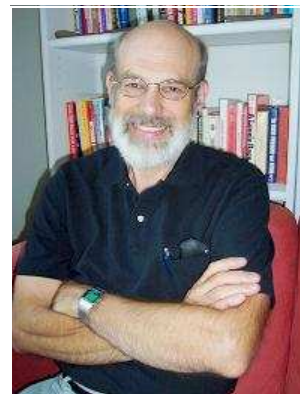
Spring 2008

## Minnesota AAUP Hosts Annual Meeting

On Tuesday, February 5th, the Minnesota AAUP Conference held its Annual Meeting for 2008. The event was hosted by Macalaster College, the home institution for our current President Eric Wiertelak. Additionally, our monthly conference meetings are also held at Macalaster (2nd Saturday of the month, 9:30-10:45, 349 Olin Hall).

Approximately two dozen members of the conference attending the event which began with casual discussion, wine, and appetizers. This was followed by the awarding of the Robert E. Sloan award to Michael Livingston as well as the announcement of our Friend of Higher Education legislator award—this year being given to State Senator Ann Lynch. Senator Lynch will be receiving the award a bit later after some of the this year's hectic legislative bonding cycle has subsided.

The Annual Meeting's keynote address was given by Joe Berry, a specialist in Labor Education current teaching at the University of Illinois-Urbana. Professor Berry was quick to acknowledge his long career as an adjunct, having taught at many, many institutions, and gave us open and frank discussion on the growing adjunct crisis in education. His address was entitled: "Organizing The New-Majority Faculty: Why it Matters To Us All" or "What's The Big Deal? They're Only Adjuncts." Dr. Berry is the author of Reclaiming the Ivory Tower: Organizing Adjuncts to Change Higher Education. This book is the first organizing handbook for contingent faculty and examines the situation of adjunct professor in U.S. higher education today, putting forward an agenda around which they can mobilize to transform their jobs and their institutions. His discussion was quite lively, and questions afterwards were brisk.



## A Few words from the President

Minnesota AAUP has had great leadership over the years, and nothing better displays that talent and dedication than the current slate of candidates running for election to national council from our district: both candidates are past-presidents of MN AAUP. Please make sure to vote in the election, which is in its final days, and know that however you do, Minnesota will be well represented.

Let me also draw your atten-

tion to the great conference being organized by graduate students at the University of Minnesota this weekend. The conference, titled "Rethinking the University: Knowledge, Labor, Value" is the subject of a longer article than this elsewhere in this issue. Please consider attending the conference this coming weekend.

As the academic year draws to a close, we can also look

ahead to coming events within MN AAUP itself. The first of these is the Fall Forum, our new annual event that focuses on discussion of specific issues important to our profession. Held each October, the tentative topic will be examination of the role of adjunct faculty in the academy. On behalf of the MN AAUP Executive Committee, we hope to see you at the Fall Forum!

- Eric Wiertelak, President.

## Michael Livingston Receives the Robert E. Sloan Award

*“The Robert E. Sloan Award is presented annually and this year it was given for Michael’s contributions to academic freedom and shared governance ”*

At this year’s AAUP Annual Meeting, hosted by MacLester College, Michael G. Livingston, College of St. Benedict / St. John University Professor of Psychology, was given the Robert E. Sloan Award. This award is presented annually and this year it was given for Michael’s contributions to academic freedom and shared

governance by the Minnesota Conference of the AAUP.

In giving Livingston the Sloan Award, the conference noted his longtime service to the state conference as a director, vice president and president, as well as his work defending the rights of graduate students at the University of Minnesota and as the

chair of the AAUP’s national Committee on Graduate and Professional Students. Livingston, who was instrumental in the creation of the graduate student committee, was appointed its first national chair in 2005.

Congratulations Michael!

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## Upcoming National Events: The Annual Meeting and Summer Institute

It’s nearly that time of year again! There are two major National events on the horizon: the Annual Meeting and the Summer Institute.

As always, the Annual Meeting is held in Washington D.C. This year it is on June 12-15 and held at the Omni Shoreham Hotel.

Our featured speaker will be Adam Habib. Mr. Habib is the deputy vice-chancellor of research, innovation, and advancement at the University of Johannesburg in South

Africa. He has repeatedly spoken out against terrorism and human rights violations. Professor Habib will speak on the history and status of academic freedom in South Africa.

June 12 will be the capital Hill day followed by Assembly of State Conference meetings on the 13th and the banquet and plenary on the 14th. June 15th is set aside for general council meetings.

The 2008 Summer Institute will be July 24th through the 27th

at the University of Rhode Island at Kingston. At the annual Summer Institutes, members from around the country come together to sharpen their leadership skills and learn practical knowledge in a variety of settings.

Workshops this year include:

*Faculty Handbooks  
Chapter Building  
Building Coalitions  
Grad Employees  
Contingent Faculty  
Faculty Advocacy  
Grievance Policies*

Hope to see you there!

## Rethinking the University: Knowledge, Labor, Value

Please join us in "Rethinking the University" on April 11th - April 13th, 2008.  
<http://www.makeumnpublic.org/conference.htm>

This conference has been collectively organized by graduate students to bring together thinkers from across the campus community and national academic community to address the "crisis" of the university as it had continually been transformed by neoliberal forces. The recent AFSCME Strike at the University of Minnesota and other academic labor struggles continue to expose the university in crisis, yet we need to further develop both our intellectual and organizational capacities to effectively address these crises. Our hope is that this conference will be productive in discussing and thinking through these issues, and bring together a community bound to the university in crisis.

Although the conference has scheduled presenters, we want to have participation from all our attendees in discussing the issues raised by our presenters-most importantly, to have participation from all sectors of the community. We hope to put into conversation workers of all types: university staff, artists, lecturers, union organizers, students, professors, and community activists, all of whom have a stake in shaping the future of the university. Please pass along this invitation to your connected community, campus, labor, and other groups that have a shared interest in our educational system.

This conference will take place over three days. Friday will focus generally on questions of neoliberalization and corporatization of higher education and the casualization of academic labor. Friday's meetings will be held on the University of Minnesota's West Bank campus, at the Carlson School of Management (2-213). Friday night, we will be hosting a reception in Ferguson Hall. Saturday and Sunday will look at questions of alternatives, including campus labor organizing, radical pedagogy, and other strategies of resistance. Saturday and Sunday will be held on the East Bank Campus at the Institute for Advanced Studies (Nolte Hall, Room 140), and we will have a dinner on Saturday night at the Bell Museum. Please see the conference program for more information:  
<http://www.makeumnpublic.org/conference/program.htm>

Please note that this is a FREE and OPEN conference. Funding for this conference has been generously provided by grants from Student Activities and GAPSA, along with generous donations from CLA Departments, the Institute for Advanced Studies, and AAUP. We hope that you are able to attend all the sessions, but feel free to partake even if you can only attend a few sessions. We are looking forward to rethinking with you,

The Conference Collective:  
Morgan Adamson / John Conley / Isaac Kamola  
Stephen Koskela / Eli Meyerhoff / Lucia Pawlowski  
Amy Pason / Matthew Stoddard

***"The recent  
AFSCME Strike  
at the University  
of Minnesota  
and other  
academic labor  
struggles  
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university in  
crisis"***

## Candidate Statements - Cecilia Konchar Farr

Cecilia Konchar Farr is professor of English and Women's Studies at The College of St. Catherine - located in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Though I was raised in Western Pennsylvania, union country, in a family of millworkers, waitresses and truck drivers, I, like many professors, didn't join AAUP until the need for the organization abruptly became relevant to my particular situation. As a national council member, I want to advance AAUP's efforts to demonstrate the organization's relevance to college and university faculty—even before our situations demand it.

My strongest interest lies in shared governance, in the need for faculty to reclaim responsibility for the integrity of our institutions and our profession. As the percentage of full-time faculty falls, those who are left have less time to do the work that links us to larger institutional concerns—curriculum planning and review, peer evaluation, policy-making. And not by accident do we become more like

corporate cogs, attentive only to our courses and our scholarship. As this occurs, we move further from the ideal we aim for — communities of scholars fully engaged in the governance of our institutions. To demand more full-time faculty and better working situations for graduate students and contingent faculty we need to be at the table, shouldering our share of governance, even if that means attending another interminable committee meeting. The investment in the future of our profession, in how we work with one another

on an alternate model from hierarchal business structures, is worth even that!

The links among shared governance, academic freedom and tenure have never been more important, or more threatened. The AAUP helps all of us stay informed. The future of AAUP is in demonstrating its relevance *before* we're needed, in weaving awareness of these issues into the daily patterns of faculty lives.

*“The links among shared governance, academic freedom and tenure have never been more important, or more threatened...”*



## Candidate Statements - Michael Livingston

Michael Livingston is professor of Psychology at St. Johns University / College of St. Benedict - Located in St. Joseph, Minnesota.

Higher education faces a continuing crisis involving declining state and federal support, increasing corporate influence in the academy, the erosion of faculty governance and tenure, and attempts at political control by outside pressure groups. Indications of this crisis abound, including the fact that currently fewer than half of all academics in the U.S. are tenure or

tenure track and the efforts to pass the so-called Academic Bill of Rights in a number of states. The AAUP will play a key role in faculty efforts to face this crisis. It is imperative that we make the AAUP a stronger and more effective organization to confront the problems that we collectively face. We need to strengthen existing chapters and state conferences, recruit new members, including graduate students and contingent faculty as well as tenure and tenure-track professors, and lobby vigorously at the state and national level. We

also need to reach out to our natural allies (students, parents, and workers in higher education) to form coalitions and go on the political offensive for higher education and the common good.

If elected to the national council, I will use the position to advocate for measures that strengthen the AAUP at the national, state, and campus level. I will also listen to the concerns of members in the district and act as your representative on the council. Finally, the role of a member of the council includes working as a volunteer organizer to support national staff and state and local activists. I am eager to take on this role. I believe my experience as a state conference president, a member of the national AAUP committee on government relations, and the chair of the national AAUP committee on graduate and professional students has given me the background to be a strong representative, advocate, and organizer.

***“It is imperative that we make the AAUP a stronger and more effective organization to confront the problems that we collectively face”***



## AAUP Files Amicus Brief in Faculty Speech Case

*From the AAUP national website:*

On March 17, 2008, the AAUP and the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression filed a jointly-authored amicus brief in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. The amicus brief supported the appeal of Dr. Juan Hong, a full professor at the University of California-Irvine, in his suit against the university and its administrators. Dr. Hong had, while participating in faculty governance, allegedly angered university administrators by opposing certain faculty hiring and promotion decisions and by his opposition to the university's use of lecturers in place of professors. After Dr. Hong was denied a merit salary increase, he filed suit against the university for violating his First Amendment right to free speech.

The U.S. District Court for the Central District of California rejected Dr. Hong's claim, finding in favor of the university. The judge reviewed the Supreme Court's decision in *Garcetti v. Ceballos*, 547 U.S. 410 (2006) (see discussion above) and concluded that because Dr. Hong was purportedly acting "pursuant to his official duties," which included participation in faculty governance, he could not avail himself of First Amendment protection if his employer retaliated against him based on his expression of opposition to the university's policy. According to the court, the University of California-Irvine "'commissioned' Mr. Hong's involvement in the peer review process and his participation is therefore part of his official duties as a faculty member. The University is free to regulate statement made in the course of that process without judicial interference." In so holding, the court failed to acknowledge the fact that courts treat the speech of professors in an academic context differently than the speech of employees of public agencies in other contexts, and that the *Garcetti* decision explicitly set aside the question of academic speech.

***"The amicus brief focuses on the unique status granted to academic speech, including involvement in shared governance. "***

The amicus brief focuses on the unique status granted to academic speech, including involvement in shared governance. The brief notes that faculty participation in shared university governance has been accorded special First Amendment protection by the Supreme Court, starting with *Sweezy v. State of New Hampshire*, 354 U.S. 234 (1957) (Frankfurter, J. concurring) through *Keyishian v. Board of Regents*, 385 U.S. 589 (1967) and *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 539 U.S. 306 (2003). The hallmark of such cases, the brief notes, is the recognition that academic freedom merits distinctive First Amendment protection against repressive action from within or outside the campus community. The brief also notes that the district court mistakenly characterized Dr. Hong's participation in faculty governance as an "official duty." Instead of a "duty", the brief argues, participation in faculty governance is part and parcel of professors' First Amendment-protected right of academic freedom to speak without fear of retaliation.

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Were on the Web!!  
[www.mnaaup.org](http://www.mnaaup.org)

## HOW TO APPLY TO MN AAUP LEGAL DEFENSE FUND:

The State conference legal defense fund has \$3,000 available to members or chapters needing legal council. Maximum grant is \$1,500 per chapter or \$1,000 per individual. To apply contact the conference president Eric Wiertelak at [wiertelak@macalester.edu](mailto:wiertelak@macalester.edu)

## How to contact the Minnesota AAUP

Visit us at our website <<http://www.mnaaup.org>> or contact one of the state executive committee members listed here.

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## National Award Nomination Deadlines

Nominations are due April 15 for a variety of AAUP awards honoring excellence in higher education. The [Alexander Meiklejohn Award for Academic Freedom](#) recognizes outstanding contributions to academic freedom and the [Ralph S. Brown Award for Shared Governance](#) recognizes outstanding contributions to shared gov-

ernence. Each is given to an American college or university administrator or trustee, or to a board of trustees as a group.

The [Georgina M. Smith Award](#) honors an individual who has provided exceptional leadership in a given year in improving the status of academic women or in academic collective bargaining and through that work

has improved the profession in general.

The [Iris Molotsky Award for Excellence in Coverage of Higher Education](#) honors exceptional reporting on higher education.

For more information on nominating someone or the awards themselves, please visit the AAUP website: [www.aaup.org](http://www.aaup.org).