

The Minnesota Academe

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

Inside this issue:

From the Conference President	2
Report from the Annual Meeting - Kirchhoff	2
The Changing face of Academia - Kirchhoff	3
Four Years in the AAUP - Nienow	4-5
2007 Nominating committee update	6
Withdrawal of Speaker invitation - AAUP re-	7
How to contact your MN AAUP	7

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Summer & Fall 2006

Minnesota AAUP Hosts Fall Forum on Academic Freedom



On October 19th and 20th, Minnesota AAUP hosted a Fall Forum on Academic Freedom at Macalester College. The forum was focused on issues surrounding the Sweezy Decision of fifty years ago, and was opened with an excellent keynote address by UT Professor David M. Rabban. Rabban, is currently the chair of the AAUP National Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure and took listeners through a detailed discussion of not only the Sweezy Decision, but also what it means to have Academic Freedom, differences between institutional and individual freedoms and the thoughts and ideas of several past judges as they interpreted AAUP ideas and standards.



On the following morning, four sessions were held building on Professor Rabban's themes, two dealing with panel discussions and the others with videos highlighting these issues including Howard Zinn's "You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train". Panel discussions comprised not only AAUP faculty, but also administrators from Macalaster and were lively and well attended.

Minnesota AAUP hopes to continue hosting this forums in the future, and there are already plans for a forum on contingent faculty, their roles and responsibilities within academia.

Newsletter: New Look / New Editor

You may notice a slight difference in the layout / design / and content of this volume of the MN Academe.

The reason behind this is the change in editors. Having served faithfully for several volumes, Eric Wiertelak has moved to conference president after completing his term as vice president.

The new editor of the MN Academe is Jeremy Nienow, contingent faculty at MCTC.

Jeremy has been a member of the AAUP since early in his graduate student career and is also current serving on the National Committee on Contingent Faculty.

Because of Jeremy's interests in graduate students, both in terms of increasing efforts to recruit them to the AAUP and the changing face of the association as a whole, please draw your attention to interior articles written by both

Mr. Nienow as well Claire Kirchhoff, our current graduate student representative.



“On behalf of the Executive Committee at the Minnesota Chapter of AAUP, welcome to another busy academic year...”

From the President

On behalf of the Executive Committee of the Minnesota Chapter of AAUP, welcome to another busy academic year, and the Fall edition of *Minnesota Academe*. With this edition we also welcome a new editor to the state newsletter, Jeremy Nienow. Jeremy is already a familiar figure to many AAUP members as one of the prime movers behind AAUP's recent changes in graduate student membership and representation within AAUP, including the establishment of the Committee on Graduate and Professional Students. We are lucky to

have him on board to steer the *Minnesota Academe*.

I'd also like to draw members' attention to some of the upcoming events scheduled for Minnesota AAUP over the academic year. First up is the Fall Forum, a new event this year. The topic for this year's Fall Forum is "Academic Freedom: Confronting the Issues Facing Individual Faculty and Institutions", and will feature a keynote address by David Rabban, Chair of National AAUP Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure. The Forum will be

held October 19 and 20 at Macalester College, is free to attend and promises to be a great new Fall semester event for all Minnesota AAUP members. Full details can be found in this edition of the *Minnesota Academe*. And, coming in February, 2008 is our Annual Meeting, which alongside a keynote address, is your chance to meet the members of the Executive Committee and other AAUP members from around the state. Look for details in the *Minnesota Academe*, and at our Chapter Website, at <http://mnaaup.org>.

Report from the Annual Meeting - Claire A. Kirchhoff

The Annual Meeting of the AAUP took place June 6-10 at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C. I attended as the Minnesota conference delegate. Several resolutions were presented for approval during the plenary session. Some highlights include an expression of sympathy to the academic community at Virginia Tech and a condemnation of the detainment and arrest of Iranian-American scholars by the Iranian government for alleged subversive activity. Watch for a full summary of resolutions that were passed at the Annual Meeting in the July/August issue of *Academe*. To see the resolution on Virginia Tech, visit the AAUP's website at: <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/newsroom/highlightscurrent/VT.htm> Other actions taken at the Annual Meeting include the censure of several administrations for violation of academic freedom and/or due process. Censure for Our Lady of the

Holy Cross College (Louisiana) was approved because of the summary dismissal of a professor involved in negotiating a faculty salary schedule. Bastyr University (Washington) was also placed on the censure list, for violation of both the 1940 *Statement of Principles of Academic Freedom and Tenure* as well as the 1958 *Statement on Procedural Standards in Faculty Dismissal Proceedings* in the cases of three faculty members at the institution. Several institutions in New Orleans were censured for violation of approved standards governing dismissals and reorganization in the wake of the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina. Censured administrations are: Loyola University, Tulane University, University of New Orleans, and Southern University at New Orleans. Faculty members present from each of the censured New Orleans institutions spoke in favor of censure for

their administrations, often relating poignant and frightening tales of the violation of their rights to academic freedom and due process. No action was taken with regard to Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, in accordance with the recommendation of Committee A because of marked improvements made by the administration in the time since Hurricane Katrina.

Two institutions were removed from the AAUP's censure list after enacting improvements in dismissal procedures and otherwise bringing institutional policy in line with established standards of academic freedom, tenure, and due process. The institutions removed from the censure list in 2007 are Tiffin University (Ohio) and New Mexico Highlands University. Watch for more information on these censured and un-censured administrations in the July/August issue of *Academe*.

The Changing Face of Academia - Claire A. Kirchhoff

The number of tenured and tenure-track faculty teaching courses in higher education has been declining for years. The face of higher education is not only changing; it has already changed. An undergraduate student is more likely to be taught by a part time faculty member, contingent faculty, graduate student, contingent faculty, or some other kind of at-will university employee. (It is worth noting that these categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive.)

In the face of this change, it bears asking whether the AAUP truly represents those who work in higher education when the vast majority of AAUP members are tenured. If the Association is to survive, it is necessary to involve and represent those who are not on the tenure track. Reaching out to the teachers in the

classroom is the surest way to protect academic freedom. How many of us, in our roles as advisors for our students, help to educate them about professionalization issues? Does mentoring extend beyond the student's research topic and, perhaps, how to find a job? Do we educate our students about other issues in higher education such as academic freedom and the value of shared governance?

The answers to these questions are vital to the academy and to the AAUP as an organization. It is our responsibility as AAUP members to support our colleagues - especially those whose academic freedom is most at risk: those off the tenure track. What are some ways to do this? Ask yourself: who are the contingent faculty in my department? What is their class-

room experience like? Do they have the same protections offered to tenure-track faculty? Part time contingent faculty often feel isolated from other faculty in the departments where they teach. A short conversation will go a long way. Ask yourself: what is teaching like for the graduate students in my department? What kind of support does teaching offer them? Are graduate students aware that the AAUP supports their right to academic freedom? Start by talking with your students about the academic concerns they have outside their research: finding a full-time job, fair compensation for their work as teaching or research assistants, classroom strategies, academic freedom. You will be helping to ensure a good future for your students, colleagues, the academy, and the AAUP.

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Minnesota AAUP Chapter Service Program & Legislation Watch

Minnesota AAUP has established a Chapter Service Program to help promote the establishment of new chapters and strengthen existing ones. Executive Committee, Committee A, and other members are available to serve as speakers for chapter events, and a small fund is available to help defray the cost of chapter events. To apply for these funds, to inquire about speakers for chapter events, or for other questions related to the program, please contact:

Eric Wiertelak,
MN AAUP President
Macalester College
1600 Grand Ave
St. Paul, MN 55105
651-696-6111
wiertelak@macalester.edu

Additionally, the MN AAUP chapter has traditionally had a keen eye trained on the state legislative process.

Conference members Michael Livingston and Jeremy Nienow have been conducting active legislative monitoring and lobbying when necessary to ensure that AAUP concepts and goals are reflected in our State's legislative agenda.

Recently, our biggest battles have come on the Academic Bill of Rights front—where former State Senator (and Now National Representative) Michele Bachmann attempted to push the ABoR through. However, through diligent work with the respective committees involved in this process, the bill was never heard

and was “killed in committee” a common practice—however, the intent was there by Bachmann to support such legislation. Beyond careful watching, members are also encouraged to contact their representatives via email and phone call, and to stay in active communication with them. To that end, land in an effort to promote the AAUP and good local legislative relations, the MN AAUP established a “Friend of Higher Education” award and presented it to State Senator Sandy Pappas.

If you are interested in participating in any of our legislative efforts, do not hesitate to contact any of the individuals listed on the last page.

Four Years in the AAUP - A Grad Student's Perspective

In May of this year, I culminated my graduate student career at the University of Minnesota with the successful defense of my dissertation. This event was just four years in the making (I already had a Masters going in), and as I sat through our long commencement activities, I invariably began a little woolgathering and harkened back to that first semester I entered my program. Incidentally, that was also the semester I joined the AAUP.

The Anthropology department no longer offered incoming students a pedagogy course, so I had opted to take the University's Preparing Future Faculty class to get some of those "active learning" exercises I knew I would make use of in future classes as a teaching assistant. The course was co-taught by Debra Wingert and Joe Massey and comprised several dozen bright-eyed grad students from all over the university system, the majority with ESL requirements to make or from the hard sciences. The humanities were a little under-represented.

A month into the semester, I was approached by another of the students, who was also current President of the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly. He had been tasked by Joe Massey to see if he could find ten students from the class and GAPSA who would be willing to get a pitch (over lunch) from him and, then AAUP council rep, Rama Murthy on the benefits of the American Association of University Professors - as graduate students. I remember reading the red brochure in the car after my wife picked me up from class that night, Joe's elegant words

on the professoriate still ringing in my ears from class, and thinking it sounded like a good opportunity for a free lunch at least.

I met up with those first ten the next week. We all dove into the food with grad student zeal, clustered at the far end of the table, while Joe and Rama sat at the other. Benefits were many - *Academe*, low dues, a chance to join the ranks of one of the most prestigious academic organizations in the country, and the opportunity to begin considering those thorny issues that may entangle us later in our careers: academic freedom, shared governance, etc. One of the only out-spoken kickers at that time was that we had few real rights in the organization as graduate students - but those would come with continued experience in the Association. The deal maker arrived when Rama offered to pay all of our first year's dues. I was hooked, and a few of the others as well. The rest were willing to at least take the year and wait and see.

From there began a dizzying period of activity, in the true graduate student "I can take on as many responsibilities as my peers are willing to give me" fashion. We wanted to form an advocacy chapter, but because one already existed on campus for faculty, we opted to constitute the American Association of University Professors, University of Minnesota- Twin Cities, Graduate and Professional Student Caucus. I was later elected president twice. I began attending state conference committee meetings, at first with another caucus member, and then alone. We embarked on a major membership drive, hosted a huge spa-

ghetti dinner costing thousands of dollars (University food services can be spendy), and had Julie Schmid from national come out and speak along with local and state AAUP leaders. After the drive we had fifty students, myself and others attended the U of M chapters annual meeting - and we began assisting with a campus wide TA organizing drive. That was all in my first year in the AAUP. Things looked really, really, bright.

In the three years that followed some pretty amazing things happened. Graduate students were granted enfranchisement (mainly due to the strong efforts of our council representatives), the national Graduate and Professional Student Committee began, with myself and Michael Livingston (then MN State Conference President) serving amidst its inaugural members. I still attended state conference meetings, attended the annual DC meeting and have been attending the Summer Institute every year since 2005. I even ran, albeit unsuccessfully, for council representative.

One of the parts of AAUP membership that I found most encouraging as a grad student was the willingness of my peers to give me/us responsibilities and rights when we simply asked for inclusion. This past Summer Institute I had the opportunity to co-teach a workshop on recruiting junior faculty and graduate students, and I am now serving on the contingent faculty committee since my term on the graduate committee recently expired. Graduate students have continued to slowly join the Association (even after our dues were raised to be on par with

"I remember reading the red brochure in the car...Joe's elegant words on the professoriate still ringing in my ears..."

with contingent faculty) and on the whole our interaction has been positive. However, looking back now, as a non-graduate student, and experiencing four years of both the AAUP and at the U of M, I have seen some parallels which continue to plague graduate students in the Association.

At the University of Minnesota, the graduate student caucus is in abeyance. The university AAUP chapter has not met for a couple of years and has not sent a representative to the state conference committee since Joe Massey left for an administrative position and then retired. The unionization drive, although successful in card signing, was ultimately rejected at the polls. Graduate students have found other tasks to occupy their free time, and membership in the Association is barely a third of what it was. This has paralleled my experiences in the AAUP as a whole. Initial movement was strong, and graduate students still have tremendous support from several key figures – notably Cary Nelson. However, ever since my first Summer Institute, and now strengthened after co-teaching in Reno, I have experienced an undercurrent among some in the Association.

Although graduate students are considered on equal footing in all AAUP functions, voting, serving on committees and running for offices, they are certainly not as equals. Although I personally craved the figurative master-apprentice relationship possible with one's advisor, this mentality seems too literal with some. Some may look back and remember when they were lowly grads them-

selves and how hard they had to work by themselves to get to where they are (I won't mention snow and trips that involve going up hills both ways). Or they do not teach in institutions that have graduate programs and so they may have a skewed view of graduation students today. Graduate students are often viewed as apprentices or teaching assistants, or research assistants, and not as peers who are often contingent faculty. I struggled to publish work, meet my teaching load, find office space, attend department and professional meetings, and still be a father and husband – all peer issues which affect a very broad array of the AAUP membership. Certainly I had much to learn while a graduate student, however, my dedication to the profession, my willingness to engage in AAUP tenets, and activities, and my earnestness to join the professoriate certainly in my eyes, and many of those around me, made me a peer.

Another issue which has continued to be provocative, and was just elucidated for me succinctly at the Reno summer institute is – why should AAUP faculty at their institutions invest in graduate students when they are just going to go some place else? Why should the AAUP care about graduate students at all? Many will probably never find their dream teaching job and given our current national market end up in back-up or associated academic careers. Many probably don't want to teach or don't want to join a tenured faculty-driven advocacy organization that has been deeply criticized in the *Chronicle* anyway – Right?

Wrong.

The future of the AAUP depends on today's graduate students. Faculty trends are writ large in the profession, more and more of our peers are younger, non-tenure track, faculty with little knowledge of what rights they have as teachers let alone how to defend those rights in an increasingly hostile, corporate, work place. Graduate students need to know, and want to know, what the profession holds for them. Graduate students know the market will be tough, and knowing the tools the Association can give them for a life-time of academic pursuit, I am surprised they don't outnumber us! But the reasons for that are clear – and are those that are mirror by what is happening at the U of M. Graduate students need faculty to step forward and help them to join. They need committed members to go with them to those first state conference meetings, attend Summer Institutes, and just have coffee and talk about what is really going on out there. Once that is done, they may be able to fly on their own – or they may need further aid - or they may be the ones knocking on your door to make sure you are coming to the next function. Graduate students need us, and we as an Association dedicated to defending academic freedom, need them. They are our banner men and women, they will stand on tomorrows' (and today's) front lines and commit to our causes. They need your acceptance as members and as peers.

Won't you offer them the brochure?

Sincerely,
Jeremy Nienow, RPA, PhD

“The future of
the AAUP
depends on
today's graduate
students”

Relevant Portions of the 2007 Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee met in Washington, D.C., on September 15, 2007, for the purpose of nominating candidates for national officer positions each of ten districts for the Association's governing Council. Nominees are listed below in alphabetical order, along with their disciplines and institutional affiliations. Incumbents are designated by an asterisk. The Council districts are also listed and defined below.

Biographical information on each candidate will accompany the ballots, which will be sent out between February 25 and March 3, 2008. Ballots must be returned and received on or before April 15, 2008. Regulations concerning nominations by petition may be found in the Association's Constitution, Article V, Section 3. Petitions must be submitted to the Washington office not later than December 15, 2007. Additional information may be obtained from Martin Snyder, staff to the Election Committee, by sending an e-mail to msnyder@aaup.org.

The committee expresses its thanks to all of the proposed candidates, whether selected for nomination or not, for their willingness to serve and for their commitment to the Association.

Below are the Nominations for National Officers, as well as those for our new District (District II). Please note that both the nominees running for District office are from our state conference!

“Please note that both the nominees running for District office are from our state conference!”

2007 National Officer Nominees

President

*Cary Nelson (English), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Gregory Scholtz (English), Wartburg College

First Vice President

Jeffrey A. Butts (Biology), Appalachian State University
Siegfried E. Heit (Humanities and Philosophy), University of Central Oklahoma

Second Vice President

*Estelle S. Gellman (Educational Psychology), Hofstra University
Julie Laskaris (Classical Studies), University of Richmond

Secretary-Treasurer

Howard Bunsis (Accounting), Eastern Michigan University
Rudy H. Fichtenbaum (Economics), Wright State University

2007 Council Nominees

District II (Alaska, Idaho, Kansas, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming)

Cecilia Konchar Farr (English and Women's Studies), College of St. Catherine (Minn.)

Michael G. Livingston (Psychology), St. John's University (Minn.)

HOW TO REACH MN COMMITTEE A:

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Were on the Web!!
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

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.

President: Eric Wiertelak, Macalester College

wiertelak@macalester.edu or phone 651-696-6111

Vice President: Karen Vogel, Hamline University: kvogel@gw.hamline.edu

Past President: Cecilia Konchar Farr, College of St. Catherine

ckfarr@stkate.edu or phone 651-690-6559

Treasurer: Dave Emery, St. Olaf College

emeryd@stolar.edu or phone 507-646-3139

Director: Gary Engstrand, University of Minnesota: garye@umn.edu

Director: John Vaningen, University of St. Thomas: j9vaningen@stthomas.edu

Director: Jeremy Nienow, Minneapolis Community and Technical College

Jeremy.nienow@minneapolis.edu

Grad Student Representative: Claire Kirchhoff, University of Minnesota

kirc0021@umn.edu

Withdrawal of Speaker Invitation - AAUP responds

From aaup.org website:

The University of California's board of regents withdrew an invitation to Lawrence Summers to speak at a public board dinner this week. California faculty members had objected to Summers' invitation; a petition calling for the withdrawal of the invitation gathered 150 signatures. Summers resigned as president of Harvard University in 2006 after he had suggested that women's innate differences from men might

explain their lower success rates in mathematics and science.

Colleges and universities as part of their educational missions appropriately provide a forum for a wide variety of speakers. The AAUP's recently released report [Academic Freedom and Outside Speakers](#) articulates the principles that should govern the handling of controversial speakers on campus. Consistent with these principles, the board of regents could have affirmed that Lawrence

Summers' views should be heard, but that the invitation to him implied no endorsement of those views. Such a response from the board would have been in keeping with the best traditions of reasoned debate in the higher education community