

# AAUP

APRIL 21, 2010

**AAUP ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 28, 2010  
12 - 2 P.M.  
STUDENT UNION ROOM 104**

## **AAUP LOOKS AHEAD**

The AAUP Executive Committee is not recommending any change in the dues structure, but it is recommending an increase in the Chapter's public relations account of the 2010-2011 budget for the purpose of addressing the public commitment to higher education. The Chapter has for many years worked with the Alumni Association, the UConn Foundation, and our colleagues in UCPEA/AFT/AFL-CIO in the often successful public relations work of the UCONN Advocates.

The University is seeking to secure state support for a new hospital with the goal of increasing research activity and being an economic generator. Storrs' commitments from UCONN 2000 and 21<sup>st</sup> Century are being anted up as markers with the hope that the Storrs' projects will be deferred and not denied. While the campus is clearly a different place from the UCONN of twenty years ago, much remains to be done. Now the state is asking UCONN to pay for the bonds issued with the state guarantee behind them (this is the \$10 and \$15 million from reserves mentioned above). Would more bond issuance for a hospital be the sugar that makes this medicine go down (to borrow from "Mary Poppins")? What is to keep those hospital bonds from being treated in the same way?

Leadership is lacking in Hartford halls where a believable plan for the university and its hospital is chugging along.

The AAUP will be making a concerted effort to address these issues in a public way to ensure that the purpose of a public higher education is honored for the generations to come.

## **CONGRATULATIONS TO UCONN WOMEN!**

In an otherwise gloomy year the UCONN women have shown an indomitable spirit on basketball courts around the country and terrific academic leadership as well. Their community service is a model as has been their role as good will ambassadors for the university. Congratulations to Coach Geno Auriemma, Coach Chris Dailey and all the other coaches and staff that have worked for the season that started in Storrs and ended on the parade route in Hartford!

## **RAISE FOR ALL AND DEDUCTION FOR SOME**

The raise package (total of 4.99% all funds; department, dean, provost) is on schedule for all this year, but unfortunately the three percent contribution toward retirement health care is also on schedule for newer members. In effect, it will seem much like a negligible change in the paycheck for many with less than five years of service.

The university has recently issued a notice explaining the implementation of this health care charge ([benefits@uconn.edu](mailto:benefits@uconn.edu)), but it is important to restate the background for this. Employees with ten years of service were already vested for retirement purposes in the health care plan. Many are speculating that there will be another state offer of incentive to retire. Fortunately for the state, the federal stimulus package has money that will help cover the cost of health care for those who retire and are less than age 65, when Medicare coverage begins. Of course, the stimulus money does not last beyond next year, so the state might make another short-sighted budget decision to get past the election.

People with five years or more of service are not required to pay the charge. Those with four years of coverage benefited from the one year delay in implementation as it brought them to the five year threshold. Employees with less service will have to contribute to their tenth year of service, at which time they will be vested in this coverage. In nearby Rhode Island, the state was upheld by the court in diminishing health care coverage for employees as it is not covered by union contract. This is the difference in Connecticut, a contract protection by which this three percent charge will help ensure protection into the future.

## **THE STATE AND UCONN'S BUDGET**

The news from Hartford regarding many things related to UCONN, especially Storrs and the regional campuses, continues to be bad.

Although the federal stimulus funding has been a prop for some of k-12 education and higher education, the predictions of a financial cliff for fiscal year 2012 (which begins July 1, 2011) cast a long shadow over university and state funding plans.

The state has long used "one time" budget fixes such that they are now seemingly used up. The stimulus money amounts to over \$1.5 billion, the short term borrowing over a billion dollars (and soon coming due), the lagging tax support continues and the fear of "tea bag" repercussions has weakened the resolve of Democrats and reinforces the anti-tax nature of the governor. When it is all added up, the projected deficit amounts to about \$4 billion.

The picture is much the same across the northeast and the country, with a few exceptions where energy revenue helps state governments.

Tax revenue lags budget planning. The projected two year recession is now looking like it will take years to change. Even the collapse of Connecticut tax support from the Wall Street incomes will take

another year to show up in Hartford, and longer where large compensation increases come from stock improvement but capital gains tax will not appear in Connecticut tax coffers until the stock is sold.

Governor Rell continues to oppose extending the estate tax (which applies to estates over \$3 million) or any other tax. The sole exemption is what amounts to a tax on state employees (pay freeze, furloughs, health care) which many in government see as savings but employees see as depressing their ability to meet expenses.

The governor and the legislature may look again to state services as a place to wring a fix.

The AAUP and the other organizations in the State Employee Bargaining Coalition are not agreeing to any contract reopening. As the saying goes, one should never say “never”, but there are considered reasons for taking this position:

1. While the state employees collectively have repeatedly offered to help stabilize state services through some concessions, the state has not stepped up in the same fashion. Fair taxation issues have been avoided, while taxing employees has been robust;
2. The university and other state enterprises have to operate in a market which is constantly being tampered with. For political reasons, in the face of good market analysis including tax benefits and Pell Grant increases, and demand for a UCONN education, the institutional resources have been depressed (tuition) and reserves are being drained (\$10 million this year and \$15 million next year). While the refrain is common that the university should be run like a business, the real decision-makers insist that it be run with political decision-making.
3. The practical impact of budget cutting is that it is a one-way street. When faculty and others are asked to accept a pay freeze, the impact is permanent, yet new hires are recruited at market-driven salaries. This permanent disparity cannot be continued.
4. The governor has called for reducing the already insufficient match for contributions to the Alternate Retirement Plan, from eight percent of salary (8%) to five percent (5%) of salary. That is more than an individual betrayal of future plans, it is a permanent move to make the university non-competitive in recruiting unless, of course, higher salaries are offered, making the dislocation mentioned above even worse.

**AAUP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2010  
ELECTION RESULTS**

Congratulations to the newly-elected AAUP Executive Committee! The newly-elected officers and members-at-large will hold office from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011. They are as follows:

|                |                  |                              |
|----------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| PRESIDENT      | THOMAS J. PETERS | COMPUTER SCIENCE/ENGINEERING |
| VICE PRESIDENT | LYLE A. SCRUGGS  | POLITICAL SCIENCE            |
| SEC'Y/TREAS    | J. LARRY RENFRO  | PHYSIOLOGY/NEUROBIOLOGY      |
| REG CAMPUS REP | CARL A. SALSEDO  | DEPT OF EXTENSION EDUCATION  |

**MEMBERS-AT-LARGE**

|                     |                                   |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| NORMA BOUCHARD      | MODERN & CLASSICAL LANGUAGES      |
| SCOTT W. BROWN      | EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY            |
| FRED V. CARSTENSEN  | ECONOMICS                         |
| DEBORAH J. DANCY    | ART/ART HISTORY                   |
| FAQIR C. JAIN       | ELECTRICAL & COMPUTER ENGINEERING |
| CHARLES (SKIP) LOWE | PSYCHOLOGY                        |
| JOHN B. MORRIS      | PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCE            |
| KATHERINE A. PANCAK | CTR REAL ESTATE & URBAN ECONOMICS |
| RICHARD C. ROCKWELL | SOCIOLOGY                         |
| LISA M. SANCHEZ     | ENGLISH                           |