

Newsletter of the California Conference of the American Association of University Professors

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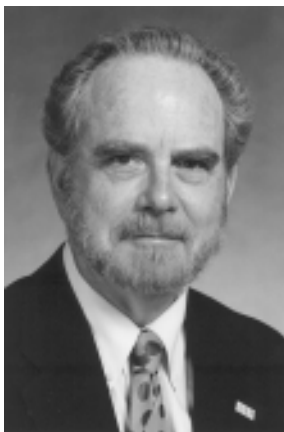
January, 2005

Annual Meeting “Strategies for Faculty Advocacy”

February 12, 2005 (8:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m.)
Mills College Faculty Dining Room
5000 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, CA

This year has seen a surge in chapter development at institutions across the state. Consequently, we have designed our 2004/05 meeting around the theme of chapter-based advocacy. With so many demands placed on faculty, it is all too easy to disengage from our institutions and colleagues. This detachment is often borne out of a mix of frustration, cynicism, and exhaustion. Whatever its cause, disengagement is not something that our profession can afford. Only by acting together can we defeat those who would eviscerate educational quality, curtail academic freedom, and chip away at tenure.

A determined and coordinated faculty CAN make a difference at any institution. Upton Sinclair’s classic treatment of American education (*The Goose-Step*) succinctly stated this almost a century ago: “any time the college professors of America get ready to take control of their own destinies, and of the intellectual life of their institutions, they can do it. There is not a college or university in the United States today which could resist the demands of its faculty a hundred percent organized and meaning business.” As the organization solely committed to the interests of higher education, we believe it is our job to get every faculty 100% organized and meaning business. Want to find out how you and your colleagues can actively improve your working lives? Join us on February 12th.



We are delighted that former AAUP president, James T. Richardson, has agreed to give our luncheon keynote address. Richardson is a professor of Sociology and Judicial Studies at the University of Nevada, Reno, and directs the Grant Sawyer Center for Justice Studies as well as the University’s Judicial Studies Program. As president of the AAUP, Richardson was instrumental in arranging the

Assault on Faculty Heats Up!

Across the country, a concerted campaign to curb the academic freedom and professional autonomy of university and college faculty is gathering momentum under the guise of a so-called “Academic Bill of Rights” (ABOR). First promulgated by David Horowitz and advocated by his “Students for Academic Freedom,” the ABOR calls on legislatures to ensure “fair and balanced” practices in grading, curriculum development, allocation of university funds, hiring, firing, promotion and tenure review. The ABOR campaign has built momentum in several states, and appeared last year in California as Senate Bill 1335. Although SB 1335 died in Committee, it has resurfaced in a slightly altered form as SB 5.

The ABOR movement ignores the fact that the vast majority of institutions of higher learning have sound and long-established practices for regulating disputes within the academy. Administrative procedures currently in place have proven sufficient to address any isolated incidents of faculty over-reaching and there is no need to overhaul the entire structure of academic responsibility and accountability, which this bill attempts to do, through an unwarranted intrusion into the classroom.

The CA-AAUP’s concern with the ABOR rests on the paradox that this, and any legislation based on such documents, infringes upon “academic freedom in the very act of purporting to protect it.” Inevitably, one result of the statutory enactment of an “Academic Bill of Rights” would be to transfer responsibility for the evaluation of student competence from faculty to administrators, the courts, or some other legislative entity. Legislation such as SB 5 would actually bring political views, party affiliations, and religious beliefs to the fore in the academic classroom. Contrary to the stated intention of its proponents—the ABOR movement is, in fact, an attempt to politicize the Academy.

In December, 2003, the national AAUP’s “Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure” issued a statement reaffirming “that decisions concerning the quality of scholarship and teaching are to be made by reference to the standards of the academic profession, as interpreted and applied by the community of scholars who are qualified by expertise and training to establish such standards.” Existing academic freedom protections are the best guarantee that First Amendment rights are alive and well in California’s Higher Education system.

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Revenues and Dues: Board Proposes a Change

At its meeting on September 25th, 2004, the Executive Board voted unanimously to seek the membership's approval to change California from an "integrated" to a "comprehensive" dues state for purposes of national AAUP and California Conference (CA-AAUP) dues collection. Before such a change is put before our members for action, however, the Board wanted to provide the rationale underlying its recommendation.

The AAUP currently regards California as an "integrated dues state" which means that the national organization will process any state dues payments made directly to the AAUP by members from California and will then remit those payments back to the CA-AAUP. Conference dues are voluntary and set at a flat \$8/member/year. Most large chapters and affiliates (California Faculty Association, Berkeley Faculty Association, Santa Cruz Faculty Association, San Diego Faculty Association, Faculty Union of the San Francisco Art Institute) within the CA-AAUP now pay this flat rate directly for all their members, but individuals who join online, or who use standard AAUP application forms, may not even be aware of the extra voluntary dues. Consequently, the Conference does not include many AAUP members who may, in fact, be keen to support our work and efforts in California.

The shift to "comprehensive dues" would bundle the collection of CA-AAUP dues with those of the national organization so that neither members, nor chapters, would need to designate separate payments to these two entities. It would also mean that the CA-AAUP's modest dues assessments would no longer be optional for members in California.

The specific proposal to be submitted to the membership for approval would place the CA-AAUP on the first (lowest) tier of Comprehensive dues. This tier includes 12 other states (IA, KS, LA, MA, MN, MO, NE, NC, OK, PA, SC, and VA); the Board does not foresee any need to advance the CA-AAUP past the first tier of dues. Should that ever become desirable, however, it, too, would need to be approved by the membership. If the membership votes in favor of the transition to comprehensive dues, the change could not be implemented before January 2006.

National and comprehensive AAUP dues are indexed according to a cost-of-living formula, and so it is impossible to state for certain what AAUP base dues will be in 2006; for illustrative purposes only, the following table ("Impact of Transition to Comprehensive Dues") shows what the effects of this change would have been had it occurred this year.

Table 1. Impact of Transition to Comprehensive Dues (in dollars)

	Full-Time	Associate/ Public	Entrant/ Joint/ Retired	Part-Time	Graduate Student
AAUP Base Dues (present rates)	143	108	72	36	10
CA (Integrated Dues) (present rates)	151 (8)	116 (8)	80 (8)	44 (8)	18 (8)
CA (Comprehensive) (projected rates)	154 (11)	116 (8)	78 (6)	39 (3)	10 (free)

West Coast Office Welcomes Vibrant New Staffer

We would like to introduce Erika Gubrium who—as the AAUP's newest professional staff member—started in the California office on January 17th. Erika has two Master's degrees (one in Horticulture; the other, Science Teaching) and is now working on her Ph.D. in Social Foundations of Education (University of Florida). Thanks to a National Science Foundation grant, she has spent the last few years integrating her knowledge in the fields of plant molecular biology and pedagogy and has developed educational software for community college biotechnology classrooms.

She has published articles in the fields of molecular and evolutionary genetics, proteomics, and qualitative research methodology. In addition to her academic background, Erika comes to us with a good deal of advocacy and organizing experience. She has undertaken issues-based community canvassing and worked extensively on campaigns with graduate assistants and faculty during her years of activism with the United Faculty of Florida.



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affiliation of the Berkeley Faculty Association with the national AAUP and furthering the Association's presence in the west – he will share with us strategies based on his work in Nevada, where he and the Nevada Faculty Alliance have been outstanding advocates for the faculty.

Breakout Panel Sessions

Shared Governance and Faculty Advocacy. Having spent the past five years organizing and advocating for faculty out of the AAUP's Berkeley office, Marcus Harvey is familiar to many of our members. Harvey will describe how alliances between AAUP chapters and senates can strengthen the faculty voice on campus. The workshop will explore a variety of possible interactions between chapters and senates, as well as the problems of organizational and leadership development in both.

Contingent Faculty: Moving Forward. AAUP activist Chris Storer and national staffer Erika Gubrium will review AAUP policy and initiatives as they affect contingent faculty. Storer and Gubrium will focus on creating more broadly representative chapters by forging a meaningful space for part-time and adjunct faculty within them. Two AAUP collective bargaining chapters in California — the California Faculty Association and the Faculty Union of the San Francisco Art Institute — have negotiated significant gains for contingent faculty in recent years. A review of their successful strategies will frame the discussion of how a faculty can protect academic freedom for non-tenure track faculty. Gubrium comes to the AAUP following almost a decade of activism as a graduate assistant at the University of Florida. Storer teaches philosophy at De Anza College and is an outspoken activist for contingent faculty members. Storer presently serves on the AAUP's Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure.

Faculty Handbooks: Protecting Your Interests. National staff member Pat Shaw and AAUP activist Linda Collins will provide participants with practical guidance in assessing their own faculty handbooks, especially as they relate to governance structures and basic terms and conditions of employment. This session will also explore the issues of handbook enforcement and modification. Linda Collins is on the faculty of Los Medanos College and served for several years as president of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges. She currently chairs the AAUP's Committee on Community Colleges. Pat Shaw is a labor lawyer by training and a tenacious advocate by inclination. A former director of the AAUP's Department of Organizing and Services, Pat serves on the Association's Committee on Governance and has worked with an enormous number of AAUP chapters and conferences on myriad bargaining and governance problems.

Shaping Public Perceptions of the Professoriate. CA-AAUP Vice President Graham Larkin and former AAUP General Secretary Mary Burgan will consider the public face of the profession. How do those outside of the academy perceive us and how does this affect our work? This session will explore a number of external threats to academic freedom and the wellbeing of the professoriate with the goal of helping chapter leaders and activists develop a public relations campaign that will be understandable – and better yet, meaningful – to the public at large. The so-called “Academic Bill of Rights” will be on the table for discussion as will a number of other efforts to undermine faculty authority. Burgan — recently retired from the AAUP, having served as the Association's General Secretary — is currently enjoying a visiting appointment at UC Berkeley's Center for Studies in Higher Education. At the other end of the career ladder, Larkin is a post-doctoral fellow at Stanford whose friendship with Marcus Harvey “encouraged” his involvement with the CA-AAUP. Larkin has been front and center in the highly publicized debate with David Horowitz over bias in the academy and the Academic Bill of Rights movement (see accompanying article).

All faculty are welcome to attend our annual meeting. Registration fees are heavily discounted (\$15 in advance) for members in good standing. Non-members may attend the whole event, but may not vote during the business portion of the meeting. Contact the AAUP's West Coast office (800-431-3348) to reserve your spot at the discounted rate. There is no limit to the number of members that a chapter may send or sponsor. Parking instructions, as well as directions to the Faculty Dining Room, will be emailed to those who register in advance and will also be available at the main gate into campus on the morning of the event. Additional information is posted on the CA-AAUP website at <www.aup-ca.org/meetings.html>.

Many thanks to our members and chapter leaders at Mills College in Oakland and St. Mary's College in Moraga for co-sponsoring this year's meeting.

CA-AAUP Officers

President

David Rubiales, Yuba College

Vice-President, Private Institutions

Graham Larkin, Stanford University

Vice-President, California State University System

Pat Sanders, San Jose State University

Vice-President, Community Colleges

Lacy Barnes-Mileham, Reedley College

Call for Volunteers

As directed by the membership at our last general meeting (October 25th, 2003), the Executive Board has drafted several committee charges for approval by the body. That is only half the battle; now we need member activists to assume leadership roles on these committees. Please contact us if you are interested in learning more about appointments to our Committees. An update on the CA-AAUP's various appointed bodies follows.

Nominating Committee

The CA-AAUP's Nominating Committee for 2004-05 has almost completed the work of identifying candidates for the upcoming Board elections. Thanks are due this year's committee members: David Rubiales (Yuba College), Patricia Hill (San Jose State University), David Bernstein (Mills College), and Chris Storer (DeAnza College).

Subcommittee on Contingent Faculty

This subcommittee of the Steering Committee shall address issues of concern to contingent faculty. It will work to limit institutions' abuse of, and over-reliance on, contingent faculty members while pressing for equitable treatment of all faculty in matters of workload, compensation, evaluation, and professional development. Two current members of the CA-AAUP's Steering Committee--Graham Larkin and Lacy Barnes-Mileham--have agreed to serve on this subcommittee.

Government Relations Committee

This committee shall monitor legislation of concern to faculty in California; analyze pending legislation and initiatives; and recommend appropriate policies, positions, and actions to the CA-AAUP's Board. The committee shall advocate positions at all levels of government that are beneficial to the higher education community, and shall keep the membership informed of their efforts. Members of the committee may be asked to testify at legislative and executive hearings on matters of concern to higher education. Outgoing CA-AAUP president David Rubiales is especially interested in the accelerated development of this committee and has agreed to serve on it once his term as President ends.

Communications Committee

This committee shall coordinate with other bodies in the Association to ensure that the CA-AAUP effectively promotes its work and principles to California's higher education community. The committee should also strive to keep the general public informed of the contribution that California's faculty make to the common good. The CA-AAUP has been exceedingly visible in the ongoing public debate over the so-called Academic Bill of Rights (see related article on page 1), and so there is some urgency to getting this Committee on its feet.

The full text of the proposed committee charges is available by request <westcoast@aaup.org> and will be posted online a week before the February 12th meeting.

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Proponents of ABOR legislation are well organized, but rely on anecdotal evidence and unanswerable allegations of faculty bias. Dr. Graham Larkin, CA-AAUP Vice President for Private Colleges and Universities, has exposed the flawed logic behind the ABOR as well as the dangers posed by any real-world implementation of its objectives. In a paper written this past September, Larkin hits on the most troubling aspects of Horowitz's proposal:

[T]o successfully foster "a plurality of methodologies and perspectives" and ensure against "political, ideological, religious or anti-religious indoctrination," one would first have to develop a sufficiently broad and clear model onto which to map these differences and deviations, and then keep very close tabs on the professors.

In January 2005, Larkin and national staff member Dr. Marcus Harvey participated in a lively debate with Horowitz on a San Diego radio talk show. Provoked by SB 5, the on-air discussion soon moved to the broader implications and long-term intent of the ABOR campaign. Since appearing together "on air," Horowitz and Larkin have continued their debate in a number of venues. On his website <frontpagemag.com>, Horowitz charged Larkin with misrepresenting the ABOR campaign as "an attempt to impose political standards on the university" and stated:

The AAUP opposes the Academic Bill of Rights because it has no interest in protecting students' academic freedom. It is a professorial guild with a political agenda, and this agenda is threatened by intellectual diversity and a pluralism of ideas.

While it is probably fair to accuse the CA-AAUP of striving to defending professorial interests, those interests are certainly not antithetical to the interests of our students. Quite the contrary! Our defense of the profession—and the academic freedom sustaining it—are integral to the quality of our students' education. Please visit our website www.aaup-ca.org/abor.html for more information on the ABOR movement, SB 5, and the Larkin-Horowitz debate.

Calendar of Events

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| February 12 | CA-AAUP Annual Meeting
Mills College, Oakland, CA |
| April 9 | ASC/CBC Spring Training Workshop
Albuquerque, NM |
| June 9-12 | AAUP Annual Meeting
Washington, DC |
| July 21-24 | AAUP Summer Institute
University of New Hampshire |

For more information about any of these events, contact us at (800) 431-3348 or at <westcoast@aaup.org>.