



Unit Ties

Faculty Working Together for Superior Education

The End of an Era

Susan Reese

Newsletter Editor, English

Spring 2008

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This is my last editorial, as I've stepped down as editor of Unit Ties after 6 years in that role. I want to thank each of you for allowing me the privilege of appearing in your campus mailboxes each term, and I especially want to thank those who have submitted articles for inclusion. This decision has been a difficult one, but it is correct for me at this time. Not only will it grant me a tiny bit more time for my own endeavors, but it will provide what I believe is a much needed new voice to speak on behalf of all of you. I have tried my best ideas in terms of getting more of you involved, and I have included my ideas (such as poems and song lyrics); I'm running dry. It is time for new blood, for someone with fresh energy to seek materials from you, to phrase your concerns and needs articulately enough to inspire you to action on behalf of AAUP. **If you are entertaining the thought of being the editor of Unit Ties, I urge you to come forward; I will happily share information with you and assist in transition.**

I particularly want to thank Tita Compere and Susan Cerasin in the AAUP office; they are the real force behind the newsletter as they do all formatting and printing, as well as much of the preparation for distribution. I also want to particularly thank Julia Getchell, Jon Uto, Gary Brodowicz, Susan Lindsay, Jacqueline Arante, Michele Gamburd, Dennis Stovall, Tom Barrows (in Salem), Susan Harlan, Martha Hickey, Jennifer Ruth, Amy Greenstadt, as well as past officers and office staff, as they come to mind in terms of those who have consistently come through with articles and support for the newsletter. I have enjoyed this immensely, and will continue to be actively involved in AAUP in some capacity.

Remember, please that **you are AAUP; AAUP is you, and your union is only as strong as you choose to make it.** Please be actively involved. Thank you.

Susan Reese
English

“Tenure is a means to certain ends; specifically: (1) freedom of teaching and research and of extramural activities, and (2) a sufficient degree of economic security to make the profession attractive to men and women of ability. Freedom and economic security, hence, tenure, are indispensable to the success of an institution in fulfilling its obligations to its students and to society.”

—excerpt taken from the National AAUP 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure With 1970 Interpretive Comments

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Unit-Ties is published on a quarterly basis. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP), established in 1915, is the only National Organization exclusively representing faculty of higher education. AAUP has pioneered the fights for tenure, academic freedom, and due process for all faculty. The Portland State Chapter (PSU-AAUP) operates as both a professional association and as the exclusive collective bargaining agent for all PSU faculty employed at least .50 FTE.

Legislative Report

Tom Barrows & Dave Barrows

Dave Barrows & Associates

The Higher Education Lobby Network (HELN) met on April 30 to discuss the issue of saving the State Salary Pool that the Legislature has held up. The State Salary Pool contains \$125 million that the 2007 Legislature appropriated for state salary increases.

It was expected that the \$125 million would be released in the 2008 special session but it was held when the revenue forecast showed a reduction in available money. Legislative Leadership said that they would wait until the June revenue forecast before making a decision on releasing the funds.

Included in the \$125 million is \$28.5 million for the Oregon University System (OUS). If the money is

not released in June, it will force cuts in the 2008-2009 academic year. The discussion of the HELN group centered on how to get that message to Legislative Leadership and get those funds released.

The group came up with several points that emphasize how important it is that the funds be released in June. These will be used to lobby legislators and ask them to press their leaders. The 2007 Session saw the first significant increase in investment in Higher Ed in nearly a decade. The Legislature and the Governor got a lot of credit for stepping up and increasing funding not only for the System but also for students through the funding of the Shared Responsibility Model, thus increasing access. These investments have already had a positive impact as applications from instate undergraduate students have increased by 15%

throughout the System. If the funds are held up, much of the gains that were enacted will be lost and the Universities within the System will be forced to eliminate some class offerings and student services as well as look at additional financial resources.

“Included in the \$125 million is \$28.5 million for the Oregon University System (OUS). If the money is not released in June, it will force cuts in the 2008-2009 academic year.”

The HELN group, made up of representatives from OUS, the member Universities, students, faculty and businesses, agreed that we need to move forward with a unified message. At that, we pointed out that the circumstances with the faculty at PSU right now are unique and need to be fixed. Dave Barrows pointed out to the group, including the Chancellor and PSU’s lobbyist, that while we are all in this together, we

cannot ignore the special PSU situation as we move ahead.

We have begun to discuss the release of the funds with legislators and a couple of them have already mentioned it as an important issue while they were speaking in front of various groups.

The Time is Now

Michele Gamburd

Vice President of Collective Bargaining, Anthropology

On May 2, 2008 PSU-AAUP Vice President of Collective Bargaining, Michele Gamburd spoke before the State Board of Higher Education meeting at Portland State University. The following is the text of her statement:

The campus extends a warm welcome to Dr. Wim Wiewel and his wife Alice as they join the Portland State University community. PSU-AAUP would like to congratulate the Oregon State Board of Higher Education and its search committee for making a fine selection. In his public presentation in April, Dr. Wiewel disarmed us with his first comment—about working to increase support for faculty. He then charmed us with his vision for an urban university.

PSU-AAUP looks forward to working with the new president and his administration to address the effects of a historic disinvestment in higher education and the festering labor issues that have resulted. These labor issues relate to salary, workload, and job security. Resources are needed to fulfill Dr. Wiewel's vision: to support student learning and to enhance PSU's role in the Portland community.

PSU's hardworking faculty is doing its best for students all over campus—in classrooms, labs, research institutes and the library, in advising and counseling sessions, and in committee work. Over the past ten years, the faculty has brought in increasing amounts of external funding for research. The faculty publishes extensively, and we reach out to the community as mandated by the university motto: Let Knowledge Serve the City.

But faculty workload is growing. The student body has increased by 70% since 1995. Class sizes have grown, with the student-faculty ratio now at an all-time high of 33:1, which far exceeds the Oregon University System average (itself well

above the national average). PSU departments and programs are losing personnel; we all suffer when valued colleagues leave for jobs in other states. High faculty turnover rates and frequent failed searches weaken existing programs. The university is relying increasingly on the work of fixed-term and adjunct faculty members who lack job security.

The faculty will continue to work hard to serve students, enhance our research and publication ventures, and reach out to the Portland community. But faculty members are tired, and labor relations are frayed. Faculty work conditions are student learning conditions. Any canary in this coal mine will testify that the work environment is toxic. The current situation is not (to use a campus buzzword) sustainable.

PSU-AAUP appeals to the Oregon State Board of Higher Education to address differed maintenance issues not only in infrastructure but also in human relations. Labor relations between faculty and administration are as rickety as the campus buildings. Invest in faculty. Invest in academic excellence and quality education. The time is now.

Stay Informed!

Bargaining Updates can be found at:

<http://www.psuaaup.net/cbupdates07.htm>

Speak Out

by Lawrence Ferlinghetti

*And a vast paranoia sweeps across the land
And America turns the attack on its Twin Towers
Into the beginning of the Third World War
The war with the Third World*

*And the terrorists in Washington
Are shipping out the young men
To the killing fields again*

And no one speaks

*And they are rousting out
All the ones with turbans
And they are flushing out
All the strange immigrants*

*And they are shipping all the young men
To the killing fields again*

And no one speaks

*And when they come to round up
All the great writers and poets and painters
The National Endowment of the Arts of Complacency
Will not speak*

*While all the young men
Will be killing all the young men
In the killing fields again*

*So now is the time for you to speak
All you lovers of liberty
All you lovers of the pursuit of happiness
All you lovers and sleepers
Deep in your private dream
Now is the time for you to speak
O silent majority
Before they come for you!*

Fixed-term Labor and Me

Dennis Stovall

English

Before I turned to writing and publishing, I was a labor organizer and activist from the mid '60s to the late '70s, in construction, teamsters, and steel. The one thing we absolutely did not have on the job in those industries was freedom of expression; there is no democracy on the job for most people. If we forgot, we were reminded. All we had was our collective power to withhold our labor. The power of the mouth and the written word was allowed only off the worksite, and it could be punished from afar, but was usually rewarded by extraordinary scrutiny of our work, since that's where they could get us. If we knew our crafts, we could survive scrutiny. We had tenure, though, in a way. Companies might lay off those with lowest seniority—in inverse order of hire, but they were obligated to hire them back in order before adding anyone else. There was real due process guaranteed by our contract when there was a dispute, particularly when anyone's job was at risk. No arbitrary dismissals. The company couldn't just wait until the end of June and not rehire someone.

Because neither I nor other fixed-term faculty have even that right, which I'd always thought was one of the bare minimums in contracts between labor and management, we don't have freedom of speech. That's wrong on any job, but here...? If we fear for our jobs because of our opinions--especially in a workplace that is all about thinking--and if that fear threatens our ability to share governance with tenured faculty, it weakens both of our species.

We are also called "contingent faculty." This is for good reason. Our livelihoods are contingent upon momentary, arbitrary decisions that often have nothing to do with scholarship or teaching. Such decisions are largely handled outside of the view of our "shared governance," yet they affect us all dramatically. We contingent faculty are the flexibility in management's various strategies. Their motives aren't (only) about being free to cull those who don't produce enough SCH, no matter the quality of their teaching and scholarship. They're not (only) about balancing resources. The institution already has plenty of safeguards in place through policies and periodic reviews to provide it with a means to remove someone who does not perform the job or who commits some extraordinary violation. We can all still be laid off.

We can all be dismissed for cause. The fixed-term system and the abusive use of adjuncts are intended to maintain insecurity and division in the academic ranks to the detriment of all of us and our students. It doesn't have to be that way.

Until I came to PSU, I didn't know it was a sort of tenure I enjoyed in the mill. Job security means different things in different circumstances, but the effect is the same. We supposedly cannot be fired without due process at PSU. We supposedly cannot lose our jobs because of our race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and spiritual beliefs. We might even like to think that this is true because of the enlightenment of the institution. But unlike the Steelworkers, we have no more job security after 20 years of service, other than a paternalistically granted two- or three-year contract, than on the last day of our first contract. It's astonishing. Embarrassing. Instead, our version of tenure--of "earned" freedom of expression and job security--is a special case reserved for a few. For fixed-term faculty, each contract is a new contract that can be denied.

This fact exacerbates another problem. To make a living doing the work we've chosen--since the salary minimums are so ridiculously low--we either rely on other sources to make ends meet or we negotiate our own contracts above the base. That's a set-up for unfair wages and conditions, and such unequal conditions undermine our common interests.

We have many common interests. One seems especially important here. This one is of self-interest to the tenured: Our fixed-term insecure and poorly paid conditions are used to erode the conditions of the tenured faculty. We all know that. Now the point is to improve our conditions in order to save those of everyone. There are all sorts of ways to reward achievement, but none should result in the lack of freedom of speech that comes from no reasonable job security for part of the faculty.

We fixed-term folks do need protection. We need protection from the fear that our jobs and our heavy investments in them are always at risk. We need AAUP. AAUP needs each of us to be actively involved for the good of everyone.

Fair to Compare?

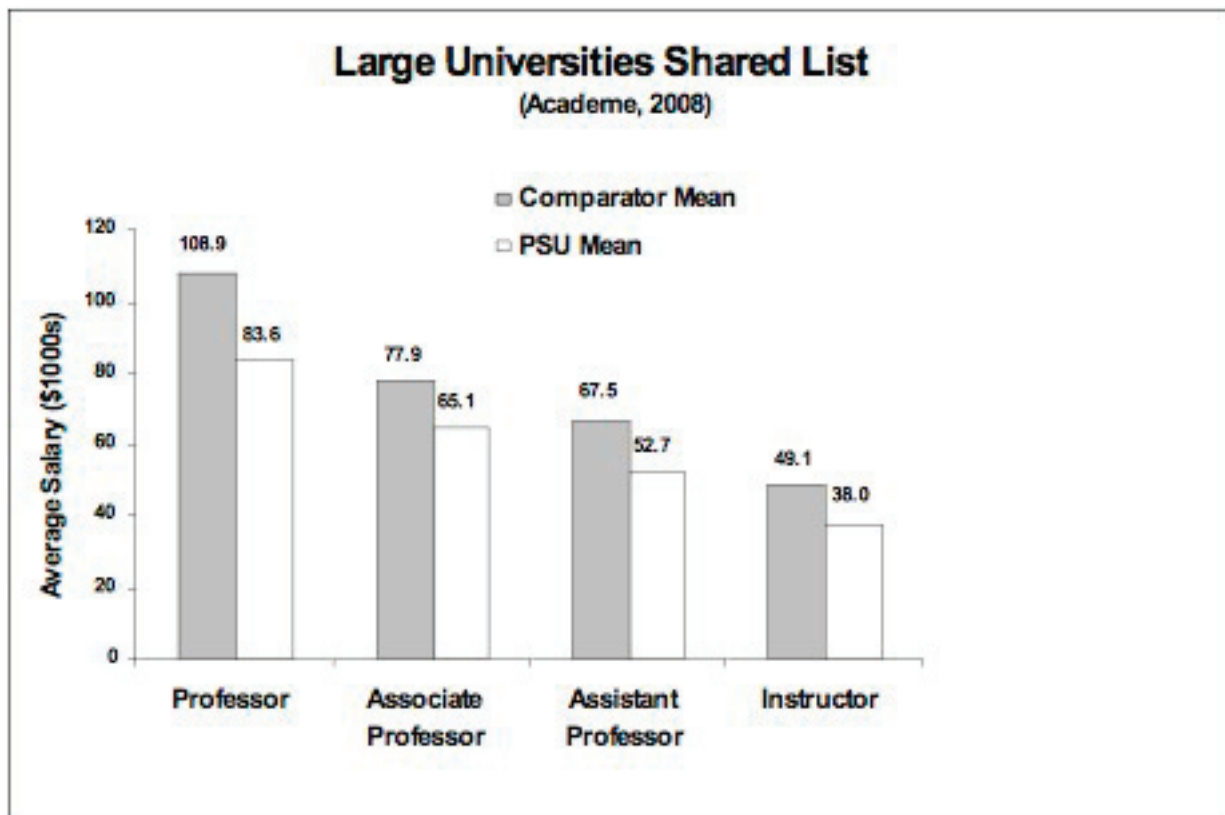
Gary Brodowicz

Past President, School of Community Health

After receiving some questions about the peer institutions that PSU uses as comparators, I contacted Denise Yunker, Director of the Human Resources Division of the Oregon University System. She directed me to the following website: <http://www.ous.edu/dept/ir/reports/PeersAIRpaper.pdf>

She also indicated one of the authors of the report (Ruth Daron—now Ruth Keele) has been working with a task force chaired by Bob Turner (WOU, retired faculty) to update the comparators for a number of months. She has met several times with the Inter-institutional faculty senate to keep them updated on progress.

“If those of us who are in a position to do so are to use our tenured positions to reassert the role of faculty in shared governance, we must ask ourselves whether we really do want change—or are we content to cede the tasks of administration to specialists at the cost of losing our role in shared governance? As Mary Burgan has argued in *Whatever Happened to the Faculty?* tenured faculty members may have been complicit in weakening the role of faculty in shared governance by choosing to spend more time doing what we enjoy (teaching and research) and less time doing what we find onerous (administration). If this is the case, we must reexamine our own priorities at the same time that we ask our institutions to change theirs.” --Academe (March-April, 2008)



<http://www.ous.edu/dept/ir/reports/PeersAIRpaper.pdf>

Baring the Threads

Keith Hadley

Geography

How Job Insecurity, Commencement, and Respect will Shape Portland State University's Future

Portland State University represents a human fabric woven from living threads. These threads are the lives of our faculty members, our students, our non-teaching professionals, and our administrators. It is self-evident that one thread does not a university make and that poorly woven threads make weak cloth. Oregon has never made strong cloth and Portland State's fabric has worn perilously thin. More accurately, Portland State University is being torn apart by the opposing forces of passion and fear. Passion is the core of the university, the self justification and foundation of the education process. Education is about people and rings hollow without passion. Fear is two things. It is the dark shroud that buries compassion and justice. Fear is also the wedge that parts the university fabric.

Why are these the topics of my concern and how are they related to university contract negotiations and the function of the university? During the May 14 AAUP meeting I learned that many PSU faculty members appear unwilling to support continued contract negotiations or a strike because they perceive themselves as insecure in their positions at PSU. Most others at the meeting were unwilling to publicly express their dissatisfaction with the administration's negotiations at commencement because they fear this would distract from the student experience. In my opinion, these two arguments, job insecurity and a perceived detraction of student experiences, demonstrate exactly why the union lacks the ability to seriously challenge the administration's stance and earn their respect. Allow me to illustrate my point.

The notion of job security at Portland State is based on faculty perception of unequal power between the administration and the faculty. Why faculty would accept this condition seems odd because most faculty members I know profess a strong disdain for the corruptive nature of unequal power and its historical role in racial, sexual, gender, ethnic, economic, or environmental discrimination. I do understand fear but I do not understand how feeding a pit bull steak will make

him a friendlier and more trustworthy dog. Does our Faculty really think that job security will improve by succumbing to the same administration that created the job insecurity in the first place?

I am similarly perplexed by the concern over the students' commencement experiences. We know students care about their PSU's teachers, it is evident in the letters they write to and for us. More to the point, do faculty members really think that PSU's administration cares about the student experience? I do not believe the students think so. Ask your students to identify what the administration has done for them beyond raising tuition, raising fees, cramming Higher One down their throats, and generally driving their instructors to distraction and depression. I also wonder if faculty members think our students are more concerned about commencement than the fate of higher education at PSU and in Oregon in general? Commencement, in my view, is more for the administration than it is for the students. If commencements were truly for the students they would be held as smaller gatherings allowing students, their friends and relatives, and their teachers to mingle and reminisce rather than attend a corporate convention.

Regardless of the outcomes of the current contract negotiations, Portland State University has worn its human fabric thin. Clearly PSU's future will not resemble its past and I believe the union needs to play a much larger role in its future. PSU should focus on education, creativity, the advancement of knowledge and service but how is this possible with a demoralized faculty facing job insecurity, barely livable faculty wages, and corporate-trained students? Consequently the future success of PSU can only happen with equitable power sharing between the Faculty and the administration and the earned respect from both sides. Passion has earned us the respect of students but courage will be needed to earn the respect of the administration. May the faculty stand strong in their resolve and the administration have the courage to join the faculty in creating a stronger university.

So Clueless it Hurts

Julia Getchell

PSU-AAUP Executive Director

Dear PSU-AAUP Bargaining Unit Members,

In addition to negotiating the contract with the University, PSU-AAUP spends a lot of time and money making sure the University follows the contract the faculty work so hard to negotiate. That includes investigating complaints bargaining unit members bring to PSU-AAUP about improper applications or violations of the contract.

The primary way we make sure the University is honoring the agreement is through grievances. Many times AAUP Faculty Advocates and staff are able to negotiate informal resolutions of contract violations. Sometimes we cannot resolve these disputes so we take them to a neutral arbitrator or the Oregon Employment Relations Board (ERB).

In July 2005, PSU-AAUP filed an Unfair Labor Practice complaint against the University because of problems getting information for a grievance investigation and the University's refusal to process the grievances.

On March 19, 2008, the ERB ruled that the University violated state law (the Oregon Public Employees Collective Bargaining Act) when: 1. PSU refused to provide information PSU-AAUP requested for a grievance investigation and 2. PSU refused to process two grievances related to the case. The ERB ordered the University to provide the information and to process the grievances.

More significantly, the ERB ruled that part of the grievance article (Article 28) is illegal and unenforceable as applied to civil rights complaints. Article 28 includes language that says if a bargaining unit member takes his or her complaint outside the University for resolution, the University doesn't have to process the grievance.

What this means is that a faculty member is forced to choose between exercising his or her civil rights OR his or her collective bargaining rights. Courts in other districts have ruled that this is illegal because union members are entitled to both civil AND collective bargaining means to resolve complaints. The ERB concurred with PSU-AAUP and ordered the University to negotiate with AAUP about this language.

Not only is this a big win for PSU-AAUP faculty members, it sets a precedent for all public employees in Oregon because this was the first time ERB issued a ruling on this topic.

The only thing PSU-AAUP did not get was a \$1000 civil penalty. However, PSU-AAUP's attorney, Liz Joffe, has filed a reconsideration with the ERB requesting a civil penalty because of the University's egregious behavior. Commenting on this case, Barbara Diamond, a Portland labor attorney, said that in this case "the employer (PSU) was so clueless it hurts."

If you have any questions about this ERB decision, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Julia Getchell
Executive Director
PSU AAUP
aaup@psuaaup.net
503-725-4414

AAUP Releases Annual Report on Faculty Salaries

Washington, D.C. —After a short-lived recovery in 2006–07, faculty salaries are lagging behind inflation again this year. Yet the salaries paid to head football coaches, presidents, and other top administrators do not seem to reflect an economic downturn. Over the past three decades, the ranks of contingent faculty, nonfaculty professionals, and administrators have swelled while the number of tenured and tenure-track faculty stagnated. These are the central findings of *Where Are the Priorities? The Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession, 2007–08* (<http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/comm/rep/Z/ecstatreport2007-08/survey2007-08.htm>), released by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) today. The AAUP's annual report has been an authoritative source of data on faculty salaries and compensation for decades.

Here are some of the highlights:

-Overall average salaries for full-time faculty rose 3.8 percent this year, the same as the increase reported last year. But with inflation at 4.1 percent for the year, the purchasing power of faculty salaries has declined for the third time in four years.

-Long-term salary trends also indicate a widening differential between the average salaries of faculty members at private colleges and universities and the average salaries of their colleagues at public institutions. When public institutions struggle to attract (and keep) the best faculty, our nation faces the risk of creating separate but unequal systems of higher education.

-The salaries paid to head football coaches at Division I-A universities are ten times as high as the salaries of senior professors. What does this say about the priorities of these universities?

-The gap between faculty salaries and salaries paid to administrators continues to grow. What does that tell us about institutional priorities? This year's report builds on previous discussions of presidents' salaries by including data for other top administrators.

-Over three decades, employment patterns in colleges and universities have been radically transformed. While the number of tenured and tenure-track faculty has grown 17 percent, the ranks of contingent faculty (both part and full time) and full-time nonfaculty professionals have each tripled, and the count of administrators has doubled.

The primary author of this year's report is Saranna Thornton, Elliott Professor of Economics at Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia and chair of the AAUP's Committee on the Economic Status of the Profession.

Media inquiries should go to Robin Burns (rburns@aaup.org) or to Dr. John Curtis (jcurtis@aaup.org), the AAUP's director of research and public policy.

American Association of
University Professors

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We're on the Web!
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American Association of University Professors
Portland State University Chapter
Membership Application

Name _____
Last First M.I.

Campus Home
Mail Code _____ Address _____

Academic Field & Rank _____
Extension _____ E-mail _____

Automatic Deduction Authorization

As provided under ORS 292.043, I authorize the monthly deduction of my dues to the American Association of University Professors, Portland State University Chapter. The amount of the deduction is based on my salary and AAUP status, and is calculated by the AAUP office and the Payroll Office. The monthly deductions will continue until I provide written notification to the Payroll Office.

Print Name _____
Signature _____
Department _____
Date _____
PSU-ID _____

Annual Dues

Normal Annual dues for PSU-AAUP members are 3/4 of one percent (.0075) of academic salary.
Active Entrant dues (must be new to the PSU-AAUP bargaining unit) are 3/8 of one percent (.00375, half of normal dues).

Send completed form via campus mail to mail code "AAUP"