

Annual Meeting “Tough Times Ahead: Outlook and Strategies for California’s Faculty”

October 25, 2003 (11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)
Hilton-Oakland Airport Hotel

This year’s meeting of the CA-AAUP will focus on the state’s political and financial crisis. What is the outlook for higher education? How should faculty respond? What role should the CA-AAUP play in Sacramento? Assemblymember Carol Liu (D-44), Chair of the Assembly’s Committee on Higher Education, will be our featured speaker. Other guests include Mark Smith, AAUP’s Director of Government Relations, and Candace Kant, President of the Nevada Faculty Alliance. The event is free to AAUP members.



**Assemblymember
Carol Liu**

Liu is also on the Assembly’s Budget Committee and its Education Finance Subcommittee. Those of us who have heard her speak at other faculty meetings in the state are confident that Liu will give us a frank assessment of what is in store for public higher education in the coming years.

Our other speakers—Mark Smith and Candace Kant—have a great deal of AAUP-specific experience with issues advocacy and government relations work. Mark Smith will follow Liu’s presentation with a lobbying workshop. Based out of the AAUP’s Washington office, Smith has been doing issues-based lobbying for a number of years; he knows a great deal about faculty successes—and failures—in statehouses across the country.

A professor of history at the Community College of Southern Nevada, Candace Kant is president of the Nevada Faculty Alliance and has served the national AAUP in a variety of capacities. She has sat on the National Council, on our Committee on Community Colleges, and is presently a member of “Committee A On Academic Freedom and Tenure.” We invited Kant to our meeting so that she could provide our members with some context that might be helpful as we chart a course for our own state conference. We thought it would be valuable to hear how a western conference with a successful record of government relations developed their lobbying program.

Although the AAUP’s California Conference has existed for some time, the past few years have witnessed a surge in activity. The business portion of our meeting will provide our members with an opportunity to review and ratify a number of structural improvements to the Conference. Along with a

Message from the President Prof. David Rubiales, Yuba College

It seems that not so long ago many of us were speculating on how good things could get. The state had a flush treasury, institutions were preparing for “Tidal Wave II” with new construction projects, UC was poised to add an entire campus at Merced, the CSU administration and faculty had agreed to hire hundreds more full-time faculty than the system was losing. Additionally, the inequities facing California’s part-time faculty were being systematically addressed by a legislature willing to allocate parity funds for this purpose. Luckily for us, the state’s financial health gave out well before its faculty had a chance to become complacent.

The moment is propitious for a resurgent AAUP in the state, and that is precisely what we have. Our meeting on the 25th of October marks the culmination of nearly two years of work to bring the California Conference up to the mark set by AAUP state organizations elsewhere in the country. Along with the usual trappings—chapter and member service programs, a burgeoning website, etc.—of a well developed AAUP state conference, we are exceedingly fortunate to have strong ties to every sector of higher education in the state.

Those broad ties, coupled with the Association’s extraordinary policy work on behalf of the profession, uniquely position us to represent the concerns of the faculty AS A WHOLE. Without interfering with the work already being done for specific constituencies by various lobbying associations and unions, we can sound a deeper and subtler note in support of such issues as adequate funding for higher education, access, diversity, professorial authority, academic freedom, and sound governance practices.

Substantively, it seems to me that our lobbying and educational agenda for the coming year needs to have two prongs. We must ensure that higher education in California receives the funding it needs to thrive. This means, in part, that we must help legislators find the will to seriously address the state’s revenue shortfall. Much of the state’s fiscal crisis can be attributed to the loss of projected revenues from taxes on capital gains, a fiscal vulnerability that was exacerbated by the reduction of various other taxes and fees in the flush 1990s. If the public discourse on taxation has become irrational, it seems appropriate for us as educators to weigh in on the matter and point out the real costs of insufficient state revenues.

Similarly, there is a real cost to insufficient access. Given California’s demographics, “adequate” funding for higher education cannot stop at restoring the funds that have been “lost” by the various systems. As a gigantic college-aged cohort swells outside our institutions’ walls, it would be shortsighted and unjust for us to simply tell them, “Sorry, but the promise of education and social advancement that we had been holding out to you was actually a lie.” Given the socio-cultural expectations of this generation, it seems unlikely that politicians will have the stomach to cut them off from higher education for too long (though in the short term, Sacramento stomachs seem cast in iron: Community College estimates suggest that budget cuts have left some 90,000 prospective students out in the cold).

length on the Contingent Faculty page on our website. Suffice it to say, we must fight against any further erosion of California's commitment to a full-time professional faculty, secure in its enjoyment of academic freedom and of healthy shared governance.

Given California's historic commitment to public higher education, reflected, since 1960, in the justly famous "Master Plan," I'm optimistic that our efforts to preserve educational quality and defend core AAUP principles can be successful. That said, I would anticipate that there will be much work for us to do in higher education's enormous private sector. Here, the range of institutional practices is remarkable and lobbying is of less utility (though certainly not irrelevant). We must pursue an aggressive organizational strategy to help faculty in this sector advocate effectively for themselves locally. Organizing, of course, must always be at the heart of what the CA-AAUP does. We cannot function without engaged faculty members taking responsibility for their profession. All the best for a healthy and productive year.

Organizing California: New website and chapter service program

The Conference's new website has been up and running for several months with new material being added almost daily. We have also established a new chapter service program to help the AAUP maintain a strong presence on campuses throughout the state. The website holds a tremendous amount of information of relevance to higher education faculty (legal decision, research papers, legislative updates, links to newspaper articles, etc.) As one of our new services, AAUP chapters may post their own websites, free of charge, to the CA-AAUP site, and a number of chapters have already opted to do so. The online version of this article briefly reviews our website, and provides a simplified schematic of what we have posted online and how you can find it. Please visit

www.aaup-ca.org/FallNewsletter03.html

Campus Equity Week and Contingent Faculty Issues CA-AAUP contributes to CEW and to COCAL-CA

This year's Campus Equity Week (CEW) activities will be held between October 27th and 31st on campuses in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Designed to educate our campus communities, the public, and policymakers, CEW also promotes local organizing and encourages contingent faculty activism. In California, events are being planned on UC, CSU, and Community College campuses, with AAUP members and staff participating directly in many of them.

Chris Storer—a member of the national AAUP's "Committee A On Academic Freedom and Tenure," and a part-time faculty member at DeAnza College—is CEW's Central Coordinator for 2003. In an open letter to the international academic community, Storer explains how the focus of CEW has shifted in recent years "from narrow labor issues to broader questions of institutional integrity and educational quality." This shift, Storer argues, reflects an understanding that faculty employment conditions are student learning conditions.

Those interested in CEW activities should visit our Contingent

Faculty page on our website. Suffice it to say, we must fight against any further erosion of California's commitment to a full-time professional faculty, secure in its enjoyment of academic freedom and of healthy shared governance.

As the petition notes, "a fair and welcoming environment for the increasing number of international students, post-doctoral scholars, and other academics in the United States is vital to the protection of academic freedom for all teachers and researchers at U.S. universities and of this nation's status as the center of academic research and teaching internationally." According to a report published by the Graduate Student Employee Organization (GESO-Yale), the State Department issued some 50,000 fewer student visas in 2002/03, than were issued in 1999/2000.

By the end of September, the petition's sponsors had collected more than 4,000 signatures from around the country. The petition is online at www.aaup-ca.org/visareform.html

The broader questions posed by post 9-11 restrictions are being taken up by the national AAUP and its new Special Committee on "Academic Freedom and National Security in Time of Crisis." Additional information—including advice to faculty members facing law enforcement inquiries under the USA PATRIOT Act—is available from the national AAUP's website, www.aaup.org

Joining the AAUP and its California Conference is easy with our new website. Encourage your colleagues to check us out. We are online at

www.aaup-ca.org

Members make possible our principled defense of academic freedom, shared governance, and due process in California. By talking with your colleagues about membership in the AAUP, you **do your part to keep us strong.**

tors Benjamin Johnson, Patrick Kavanaugh, and Kevin Mattson would donate all royalties from their book *Steal This University: The Rise of the Corporate University and the Academic Labor Movement* to the AAUP for work on behalf of contingent faculty.

According to the fund guidelines, expenditures may be made from the fund for:

- * **Financial assistance to faculty at an institution where a significant threat to contingent faculty arises,**
- * **Fellowships to individual faculty members who are involved in contingent faculty issues that implicate AAUP policy,**
- * **Support of research projects relating to contingent faculty and publication of their results,**
- * **Assistance for contingent faculty activists to attend training programs or conferences on issues relating to contingent appointments, and**
- * **Support of efforts to increase public understanding of contingent faculty appointments.**

Contributions may be mailed to:

**Contingent Faculty Fund
c/o AAUP, West Coast
15 Shattuck Sq., Ste. 200**