**MINUTES of AAUP Executive Board meeting**

**Monday 6 July 2020, 3:30-5:00pm**

<https://washington.zoom.us/j/95800425510>

Three priorities in the current AAUP strategic plan:

1.     the escalating division of insecure academic labor

2.     reductions and restructuring of public funding and budgeting processes

3.     the increasingly hostile environment affecting students and faculty

#### On Zoom: Eva Cherniavsky, Amy Hagopian, Jay Johnson, Nora Kenworthy, Diane Morrison, Abraham Flaxman

#### Absent: Ann Mescher, Theo Myhre, Charlie Collins, Dan Jacoby, Duane Storti, Jim Gregory, Rob Wood, Jim Bakken (AAUP regional),

#### Resigned, but acting in treasurer capacity in the interim: Bert Stover

**Minutes**

***Academia in the Time of the Pandemic***

We discussed the issues raised in our June 22 “happy hour.”  We had some new faces present at that event; the issue front and center for these participants was childcare.  Nora Kenworthy has [drafted a letter](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1LqxRT2mvhc6imH4wIJD0VPRi9uK0Ih8oHuA1nwOQ_fA/edit?usp=sharing.%20It's%20nice%20to%20note%20that) regarding childcare.

There are so many different family needs regarding child care; solutions need to be flexible, including the option of remote teaching. Jay suggested we use the UW Faculty Club for a child care center. We also heard ideas about hiring students to do childcare, solving a solution for students as well as faculty/staff, and asked that idea be added.

We recommended rearranging Nora’s letter to fall into three overarching categories.

* Faculty cannot just be left to their own devises;
* We need a largescale revision of assessment processes in the face of the loss of productivity;
* Equity issues for women and lower income faculty.

Louisa Mackenzie (Faculty Senate rep for Asian/Romance & Near East languages) raised broader concerns about the new abnormal: additional burdens of remote teaching; of mentoring students in crisis.  She has [assembled a list](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Q3Fxw0tYl2HOPM--fVb4c3D5J3o4m0bQZXcNbggpzao/edit?usp=sharing) of ideas she had brainstormed with Kate Norako (a colleague of mine in English).

**Is administration interested in good ideas?**

We’ve watched administration “manage” the pandemic for more than four months now, and it’s not impressive. We aren’t going back to normal any time soon, no matter how rosy a picture they keep trying to paint. They’re not asking for ideas. We are getting asked false questions—it’s highly unlikely we’ll get back to in person. Let’s put serious energy into improving the on line experience rather than pretending we’ll be in person. We could innovate the internship experience to address the virus—contact tracing, data collection.

We need spaces for faculty, staff and students to meet and talk and build a healthy sense of community with **shared principles**. Don’t they have a consultant telling them to do these things? AAUP can put out a letter seeing these are the concerns we are hearing. We need shared governance, a resistance to austerity, ensuring the best experience for everyone under the circumstances, and a commitment to equity. What’s Plan A/B/C? Asking us to be endlessly flexibly and live in limbo is not going well.

We acknowledge some students really need to be on campus, and some disciplines can’t be taught at a distance. We also know faculty and staff feel very stressed, uncared for and unsupported. Some units are better than others, and this has been a pretty decentralized place. In the pandemic, though, communications were restricted by central administration. Units also perceive central administration as unlikely to do the right thing.

Could Administration be persuaded to host a meeting so faculty could ENGAGE and converse and brainstorm?

Could Faculty Senate host such a meeting?

Do WE (aaup) have to do this? *Somebody Has To Do Something. . . It Seems Pathetic That It Has To Be Us…****Jerry Garcia.***

**How can we persuade the powers to host such a thing? Ask FCFA? [Note, the Faculty Committee on Faculty Affairs is chaired by Jack Lee (math),** Megan Callow (English), Jeremy Davis (UW Tacoma), [James Gregory](http://gregoryj@uw.edu), (history), Tom Hazlet (pharmacy), Dan Jacoby (UW Bothell), Aaron Katz (Health Services), Dawn Lehman, (Engineering), Jacob Vigdor (Evans School of public policy and governance), Teresa Ward (Nursing), and Mary Pat Wenderoth (Biology).

**Reading resources:**

Louisa also shared the following (“Online College Classes Should Have No More Than 12 Students”):

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/dereknewton/2020/06/28/online-college-classes-should-have-no-more-than-12-students/#786c0a783179>

The surging outbreak among UW fraternities / sororities (<https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/education/a-covid-19-outbreak-on-uws-greek-row-hints-at-how-hard-it-may-be-to-open-colleges-this-fall/>) is only one piece of evidence in a now hard-to-ignore picture of how dangerous it's going to be to re-open campuses come fall. I hope that if we don't have time to discuss this issue come Monday, that I can at least encourage all of you to be on the open call with AMC this coming week to discuss reopening / fall plans, and to ask hard questions about the risks to students, staff, and faculty.

This webinar from National Academy of Medicine this week may also be of interest to us:

Reopening Colleges and Universities During COVID-19: Keeping Students and Communities Healthy

**When:** Wednesday, July 8, 2020 | 5:00 – 6:30pm ET **Where:** Webinar

<https://nam.edu/event/webinar-reopening-colleges-and-universities-during-covid-19-keeping-students-and-communities-healthy-nam-apha-covid-19-conversations-series/>

A Message from Your University’s Vice President for Magical Thinking

<https://www.mcsweeneys.net/articles/a-message-from-your-universitys-vice-president-for-magical-thinking>

***Updates on two personnel cases:  Cynthia Updegrave and Jarek Sierschynski.***

1. We earlier thought we should ask Jarek Sierschynski to appeal to the Senate Executive Committee, but reconsidered after realizing SEC wouldn’t do anything. So he’s asked for adjudication. Eva will draft a letter to convey the AAUP’s support; we’ll review it.
2. Cynthia Updegrave of American Indian Studies was made to compete for her job at UW Seattle in a national search, and was successful. Surprisingly, the resulting contract was for ONE quarter. Unclear where the decision was made. Eva will introduce Cynthia to Jack Lee, in hopes he can help with the policy.



***Meetings over the summer:***

First Mondays: August 3, September 14 (skipping Labor Day).

TO DO:

Nora will rearrange the childcare letter a little, and Eva will circulate it to the AAUP board for endorsement. Once endorsed, we will circulate on the AAUP Listserver.

Eva will draft a note to call on FCFA for the formation of principles (priorities, values) to guide decisions about fall reopening, among many other things. We can suggest some principles, but insist there be a campus conversation with lots of input and gathering of ideas. We can’t wait until September.

Fall: Recruit new members, organize a fall election, vote on by-laws revision. Libi will rejoin.

Ask Bert to write a treasurer job description.

APPENDICES:

CHILD CARE LETTER, DRAFT

Dear Colleagues:

We are writing with an urgent request to University leadership and the Faculty Senate of the University of Washington, deans, and department heads. COVID-19 has uncovered many aspects of our institutional practice that have historically rendered certain labor invisible and left others more vulnerable. Now, more than ever, the structure and expectations of research productivity and teaching quality overwhelmingly privilege those who do not have to consider caring for family members.

A significant number of staff and faculty have caregiving responsibilities. At the Seattle campus alone, according to the most recent [climate survey](https://depts.washington.edu/yourvoice/documents/uwseattle_finalreport_grayscale.pdf), 39% of staff and 51% of academic personnel have substantial parenting or caregiving responsibilities. About 30% of staff and academic personnel were caring for children under six, and more than 50% were caring from children ages 6-18. Around 20% of staff and academic personnel care for senior family members.

Come Autumn, caregivers at the University of Washington are facing a crisis with the potential to impact their career trajectories and increase gender and racial disparities in the academy. Although schools and childcare centers are slowly considering opening up, there will inevitably be a scarcity of care options, which will be exacerbated for families with multiple children, children with special needs, and/or adult members with care needs related to age or disability.

Concerning school-aged children, there is no expectation that children will be returning to a normal school schedule in the school districts surrounding Seattle, Bothell, and Tacoma. Yet, student and administrator expectations of work quality are rising. Thus, parents find themselves with little guidance as to how to reconcile these demands. Recent announcements by Seattle Public Schools and other surrounding districts suggest that, at best, higher needs children and elementary-aged children will be on a hybrid schedule. Older children will possibly be 100% remote. Moreover, some parents with more medically-vulnerable children may be unable to send their children to school or childcare, or may have family members with pre-existing conditions that makes sending children outside of the home dangerous. When school-aged children are not in school, school districts will expect parents to supplement their children’s learning at home, as they did in the Spring.

These challenges are also shared by parents of younger children. First, while some childcare centers are open, they are open at limited capacity to adhere to social distancing guidelines, and may be frequently and intermittently forced to lock down in the event a child or staff member is ill. Second, King and Pierce County public health guidelines further require that children showing any symptoms of COVID-19 (including cough, nausea, and sore throat - common childhood ailments) be kept home for at least 10 days. Parents in this situation will still be responsible for paying their child care center, while either paying out of pocket for additional care or providing care themselves, but still will need to meet their teaching, service, and research obligations.

Moreover, facilities that provide care for elders and adults with disabilities remain closed for the foreseeable future, as participants are in medically vulnerable positions.

The demands of full-time childcare and full or part-time homeschooling, and other care work typically performed by others, are not compatible with expectations of full-time research, teaching, and service, as we learned in Spring quarter. And yet, neither President Cauce nor Provost Richards have addressed these challenges in any of their re-opening plans, leaving caregivers to wonder whether they will be forced to fall behind their peers without caregiving responsibilities and suffer professional consequences related to merit or promotion.

Additionally, while the caregiving burden will be shared by all caregiving employees, empirically we know that we should expect that it will fall disproportionately on women. Studies conducted since the COVID-related school closures have repeatedly found that working women are more likely to have primary responsibility for caregiving than men. [Women](https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/BN290-Mothers-and-fathers-balancing-work-and-life-under-lockdown.pdf) are spending more time per day than on childcare and homeschooling than men and spending fewer hours working than men. The disparate impact of school and care center closures on working women in academia have already been seen in [reports](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/04/21/early-journal-submission-data-suggest-covid-19-tanking-womens-research-productivity) of women submitting fewer publications. The impact of balancing family and work are also likely to manifest in teaching evaluations (which already tend to be lower for women), and will disproportionately impact women who are contingent and teaching faculty, the [majority](https://community.chronicle.com/news/984-contingency-and-gender#:~:text=Women%20make%20up%20the%20majority,of%20full%2Dtime%20tenured%20faculty) of whom are women.

In short, caregiving employees at the University of Washington will find themselves bearing a disproportionate amount of the COVID-19 crisis on their time and their ability to perform their job duties satisfactorily, and this burden will further fall disproportionately on women. The challenge of childcare or homeschooling or elder care during the COVID-19 pandemic will increase the already existing gender disparities in promotion and tenure in U.S. universities, potentially for an entire [cohort](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/03/business/economy/coronavirus-working-women.html) of women currently working in higher education and caregiving. In order for the University to alleviate the burdens of caregivers during this crisis, and not further exacerbate gender disparities in higher education, it must reorient and shift its expectations of research, teaching, and service, until the pandemic is under control with a widely available vaccine. In sum, we need different approaches and strategies for the foreseeable 12-24 months, if not longer.

Fortunately, we still have time to make plans for the future. We suggest the following steps:

1. Repurpose departmental funds for faculty conference travel and visiting speaker travel to pay for additional hired caregivers. (N.B. Childcare for two children costs $25/hour on average for two children in Seattle. This is $4,500 per month for full-time care before taxes). The University has long had a back up care service, but even before the pandemic, it was difficult to secure care with this service, especially at the last minute, as noted in the climate survey. In an informal survey, it appears that it is even more challenging now. Adding more resources to this service could help.

2. Use this moment to rethink caring strategies across the University. The Seattle area as well as Tacoma notably suffer from a deficit of care options, especially affordable ones, and the University offers few oversubscribed childcare centers, as noted in the Climate Survey. We could build upon strategies used by peer institutions in order to address that ongoing crisis creatively and with long-term implications (for example: expanded regular daycare on campus, sick-day childcare on campus, subsidizing the expansion of childcare centers, as well as better access to care for adult family members with disabilities or medical needs).

3. Instruct department heads and deans to evaluate teaching loads and student enrollments. Those with heavier caregiving needs should be granted teaching relief and/or TA assistance.  Considerations for reducing new preps could be helpful as well. Consider adopting strategies similar to those adopted by many large Seattle-area [employers](https://www.cnet.com/news/google-extends-family-leave-for-employees-during-coronavirus/) (e.g. Google and Microsoft) and allow faculty with caregiving needs to take flexible paid caregiving leave that reduces their teaching loads during the pandemic.

4. Reduce service expectations for caregivers, as requested by affected faculty, without penalty. Allocate funds for graduate students or other faculty members to perform these services, when possible.

5. Suspend “on track” standards for research productivity until a vaccine is widely available. Re-evaluate timely progress standards for tenure, promotion, and other merit reviews.

6. Identify protocols for replacing instructors who must take leave from teaching due to their own or their family’s health needs during the pandemic. Provide funds to departments to compensate faculty or graduate students who take on additional teaching responsibilities as a result.

7. Allow faculty with caregiving responsibilities to teach online for the duration of the pandemic or until a vaccine is widely available, and to change their courses to those more appropriate for online instruction, if necessary. Additionally, support faculty development for learning online teaching methods, and do not penalize faculty who use asynchronous teaching methods, which are most adaptable to the unpredictable schedules faculty and students with caregiving responsibilities are experiencing.

8. Make course evaluations optional and/or replace them with peer evaluations for the duration for the pandemic. Temporarily suspend the teaching evaluation requirement for merit raises.

9. Promote awareness and understanding among students, staff, and faculty of these additional challenges faced by caregivers, which may cause interruptions to student services and education.

10. Convene a committee to develop a race-, gender-, and disability-informed accommodation policy for those affected by caregiving responsibilities due to the pandemic. Survey faculty, staff, and graduate students at the university to gather information about their current challenges and needs. Ensure that women with young children are on this committee, that the majority of the committee be composed of individuals with caregiving responsibilities, and that its meetings are open to UW community members for comment.

We are aware that the issues we as faculty mention here are also applicable to staff, academic student employees, and the students themselves. While our letter focuses on faculty caregiver needs, we are also supportive of similar efforts to support caregivers more broadly across UW.

The costs of continuing our previous expectations for research, teaching, and service on faculty, especially junior faculty, and others who have ongoing child care, elder care, and homeschooling responsibilities will be cumulative and have gendered impacts. This will be evident not just during the period before there is a widely available vaccine, but going forward in their academic careers. More funding for COVID-related research will not alleviate the compounding disadvantage experienced by caregivers, and the University of Washington will need to develop creative and proactive solutions in order to support its goals of equity and inclusion in the academy.

Many thanks for your creative vision and flexibility in these uncertain times,

SIGNATURES

Note: We are grateful to Dr. Michelle McKinley (University of Oregon Law School, Center for the

Study of Women in Society) and Dr. Lynn Stephen (University of Oregon, Department of

Anthropology) whose earlier letter served as an inspiration and model for our own, as well as the The Gender Studies Working Group on Gender and COVID-19 at the University of Notre Dame for their extensions of the University of Oregon letter.

LOUISA MACKENZIE’S LETTER

UW teaching staff demands in recognition of the extraordinary difficulties of teaching and learning during public health and social crisis.

1.       In recognition of the extraordinary difficulties of teaching and learning during public health and racial pandemics, and the fact that teaching effectively online and/or in crisis mode, takes exponentially more time and effort that in normal times, the UW will make student learning and instructors’ work conditions the number one priority while in crisis mode, and will use this re-prioritization to continue to reshape priorities in the future.

2.       The Faculty Senate regular membership must hold extraordinary sessions during the summer of 2020. There has been no input from the senate at large on reopening plans; this is unacceptable. In particular, decisions about teaching throughout next year must be made by consulting faculty and lecturers who shoulder the greatest part of the core undergraduate teaching at the UW. Shared governance has already and explicitly been violated (the Faculty Code and EO 64). This cannot become the norm for emergency decisions.

3.       Where possible, funds will be reallocated to the UW’s teaching mission, as we need more, not fewer, instructors. Hiring instructors in understaffed units will be the highest priority, along with hiring more instructors from underrepresented minorities, especially Black faculty. Allocating funds to even more technological resources should be a lower priority. Students need one-on-one contact with instructors now more than ever, existing instructors are stretched thin, and students of all races need to see more racially diverse representation in their faculty and their course materials. The UW found the funds to quickly provide everyone with a professional Zoom account during a public health crisis. We can now find the funds to provide everyone with more diverse and more student-centered instruction, as well as more effective online/remote instruction, during a social crisis.

4.       One way to fund our instructional mission is to ask “5% from the 1%.” In the spirit of shared sacrifice, UW employees making over $250,000 p.a. (1% of all employees) will see their salaries reduced by 5% until the economic emergency is over. This is in line with, but a much more moderate demand than, the University of Arizona’s mandatory salary reduction of 17% for all earners above $150,000. The money saved will be reallocated to support core instruction, for example by creating a fund to hire emergency replacement instructors.

5.       Another way to support instruction is to tap into the under-utilized resource of administrators who have ceased teaching despite holding professorial appointments. Administrators who hold academic appointments will teach at least one 5-credit undergraduate class in their home department during AY 2020-21. This not only ensures that their skills are being redirected to our most urgent collective concern—educational continuity—but also ensures that those making decisions about teaching conditions have personal experience of the modalities of teaching they are asking from their colleagues. If they are unable to teach, they will take temporary pay cuts or furloughs to compensate part-time instructors for course coverage.

6.       Faculty merit review during the pandemic (assuming a regular course load without academic leave) if conducted at all, will pivot to reflect the fact that many of us are spending up to twice the amount of time as usual on teaching-related duties. Research expectations will be reduced accordingly.

7.       In evaluating the labor of teaching, it will be recognized that classes without teaching assistants, usually capped at 40 or below, can demand significantly more time than classes where most of the invisible labor of undergraduate support and evaluation is done by a TA. The same is true of online content management and technical know-how and trouble-shooting.

8.       The work of teaching assistants will be recognized and supported as crucial. No TA will be asked to have direct responsibility for more than 30 students. The UW will hire additional instructors rather than overloading ASEs.

9.       Retention offers, where made at all, will prioritize those instructors (tenure track and lecturers) with excellent, full, and diverse teaching records. Retention offers will not be made primarily on research productivity, since such offers tend to privilege faculty with lighter teaching loads.

10.   No FTE faculty or lecturers will have their course loads increased. Effective teaching during this time is roughly doubling the time we spend on teaching duties.

11.   Department chairs and divisional deans must ensure that each unit has enough human and financial resources to cover the teaching duties of an instructor who becomes ill, who has to provide care for a family member, or who experiences bereavement, during the pandemic. This will likely require creating an emergency fund for faculty replacement. Administration (not the instructor of record) will be responsible for drafting contingent plans for continuity of core classes. Faculty will vote on plans at the department level.

12.   The particular stress and trauma of the work of teaching through crisis – as opposed to types of labor further removed from students—should be recognized.  Instructors are often on the front lines of student mental health issues, for example. Students require more individualized attention and support at the moment. Course evaluations could include additional questions about the instructor’s accessibility and responsiveness to student problems, and student responses to such questions should carry more weight than the simplistic numeric evaluations. Instructors should be able to submit evidence (with student identifiers redacted) of extraordinary help they have provided to students, during annual performance review, or on an ongoing basis. Department chairs should keep documentation of this labor just as they document research productivity. Such labor must be recognized as much as, if not more than, research productivity for the duration of our public health and social crisis.

13.   Instructors themselves are experiencing bereavement, increased severity of mental health issues, and other stressors. Policies of maximum flexibility must include instructors as well as students.

14.   In recognition of points 12 and 13 above, the OEA should consider moving to entirely qualitative modes of course evaluation. The numeric evaluations provide the least information, and are notoriously biased. Targeted, qualitative feedback, with faculty having the option to add their own questions, is much more helpful, and appropriate when both students and teachers are in extraordinary crisis.

15.   There must be structural recognition of invisible labor, and of the fact that invisible labor such as the affective work of teaching is taken up overwhelmingly by minority faculty, by women (especially women of color), and by the non-tenured. The UW will stand behind its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, by recognizing and rewarding the particular and multiple demands being made on non-white instructors who are expected to take initiative in discussions or curricular development on racism, often at significant emotional cost, and who are called on to represent and to mentor students of color. Informal as well as formal contributions to DEI goals shall count as merit-worthy activities. Related to point #3, despite financial exigency, hiring initiatives must take place explicitly to hire more faculty from under-represented minority groups. Lack of racial diversity in the faculty must be considered a structural emergency.

16.   There must be structural recognition of, and support of, instructors with extraordinary demands on their time at home because of care-giving or home-schooling. Relating to the point above, this work is overwhelmingly performed by women, who in turn staff most of the precarious (part-time, adjunct etc.) teaching positions, which constitute most of the core undergraduate learning experience. Such recognition could be made by a reduction in workload for those affected, by assigning assistants to classes (e.g. for grading), or by providing additional funds for childcare.

17.   No instructor shall be required to teach in person during the pandemic if 1) they feel unsafe doing so or 2) they feel that the in-person classroom experience would be pedagogically inferior (because of social distancing etc.) to what they could offer online.

18.   There must be robust discussion about the pedagogical as well as the public health implications of any teaching model other than fully online during a pandemic. The effects of COVID-19 will impact teaching for the whole of AY 2020-21, and beyond. These discussions must center the experiences of instructors who have already done, and who will be doing, core teaching before and during the pandemic, that is, fully in person AND fully remote. Many of us have strong, evidence-based pedagogical reasons to believe that a hy-flex, ready-to-pivot model of instruction is the worst of both worlds, and that student learning will suffer. Administrators cannot sign off on decisions affecting the mode of instruction without themselves being personally committed to teaching in the same mode. The advice of educational design professionals (e.g. CTL), while appreciated, should be considered secondary to, and in support of, the direct experience and needs of teachers.

19. Following the example of Western Washington University, the UW shall back up its promise to students to provide continuity in instructional excellence by paying all faculty to learn about best practices in remote/online instruction during the summer. Students have a right to expect their classes next year to be more intentionally planned than during the emergency-driven Spring 2020.