**AAUP Executive Board planning retreat**

**1 Sept 2022, 11 am to 3 pm**

**Rosling Building 101**

Three priorities in the previous 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

Our mantra is “refuse austerity.”

Board members: Eva Cherniavsky (president), Amy Hagopian (Secretary), Diane Morrison (treasurer), Louisa Mackenzie, Jay Johnson, Jim Gregory, Abraham Flaxman (VP), Charlie Collins, Rob Wood

Missing: Duane Storti, Annie Nguyen (membership secretary) Nora Kenworthy, Ann Mescher, Rachel Chapman

**AGENDA**

**Welcome and introductions**

**Goals for today:** Achieve consensus on our AAUP chapter areas of focus for the year, discuss and make decisions on how we distribute workload and operate as a board, commit to pieces of work, get organized to track our issues, and build enthusiasm for diving into a new school year.

**Ground rules**: Expect the positive, be present, avoid sidebars (we can revisit these later), have fun

**Brief overview of issues we addressed in 2021-2022**. Eva reviewed many of our recent accomplishments: We fought the salary increment cancelation in 2020. We addressed back to work conditions as Covid restrictions lifted, including convening a town hall on zoom. We opposed (and derailed) the provost’s proposed merit review for full professors (and now there’s a task force to review all merit review procedures). We launched a campaign with national AAUP to advance collective bargaining at UW. We challenged the Faculty Senate’s proposed approach to faculty conduct review, encouraging a restorative justice approach. We held a November forum on campus safety, proposing alternatives to UWPD as currently configured. We challenged the way in which UW catered to the Benaroya donor bullying of the Israel Studies Program chair and faculty. We ran the list server faithfully, including managing some controversy. We handled some cases on behalf of faculty who were not treated well. We won free Upasses for faculty (and all other employees), and we won the faculty Regents position.

Round robin exercise to identify our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats as we look ahead to the coming year(s)

STRENGTHS

1. we have money in the bank and a great treasurer (Diane!)
2. we have a 100-year-old name branded organization with a reputation and a clear voice
3. we are known for seeking the high road, and having a commitment to finding a better way of doing things
4. our list server is a campus-wide asset, and boasts nearly 2,000 subscribers
5. we have institutional knowledge and memory, and experience in Faculty Senate (Jim! Duane! Louisa! Rachel! Abie! Rob! Diane!)
6. we’re cross-fertilized with the Faculty Senate
7. we have a commitment to organizing, based on our advocacy history
8. we model that it’s possible to have a less sycophantic relationship with administration through our direct, clear and powerful communications
9. we have negotiating power, and have the power to stop bad policy
10. we enliven solid academic norms and values with a structured approach and our ties to national AAUP
11. we have a pretty good idea of what’s going on among faculty, a finger on the pulse of concerns
12. we’re nimble and responsive
13. we have really good leadership (Eva!)
14. we play a unique role as the only advocate for faculty facing trouble in their units, in the absence of a union
15. we’ve won some issues (faculty regent, UPass)

WEAKNESSES

1. we’re individually and organizationally overworked
2. we have too little capacity to meet the magnitude of the task we face
3. our paid membership (~110) is too small
4. our standard practice is to be reactive
5. we don’t have much of a long-range vision (the next 5, 10, 100 years)
6. our links to the Senate aren’t as strong as for past chapters, and we don’t have leverage in that setting (SCPB especially is a weak entity); labor history says that genuine and successful unions often start by taking over the company union (eg Faculty Senate)
7. we are not sufficiently diverse in our composition (by race, age, rank, school distribution)
8. spats on the list server are distracting and divert faculty from more important things; the silliness of the free speech debate is so tedious
9. we have some valued board members who seem to be alienated (Duane!), and we miss them
10. good debates about direction and vision have sometimes been derailed by differences in culture/norms

OPPORTUNITIES

1. we could reshape and strengthen our board by recruiting new members with diversity in mind (race, age, rank, school distribution)
2. host forums on hot topic issues to solidify our role as thought leaders; these forums also serve as recruitment opportunities for membership and leadership
   1. Faculty discipline and grievance practices at UW (restorative justice focus)
   2. Salary problems, and why other WA campuses have fewer of these than we do
3. support Gautham Reddy’s Senate chairmanship, cultivate that relationship, help him be strategic
4. cultivate a relationship with the new faculty regent (whoever that ends up being)
5. revive the salary policy conversation
6. influence the process and selection of the next Provost, Academic HR vice-provost, Medical School dean (and, eventually, president of UW)
7. spotlight the importance of a faculty role in selecting new university leadership
8. identify new faculty to campus, and invite them to join AAUP (even host a social?)
9. union organizing
10. increase intelligence on issues of importance
11. the stress of teaching under Covid is motivating faculty to seek solidarity and mutual aid

THREATS

1. end stage capitalism is brutal
2. the new leadership hires (Provost, AHR vice provost, med school dean) could be worse than what we have now
3. administration could hire fancy expensive consulting firms to select our next leaders, along with union-busting firms
4. right wing political interference (and limp liberal do-nothing democrats, for that matter)
5. donor interference (a la Benaroyas)
6. COVID
7. on-going reconfiguration of institutional protections (tenured faculty now less than a quarter of our ranks)
8. the medical school dean has a LOT of power

**What are the issues in which we want to *actively intervene* this year? The topics below represent a *possible* set of foci (based on work begun last year, discussions in Board meetings, as well as discussions on the Organizing Committee). Is this the right list? What stays/goes? What is “winnable”? Who will take point and/or work on our prioritized items?**

* Faculty conduct/grievance legislation
* Relatedly, wholly unaccountable administrators (and the absence of recourse when they harass or otherwise abuse power)
* Again, relatedly: Role and outsized power of Academic HR (in context of search for Cheryl Cameron’s replacement)
* Under-resourcing of Disability Resource Services
* Hybrid teaching/faculty workload
* Salary issues (“merit” well behind inflation; cost of living in region; inequities across ranks)
* Recruitment and retention of faculty of color (UW failing to make gains or to commit real resources)
* Reimagining campus safety

**Conversation**: ideally each of the items we choose would have a person to track the intelligence and opportunities for these issues.

1) AAUP inserted ourselves into the Faculty Senate’s work on revising faculty conduct/grievance legislation; we (thanks, Rachel!) drafted a Class C resolution on the topic to insert the importance of restorative justice. The current version of the legislation doesn’t include any of these elements. If the Senate’s final version emerges without any of the reforms we sought, the idea was that we could respond with the Class C resolution. The organizing committee’s assessment of important issues includes this topic. We have experience using Class C resolutions as organizing tools. We are knowledgeable about the cases of faculty prosecution and can visualize how reforms might work well or not. If we don’t work on this, no one else will do so effectively (even the task force).

We could post an AAUP statement to the list server (addressed to Faculty Senate/administration) laying out the characteristics of legislation we’re looking for, and some examples of cases and how they would have been resolved more satisfactorily had these changes been in place.

The task force acknowledges AAUP could shut down the proposed legislation. The other threat to the task force is President Ana Mari’s opposition, which she announced at a special SEC meeting for that purpose 3 weeks ago. She expresses concerns about the costs; can that really be the issue? [More likely, it’s the potential loss of power institutionally as well as personally. In effect, however, keeping this power implies a lack of trust in the use of well-chosen faculty members to do the “deeming”, i.e. diligently performing a fair inquiry and deliberating about the best course of action.]

**Dilemma**: do we prefer shutting it all down or adopting modest reforms that will make disciplinary practices marginally better? If we shut it down, we’re doing Ana Mari’s work in a way. Bob Stacey wielded his power in an abusive way, as have other administrators. Townsend has documented these cases. The modest reform on the table is better than we have now, but it doesn’t offer a mechanism for adjudicating the facts.

Louisa reported on the factfinding group that was assembled to investigate Stuart Regis’ 25-71 charges. The committee was disbanded abruptly. But even the existence of this committee formation was highly unusual—most faculty don’t get a fact-finding process. He’s now filed a lawsuit, based on his free speech claims. We’ll follow as this unfolds.

**DECISION**: our best course is to stand by on the faculty discipline/grievance legislation. It’s a cesspool. The theoretical good position of challenging the modest reform to be better puts us in a weird spot with Senate and administration. We could pivot to the grievance side, not the disciplinary side, but they’re inextricably tied and use similar language. Of course, *a union would create a mechanism to solve all these problems, which will end up being our main message.*

2) Relatedly, wholly unaccountable administrators (and the absence of recourse when they harass or otherwise abuse power). A good handle for this issue is around Cheryl Cameron’s position. We could inform the search process; is it an issue that will engage people? Not many are aware of that position’s power. We could raise awareness about the role of this position in administration. Part of the umbrella of “administrative positions that affect faculty.” So also focus on the Provost position and the dean of the medical school. With all that power in those hands, it’s even more reason we need corresponding mechanisms for faculty power. We could point to the process for hiring the Arts & Sciences dean as pretty well run and daylighted. Elected college councils should have a role.

DECISION: We will center AAUP as the entity calling for a good daylight search for all these new central administrative positions. AAUP national has some good materials we can rely on. We’ll conduct a **survey** of faculty views on the qualities we’d want to see, the process we’d like to recommend. The final round of candidates should be daylighted. (Q: How was the police chief chosen?) We could also wield power to defeat bad candidates. AFT has a **research** dept that looks into candidates for these positions, for example. We can also reach out to the other UW unions on these hiring processes, create a collective voice. We’d track and if necessary, call out the search committee composition and other aspects of the selection process.

The issue of transparency can be central here. This pertains to budgeting too. What are the revenue sources and expenditures? UW is plus $5 b in 2021, according to recent reports. We need a financial statement watch. Can we get Rajib Doogar to help? Or someone from the econ/business sector?

3) Salary issues (“merit” well behind inflation; cost of living in region; inequities across ranks). Hiring salaries can’t be high enough to cover housing here. This could be a good forum topic.

Salary issues writ large, workload, the lack of real raises generally, how we have to justify COLA raises by being meritorious. There is so much variety to salary issues at UW, digging into it to show how a wall-to-wall union could help us all. Teaching and tenure track disparities.

The Senate special committee on merit reviews was convened to respond the Provost’s proposal. Rob Wood is our AAUP rep. The committee hasn’t had a meeting yet, having been formed end of last AY. Jake Vigdor is chair. The provost appointed Dean Hilary Godwin as his rep on the committee to ensure admin support for the results. Whatever they come up with, if Ana Mari doesn’t like it, it’s dead.

Some universities have “equity raises,” but that’s not in our Code. We could explore how our Code is particularly constraining and find language from other institutions. Student reviews can have an outsized role and lead to inequitable promotions. How is UW behind our peers in fostering equity on salary? What do our peers have that we don’t have? (a union). The role of retention offers in knocking people off track. Compression, inversion issues.

DECISION: We’d get a lot of attention by publishing some comparative salary data. AAUP “State of the faculty” salary reports were once popular, Janelle and Jim did these for many years. It’s a recruitment tool. We could hire a student to prepare an analysis. It’s all open information. Diane, Louisa and Jim know how to do this. We’d report ranges by department and rank/job title, averages, etc. Diane agreed to honcho this; AFT staff might be able to help too.

4) Investing money in hiring faculty of color.

5) Workload.

Agreed: work to get a new faculty list for outreach for new members. Annie is our membership secretary, but isn’t here (childcare struggles). Rob said he’d help.

**What are the issues we want *to track* this year. The topics below represent a possible set of things (based on interventions and conversations last year) on which to keep an eye. Is this the right list? Who wants to be the responsible person for each item?**

* Merit evaluation changes (Rob, Jim?)
* Donor power
* Faculty board of Regents member liaison
* UW finances and budgeting (broadly speaking) (Eva, Diane?)
* Retirement contributions snafu (Duane? With Rajib Doogar & Marshall Horwitz)
* Senate task forces and committees: who’s on them and what they are up to (Louisa?)
* Faculty status/ voting rights: clinical, part time, teaching

**Internal Board relations & operating expectations**

* How can we function more effectively as a Board? For example, do we want to constitute a ‘rapid response team’ we trust to deal with time-bound issues (to avoid long and confusing email chains)?
* How do we make sure that our ambition calibrates with our capacity – or, in other words, how do we ensure that Board members actually have bandwidth for the work we undertake?
* Would it make sense to anticipate issues that have arisen and will continue to arise, and to agree on a set of principles that would govern our response (e.g., the kind of academic freedom issues raised a couple of years ago by Cliff Mass’s blog post, or the escalating targeting of progressive faculty by right-wing groups?) How do we want to handle casework going forward? (continue our conversation left hanging about responding to cases of faculty who may not be the exemplars we wish they were)
* Do we want to recruit new members for some specific pieces of work?

Conversation: if we undertake to do something, it needs to be clear who is on point. But who reacts to the fires that happen? Right now our strategy is we do a group email chain that generates too much volume.

DECISION: Eva will assemble a rapid response team to draft AAUP statements as needed, the team will circulate a final draft for approval, with 24 hours to approve.

AAUP president will select the most relevant folks for the rapid response team on each issue. Eva will present an approach at the next meeting.

Should we have some statements ready to go? We could draw on previous statements more effectively in our Google Drive. Academic freedom vs. free speech will be topics we’ll have to produce language on regularly. AAUP’s committee A might be more helpful too.

Emails to the list server that call on AAUP to do things should be diverted to Eva without disseminating to the full list.

The Waleed emails need to go out, Amy will follow through.

CASES

Distressed Tacoma colleague permanent part time lecturer heading a program is being told her appointment won’t come through until after her insurance is suspended. Saturday consultation with Eva; Louisa agreed to join. She has a waitressing job on the side to pay rent.

Another promotion case denied at a 2.5-day grievance hearing. We’ll follow that case. She was asked to produce data that Asian faculty are the victims of discrimination in evaluations.

**Ongoing management responsibilities**

* Treasury/ (Diane)
* Membership (Annie)
* Website (Rob & Amy)
* Case work (Eva)
* OTHERS?

**TO DO commitments**

1. Organize a forum this year: other institutions doing so much more (e.g., race- and gender-based salary equity reviews; eliminating numerical evaluations data from promotion files).  This could be the context to showcase what a restorative justice approach to discipline and grievance would look like.  More broadly, we could link to salary/merit issues (hours spent annually documenting merit to receive less than COLA); faculty salaries are simply not commensurate to regional cost of living, except for a small minority in the highest paid ranks.
2. Invite an AAUP rep to Reddy’s cabinet
3. Identify new faculty and welcome them to AAUP membership (Rob said he’d work on finding lists of new faculty, work with Annie on an outreach plan)
4. Make public (well in advance) AAUP’s views on the importance of open and transparent processes for hiring to fill vacancies at the Provost, VP for AHR, and medical school dean levels. This is a dress rehearsal for Ana Mari’s eventual departure
5. Publish a salary report (Diane volunteered)
6. Systematically identify good prospects for AAUP board membership
7. Rapid response team strategy approach to fight fires as they arise this year (Eva will bring to October meeting)
8. Coax Duane back to meetings