



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

What does the AAUP really *do*?

Academic Freedom and Due Process: The Association receives more than a thousand inquiries a year from faculty members who believe their academic rights have been violated. Staff members work with faculty, administrations, and attorneys to gain resolutions.

The AAUP's legal staff and advisers routinely submit friend-of-the-court briefs to appellate courts defending academic freedom and faculty rights. Thanks to these efforts, AAUP standards are often featured in decisions affecting faculty.

Tenure: Attacks on tenure occupied a prominent place in attempts to redefine higher education beginning in the 1990s. Tenure is viewed as an impediment to change by those who seek a managerial revolution featuring flexible hiring, top-down decision making, and "virtual campuses." AAUP staff and leaders have worked hard to persuade college and university administrations to adopt policies that support tenure and the academic freedom it protects.

Post-Tenure Review: Post-tenure review should be geared toward faculty development and must be designed and carried out by faculty. Post-tenure review must not be a reevaluation of tenure, nor should it be used to shift the burden of proof from an institution's administration (to show cause for dismissal) to the individual faculty member (to justify retention). Post-tenure review must be conducted according to standards that protect academic freedom and the quality of education.

AAUP Lobbying: AAUP lobbying in Congress and in state legislatures makes a critical difference, because legislative bodies are where budgets and policies are decided. The AAUP's government relations department maintains a regularly updated page on the Association's website to keep members informed about congressional and governmental actions affecting higher education. The website also provides ways to contact members of Congress and includes background information on a range of topics.

Work and Family: One of the AAUP's strengths is in its ability to respond to professional issues that reach across disciplinary concerns. The balance between academic work and family responsibilities is such a concern. In 2001 the AAUP adopted as policy the *Statement of Principles on Family Responsibilities and Academic Work*. It recommends that colleges and universities provide leaves for childbirth, adoption, and the care of dependent family members, and that they allow faculty members short periods of "active service with modified duties" when they need time to discharge family responsibilities. In addition, the Association encourages institutions to modify tenure policies to permit "stopping of the tenure clock" for up to one year for the birth or adoption of a child.

Contingent Faculty: Colleges and universities are adding more professors to handle increased enrollments, but many – if not most – of these new faculty members will not be eligible for tenure.

If present trends continue, our profession is heading for troubled times. How can we offer quality education when increasing numbers of professors have no say about the curriculum or university governance? Despite the official rhetoric, these trends say loudly and clearly that the work we do is not valued, and course content is not important, and that students are not a priority.

The AAUP is lobbying actively on the state and national levels, but most important, we are organizing both full-and part-time faculty to face this powerful threat. Our success depends on people like you joining the AAUP. That's all the AAUP really is: faculty like us defending professional standards and quality education. We are the Association.

Shared Governance: The corporate model of management embraced by many boards and administrators has led to a top-down management style and the erosion of shared governance. The corporate model as applied to higher education is based on two assumptions: that university presidents are no different from the CEOs of any other large and complex organization and that the management of a college or university is strictly analogous to that of a profit-maximizing business corporation. Both assumptions are false. At its core, a university is not a hierarchical bureaucracy in which those at the top can claim authority based on superior training and expertise. It is, instead, a community in which faculty and administrators are peers who are responsible for different functions within the academy.

The faculty has the primary responsibility for such areas as curriculum, methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life that relate to the educational process. Avenues for faculty participation in the government of the institution should be established at each level at which faculty responsibility is present (the department, school and college committees, faculty assemblies, and senates).

Faculty Salaries and Compensation: Assurance of stable and adequately compensated appointments is integral to maintaining a competent, professional faculty. The AAUP's annual salary survey is a "must read" for faculty, administrators, and legislators. It reports on salaries and benefits by institution, rank, and gender. The AAUP's data influence both institutional and legislative budgets.

Faculty members use the AAUP salary data to negotiate salaries and benefits with administrators, achieve parity with comparable institutions, and remedy salary or compensation inequities.