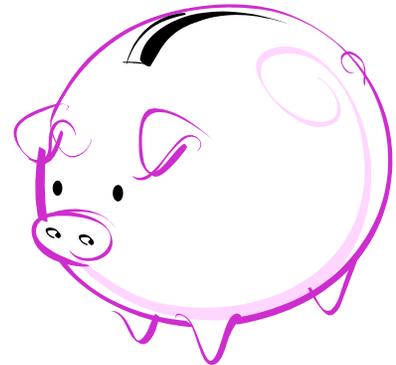


Union News

Connecticut State University
American Association of University Professors

How will the Economy Affect Us? Page 3



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Dates to Remember

- 12/18:** Dean submits recommendations for promotion (all) and penultimate year tenure candidates (Aug. hires)
- 12/11:** Day classes End
- 12/12:** Reading Day (No Day or Evening Classes)
- 12/13-12/19:** Final Exams
- 12/20:** Semester Ends
- 12/31:** Provost takes required action and informs 2nd year or later renewal candidates (Jan. hires); Board awards tenure for penultimate year tenure candidates (Jan. hires)

Union News

CSU-AAUP
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Member Benefits

Following is a brief description of some of the member benefits offered by CSU-AAUP. To check your membership status, please contact your local AAUP office.

Tires

Town Fair Tire offers a 10% discount off any tire or wheel purchase at all 70 locations in CT, MA, RI, and NH. You will also receive free lifetime flat repair, mounting, and lifetime rotation. In addition, you will receive free front wheel alignment with any tire purchase, free installation mounting with every tire purchase, and free snow tire changeover. To obtain your 10% discount coupon, please contact your AAUP office.

Academe

As a CSU-AAUP member, you will receive *Academe*, the bimonthly magazine that analyzes higher education issues from faculty members' perspectives. The magazine begins with an incisive round-up of news affecting professors. Feature articles examine tenure, affirmative action, part-time faculty appointments, distance education, intellectual property, and other timely academic issues. Investigative reports on violations of academic freedom and tenure are regular components. Columns cover legal trends, legislative developments, and new scholarly books.

Adjunct Advocate

The *Adjunct Advocate* is a bimonthly magazine that features articles pertaining to part-time faculty. To read the magazine online at www.adjunctnation.com, please contact your local AAUP office for the username and password.

How Will the Economy Affect Us?

The Current Fiscal Situation & Future Outlook

For the current fiscal year, the state is projected to have a deficit of \$300 million, even after the Governor's rescissions and the cuts made during the special session on November 24. Governor Rell must submit a deficit reduction plan by the end of the year but most, if not all, of those cuts will likely have to be implemented by the General Assembly. The Governor is only able to cut five percent in any one line item without General Assembly approval, and she has already reached that limit for many state agencies, including higher education.

The General Assembly goes into session on January 7 and may or may not adopt budget reductions for the current fiscal year within the first months of the session. If they do not adopt budget reductions, the funds will automatically be transferred from the "rainy day fund" at the end of the fiscal year July 1, 2009. The rainy day fund currently contains about \$1.6 billion.

Both the Office of Policy Management (OPM) and the Office of Fiscal Affairs (OFA) have estimated that there will be a budget deficit for the new biennium of over \$6 billion. There will be draconian cuts if Governor Rell presents a budget with no revenue enhancements, which she continues to assert is her goal.

CSU-AAUP and the State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC)

Leaders of the State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC), including leaders from CSU-AAUP, were invited by Governor Rell to hear a presentation about Connecticut's economy on November 6. Don Klepper-Smith and Nick Perna, outside economists who serve on the Governor's Economic Advisory Council, as well as Bob Genuario, her Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, presented a briefing about the administration's view of the economy and its potential impact on Connecticut's budget. There was no discussion about collective bargaining, wages, benefits, or early retirement.

On November 12, the Governor held a press conference to announce projected budget deficits of \$2.6 billion in 2010 and \$3.3 billion in 2011. **The Governor's recent Deficit Mitigation Plan included a proposal to use \$14.5 million in savings set aside for future retirees' health costs, which would require**

negotiations with SEBAC. The organization responded to her request, calling for a working partnership and discussions on the possible consequences of such a move.

Further, on November 24, SEBAC leaders met with members of Connecticut's Congressional delegation to begin creating a partnership between workers, elected officials at all levels, and the private sector to help working families weather the economic storm. The organization is urging Governor Rell to seize the moment and engage with national leaders to tackle the growing economic crisis.

On December 8, Governor Rell announced at a Middlesex Chamber of Commerce meeting that she would be meeting with SEBAC leaders that week, but SEBAC has not been contacted and no meeting has been scheduled as of the printing of this newsletter.

There has been no official discussion of an Early Retirement Incentive Program (ERIP). SEBAC is opposed to any such proposal because of the adverse affect it would have on the state pension fund's unfunded liability; Connecticut has one of the worst funded pension plans in the country (52%). In addition, the estimated cost savings from previous ERIPs have not shown to be substantial in the long run.

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Resources and updates on the state's economic crisis will be posted on our website in the Political Action section. CSU-AAUP will send electronic updates as needed during the winter break.

Collective Bargaining Congress Semi-Annual Meeting

The purpose of the Collective Bargaining Congress (CBC) is to develop and disseminate information and resources in support of the collective bargaining activities of local AAUP chapters, and to engage in other activities in support of higher education collective bargaining. The CBC meets twice a year, in June and in December.

CSU-AAUP sent fourteen representatives to the December 2008 CBC meeting, which took place in Washington D.C. from December 5-7. The opening dinner meeting featured Kathy Krieger as keynote speaker, a labor lawyer, teacher, and activist who delivered a talk entitled, "Labor Advocacy as 'Racketeering': The Continuing Legal Campaign against Union Speech and Activism." Ms. Krieger's speech discussed lawsuits based on the 1970 Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) used to obstruct union organizing campaigns by deliberately confusing free speech and open information-sharing with criminal activity.

At the business meeting, an update on the restructuring of National AAUP was provided. Currently, the organization is working with a former IRS employee to create a restructuring proposal for the IRS. The organization still anticipates that the restructuring plan will not be implemented until January 2010. Also discussed was a proposed change in election rules for National AAUP Council, which has the potential to benefit collective bargaining (CB) chapters. CB chapters are currently underrepresented on the Council; seventy percent of AAUP members belong to a CB chapter but only fifty-five percent of Council members are from CB chapters. The proposed change would increase the number of at-large positions on the Council from three to nine and decrease the number of representatives from each district from three to two. It was argued that allowing for more at-large positions provides the possibility for more CB representation as some districts have few or no CB chapters.

CBC leadership also made several positive announcements:

- National AAUP membership has grown from 44,000 to 47,000.

- A new Chief Financial Officer was hired and there has been a lot of progress in fixing the accounting problems that occurred over the last several years.
- The National AAUP office is moving, which will save the organization hundreds of thousands of dollars and provide a nicer facility and one that is more conducive to staff cohesiveness since all the offices will be on one floor.
- National AAUP has formed a subcommittee on converting contingent faculty positions to the tenure track, which will make recommendations on the "nuts and bolts" of conversion. The subcommittee is currently surveying strategies for stabilizing the contingent workforce and evaluating those strategies.
- The CBC has created a contract database, an online searchable collection of all its chapters' collective bargaining agreements. It is a password-protected system that is regularly updated by National AAUP staff.

Save the Date
**CSU-AAUP/
 SUOAF-AFSCME**
Lobby Day
Wednesday, March 18
Breakfast & Meetings with
Legislators at the
State Capitol

Termination of Domestic Partner Benefits

Same sex domestic partners and eligible dependent children of the domestic partner are currently eligible for coverage under the State's pension and health benefit plan. This benefit was awarded to couples by an arbitrator, however the arbitrator's award terminates same-sex partners' eligibility for domestic partner benefits as of the date same sex couples become eligible to marry in Connecticut. The award also holds that domestic partners and eligible dependent children of the domestic partner on the State's pension and health benefit plan will have these benefits cease one year after same sex marriages are allowed by the State of Connecticut.

As of November 12, 2008, same sex partners have gained the right to obtain marriage licenses in Connecticut. Accordingly, under the terms of the arbitrator's award, and effective November 13, 2008, the State will no longer recognize "new" domestic partnerships for benefit purposes. For those individuals currently in a domestic partnership relationship, the health (including medical, prescription and dental) and pension benefits (including pre-retirement benefits and spousal waivers) currently provided to partners and the eligible dependents of the domestic partner will end effective November 30, 2009 unless the partners marry or enter into a civil union prior to this date. For partners who do not marry or enter into a civil union, enrolled domestic partners and their dependent children will be allowed to continue their benefits through COBRA after November 30, 2009.

For current employees with a domestic partner enrolled in health insurance who marry or enter into a civil union by November 13, 2009, the employee or retiree will be given thirty days from that date to obtain medical and dental coverage for his or spouse or civil union partner and eligible dependent children. If they fail to complete this within the thirty day period, the employee or retiree will have to wait until the annual open enrollment period, which normally takes place in June.

With regard to retirement and pension benefits, for current employees with a domestic partner who marry or enter into a civil union by November 13, 2009, the employee should complete a form to entitle the civil

union partner or spouse to pre-retirement death benefits (where applicable) and survivorship protections. For current domestic partners who do not marry or enter into a civil union by November 13, 2009, the domestic partner can remain the employee's beneficiary for retirement purposes but the domestic partner will not be treated by the Division as a spouse for purposes of pension benefits at the time of the employee's retirement.

If you have questions, please contact the Human Resources office.

Council Notes

At its November 20 meeting, the CSU-AAUP Council:

- Had a lengthy discussion regarding the fiscal crisis in the State of Connecticut and how it may affect state employees
- Approved funding in support of the CSUS 25th Anniversary reception
- Authorized the purchase of two tickets to the Connecticut Citizen Action Group's event honoring State Representative Chris Donovan
- Heard a report from ECSU-AAUP that they successfully lobbied for AAUP presence on the University's Homepage
- Discussed purchasing a server of its own rather than using the university's server
- Heard a report from SCSU-AAUP that its HR office is making all potential new employees sign what appears to be a new Background Investigation Authorization form. CSU-AAUP agreed to look into the matter further.

How Will the Economy Affect Us?

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CSU-AAUP & CSUS

All three systems of public higher education in Connecticut are delaying the announcement of tuition increases until they have a clearer picture of their budgets. Typically, the increases are presented to the Board of Governors for Higher Education this month, but all the systems are expecting to have to raise tuition to offset cuts.

CSU-AAUP President David Walsh has met with Chancellor Carter several times over the last month. Chancellor Carter does not expect to have to declare "financial exigency" which is good for our members. Detailed procedures for dealing with financial exigency are found in Contract Article 17. Chancellor Carter has also expressed in these meetings that he wants to work collectively with the unions, both CSU-AAUP and SUOAF-ASFCME, to get through this fiscal crisis without any substantial cuts in any one area. Further, the Chancellor stated that his goal is to have no layoffs.

President Walsh has expressed that it is crucial that the CSU-AAUP membership stay united during the fiscal crisis. Individual administrators on each campus may approach faculty with sacrifices or cost saving measures and these should all be reported to your local AAUP office. It is critical that AAUP keep track of all requests for concessions because further concessions may be requested by the Chancellor

and/or Governor and these smaller requests may be important bargaining tools.

As for the CSUS hiring freeze, President Walsh has been asked many times recently **how search committees should operate in this economic environment.** His advice is that search committees should complete their ongoing searches. However, there is no guarantee that the person the committee recommends will be hired. The System Office has to present evidence to the Governor's office of the need for each and every position right now. Further, the individual may be offered a special appointment rather than a position on the tenure-track.

CSU-AAUP will continue to update its members on any developments over the winter break through e-mail. Also, please note that there is a new section on our website, www.ccsu.edu/aaup/csu, where we will post any new information we receive relative to the budget crisis. Once we return for the spring semester, President Walsh will hold regular meetings on each campus with the membership, in order to keep you as informed as possible.

CSU-AAUP

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