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AAUP Chapter, Illinois Wesleyan University

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Illinois Wesleyan Chapter of the AAUP

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NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 1

Chapter Executive Committee:
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<http://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/iwuaaup/>

On Fixed-Dollar Raises

By Miles Bair

The current faculty handbook states that annual raises should combine fixed dollar amounts with percentage raises. The provost should seek CUPP's advice annually on how much of the salary pool increase should go towards fixed dollar amount raises and how much should go towards percentage raises. I asked CUPP to consider recommending that the dollar amount of raises for the next academic year be identical for all University employees. I was struck by the comment from the December 3rd Strategic Planning Committee minutes. Kathy Lewton expressed the sincere appreciation she has felt throughout the past few years that there was such a spirit of shared sacrifice among Wesleyan employees in dealing with the University's financial difficulties. Speaking for just one employee, I do not recall having any choices in this matter. I do not agree that sacrifice here has been shared (or anything close to shared) or that there exists a spirit of shared sacrifice among the employees. Frankly, it is a bit tough watching people take an economic hit when new buildings and ventures are being funded all around us. Basing raises on a percent of existing salaries is not my idea of reasonably equitable sacrifice. I recognize that salaries at the University are not based on individual needs. In a sustained period of austerity, the criteria for raises should change and "need" should become a criterion--perhaps the only criterion. Additionally, in the interest of actual shared sacrifice, it would not be unreasonable to ask that raises be discontinued for those making above a certain dollar amount.

The Dougan Award

By Alison Sainsbury

The Dougan Award originated with and the winner is chosen by members of the campus chapter of the American Association of University Professors. In introducing me as this year's recipient, AAUP President Prof Jim Matthews explained that I had been chosen because I have always been willing to ask questions, even unsettling questions. "Asking direct questions and holding administrators accountable," Prof Matthews went on to say, "may be the most important way faculty can participate in faculty governance." I wouldn't go so far as to say it's the most important thing we can do, but it's surely one important thing we must do. It's an honor to be named, but it's a more of an honor to have spent more than twenty years as part of this engaged faculty so committed to the principles of faculty governance.

Health Insurance Cost and Annual Raises 2013

Annual health insurance premium increase¹:

Single:	\$48
One dependent:	\$384
Two or more dependents:	\$420

Annual percentage raise²: 1.25%

Income Point at which premium increase equals entire annual raise³:

One dependent:	\$30,720
Two or more dependents:	\$33,600

Calculated fixed-dollar raise instead of percentage raise⁴: \$700

Sources: ¹2013 HCAC letter. ²President's Enrollment and Budget Update. ³Calculated from 1 and 2. ⁴Based on data provided by VP for Business and Finance.

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<http://www.aaup.org>

I was honored beyond words by being given the Dougan award. I am, however, keenly aware that although my name might go onto to that plaque with Prof. Mike Young's, I will always occupy a lesser position in relation to him as a faculty advocate and voice of reason and clarity. I'm honored to be in his company.

One of the delights of my years here is his singling me out in the lunch line, after I spoke at a faculty meeting in my first year here, to tell me he appreciated how I spoke out. But it's been his example, year after year, that has taught me and modeled for us all the definition of "a faculty" and how to work for, and, when necessary, fight in, its interest.

Celebrate the Freedom to Read!

By Meg Miner

This fall The Ames Library is celebrating Banned Book Week with events before, during and after September 23-28. These events offer an opportunity to bring attention to a precious right: our freedom to read and grapple with all types of ideas without fear of institutional restrictions. So far, we have planned

1) A photo gallery of IWU community members holding a challenged book. We invite you to have your picture taken with your favorite Banned Book and provide a brief statement on why the book is important to you. We will frame the photo and your quote and display it on our Wall of Supporters on the library's entry level.

To schedule a time for your photo, please contact Help@Ames (556-3900) indicating your interest in participating in this event. A link to challenged books for you to browse through is at <http://www.goodreads.com/list/tag/banned>. Sue Anderson also has a catalog of banned books that includes a history of the actions taken against these ideas; contact her at ssstroyan@iwu.edu or call x3358 to browse through it.

2) A campus visit by Barbara Jones, the Executive Director of the Office of Intellectual Freedom, American Library Association and a consultant on the national AAUP's Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure (<http://www.oif.ala.org/oif/?p=755>), on October 2nd, 4pm will be held in Evelyn Chapel to discuss challenged material that has religious overtones. Also on this date, students will be performing two Theatrical scenes from *Harry Potter* and *To Kill a Mocking Bird*.

3) A display in The Ames Library on the importance of academic freedom. Contact Meg Miner (mminer@iwu.edu or x1538) if you are interested in helping with this.

Your participation in Banned Book Week emphasizes our sense of shared responsibility for these issues and helps us highlight the value of free and open access to information. Even though some might consider them unorthodox or unpopular, freely expressed ideas and access to the range of opinions surrounding them are vital elements that enrich the lives of global citizens.

Not Enough: How to Improve the Role of the Faculty in Budgetary and Salary Matters at Illinois Wesleyan University

by Joerg Tiede

One of the findings of the shared governance survey conducted by the AAUP chapter in 2010 was that in academic matters, such as curriculum or promotion and tenure, the faculty's role at Illinois Wesleyan University is very strong. It is quite apparent that President Wilson is very committed to this aspect of shared governance, a commitment that I applaud. However, the role that is allotted to the faculty in budgetary and salary matters at Illinois Wesleyan University was

identified in the same survey as a serious concern and has since only become more perfunctory.

Meaningful participation of the faculty in budgetary and salary matters requires the opportunity for the faculty to present a collective position. When the president halved the university's TIAA-CREF contributions for all employees in 2009, the faculty took the opportunity to formulate such a collective response. At the November 2, 2009 faculty meeting, CUPP presented a resolution that read:

The faculty urges the administration in conjunction with the Board of Trustees to prepare and communicate in writing a plan for restoring the TIAA-CREF contribution benefit to 10%. If the administration believes that such a plan cannot consist of a timetable, it should contain specific conditions such as enrollment targets, endowment growth, or annual fund contributions, that would lead to the return of the TIAA-CREF contributions to 10% over a specified period of time.

This resolution passed with an overwhelming majority, in spite of the fact that President Wilson repeatedly requested at the faculty meeting that the resolution not be adopted.

On the other hand, at the last faculty meeting of the 2012-13 Academic Year, the president presented a range of possible effects that a smaller-than-expected entering class might have on the budget and asked faculty to e-mail him their thoughts. It should be added that, in spite of the fact that the size of the entering class wasn't smaller than expected, the increase in our TIAA-CREF contribution was still lower than initially budgeted.

The difference between these two events and the opportunity of the faculty to respond is striking: asking the faculty to e-mail their views on a matter individually, in particular at the last meeting of the year, merely appears to take the views expressed by members of the campus community into consideration. In fact, it ensures that the president is not held responsible in any way, since each e-mail sent to him is simply the opinion of an individual. In short, we have the artificial appearance of shared governance without the practice of shared governance.

A vote by the faculty on matters such as budgets or salaries is of course never binding on the president: actions taken at a faculty meeting only possess moral authority. However, there is a political cost associated with disregarding a faculty action, because the moral authority of the faculty is tied to its well-established expertise and legitimate interest. Replacing a collective vote by individual e-mail messages to the president eliminates the political cost of overturning a faculty recommendation – there isn't a faculty recommendation to overturn – while creating the appearance of a transparent and legitimate process.

While budgetary and salary matters are not academic in nature, the faculty has a legitimate interest in those matters. That interest is still based on the expertise of the faculty in academic matters: budgetary decisions determine how much of the total budget is allocated to the core academic mission of the university and how the academic budget itself is further subdivided. Similarly, the legitimate interest of the faculty in salary matters is based on the impact of the faculty's working conditions on the core academic mission. Therefore, the AAUP has called for "meaningful participation" of the faculty in budgetary and salary decisions.

Clearly, meaningful participation in budgetary and salary matters is not taking place in faculty meetings. The resolution on TIAA-CREF was a rather singular event. Instead, faculty participation in this area is conducted through faculty membership on the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee (SPBC). However, SPBC suffers from many of the same shortcomings as the role of the faculty in general. In particular, I would identify the following four shortcomings:

1. Members of SPBC don't function as representatives of the faculty: they don't report to or seek out feedback from constituents. In fact, given the "at-large" representation on SPBC, it is difficult to conceive of faculty members on SPBC as having constituents. Instead, members of SPBC simply function as individuals who offer their best judgment to the questions at hand.

This constitutes the same problem as e-mailing one's thoughts to the president: the positions presented in SPBC are not a collective response.

2. No votes are ever taken on SPBC. Instead, the committee functions as a sounding board or a forum for discussion only. In fact, when the CUPP resolution noted above was presented to SPBC, the response was "SPBC is not a committee that votes".

Again, the absence of a vote allows the president to interpret a range of comments rather than consider the expressed collective view of the committee.

3. The committee does not report formally at faculty meetings, nor does it present central recommendations to the faculty for approval. Instead, the president gives reports on the discussions in SPBC as part of his report to the faculty.

This is ultimately the most serious problem of SPBC: its only function is to give advice to the president, but it is in no way responsible to the "represented" constituents. Having someone other than the president chair the committee and report at faculty meetings would go some way towards changing the role of SPBC. Finally, I would add the following feature of SPBC as one of its shortcomings:

4. The scope of issues discussed on SPBC is severely limited: broad questions about the overall allocation of the budget are never discussed on SPBC. Instead, minute, discrete choices are presented to the committee for discussion.

Addressing these issues would certainly improve the role of the faculty in budgetary and salary matters at IWU and move us closer to governance standards promulgated by the AAUP.