

AAUP- QU

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE #3 SPRING 2022

AAUP-QU

Executive Committee
(AY 2021-2022)

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FACULTY ADVOCACY

The primary role of the AAUP chapter at QU is to advocate for and on behalf of all faculty at Quinnipiac. To that end, you may use **THIS LINK** at any time to share comments, concerns, or issues you would like raised or addressed by the AAUP, or for the AAUP to bring forward to the Senate or other governance bodies. All responses are anonymous unless you choose to disclose your identity.

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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

Introduction to AAUP-QU

AAUP-QU is a chartered advocacy chapter of the American Association of University Professors. We formed over the course of Spring and Summer 2020 out of concern with the many unilateral decisions made by Quinnipiac in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These decisions, which included preemptive layoffs, contract changes, and a mandatory workload increase throughout 2020-2021, not only damaged faculty but disserved our students. Our chapter shares a core understanding that when faculty are thriving, students receive a better education. Membership is open to all full- and part-time faculty, from all units on campus.

The AAUP chapter at Quinnipiac is one of the newest chapters in the state of Connecticut. Other universities and colleges in the state with chapters are: Connecticut College, Connecticut State Universities (all campuses), Fairfield University, Trinity College, University of Connecticut (all campuses), UConn Health Center, University of Hartford, University of New Haven, and Wesleyan University. Sixty-three percent of our peer and aspirant institutions have an AAUP chapter (20 out of 32 institutions).

Meeting Schedule for Spring 2022

Meetings in **BOLD** will be open to any QU faculty member interested in learning more about the work of the AAUP.

- Thurs, Feb 3, 1-2pm
- **WED, FEB 16, 9-10am**
- Thurs, March 3, 1-2pm
- Wed, March 23, 9-10am
- **FRI, MARCH 25, 3-5pm:** Gather at Kim O'Neill's backyard fire pit (if COVID and weather permit)
- **THURS, APRIL 7, 1-2pm**
- Wed, April 20, 9-10am
- Thurs, May 5, 1-2pm

For faculty members who would like to join the open meetings and need the Zoom link, please send an email to quinnipiacaaup@gmail.com for access.

This newsletter was supported with a grant from the CSC-AAUP.

COVID Responsiveness

This semester we continue to advocate for the safety and health of faculty, particularly in light of spiking Delta and Omicron variants (see [AAUP's Principles and Standards for pandemic response](#) and [AAUP COVID FAQs](#)). We support the university's vaccine and mask mandates. We ask the university to approve reasonable accommodations for faculty, including opportunities for remote teaching. We urge the university to avoid lay-offs, which often leave vulnerable community members without employer-sponsored health insurance.

Budget Transparency

We believe that an institution like QU needs to be more transparent regarding its priorities and budget decisions. We applaud the steps the Provost's office has taken in recent months to be more transparent. However, at the school and college level, we often hear that the budgets are tight, programs need to work with less, faculty lines are scarce, and cuts are inevitable. But how are funds being allocated to the schools in the first place? What do budget priorities look like on the administrative side? We encourage our colleagues to contact the members of the Faculty Senate's Finance and Future Plans committee and inquire about ways to make budgetary decision-making more transparent. The more we know, the better decisions we can make for our students and our academic community as a whole. To learn more about the AAUP's longstanding position on this issue, see [The Role of the Faculty in Budgetary and Salary Matters](#). We understand and recognize that final decisions about the budget are made by the administration. In our view, the role of the faculty is to articulate how student

learning conditions should always be the priority in any University budget.

Strategic Program Reviews

In Fall 2021 the university administration announced a campus-wide strategic program review focused on "right-sizing" university departments and programs. We are concerned about both the hasty process and the potential outcomes of these reviews. Our AAUP chapter is a forum in which faculty can discuss the review process and strategize about how to advocate for faculty voice and expertise in the metrics used to evaluate academic programs, as well as their intellectual merit and worth for 21st century lifelong learning, in line with the values articulated in the University's Strategic Plan. While Burning Glass data are one of many measures that can be used to understand the value of a given academic program, they are hardly the only data available to understand the quality of what our faculty offer our students. We support efforts to incorporate more holistic, qualitative, and alternative quantitative measures and data to understand the value of each and every program we offer at Quinnipiac, and the potential they hold for our students' needs in the 21st century.

Terms of Employment

We recognize that Quinnipiac faced an uncertain financial landscape in March 2020. We appreciate that many of the steps that the administration took at that time – including layoffs, salary freezes, teaching overloads, contract changes, and other cuts to research and teaching support – were taken to avoid potentially worse outcomes for faculty and for the institution. Thankfully, as of SP/22, most faculty mem-

bers have been, or are in the process of being, returned to their pre-pandemic teaching loads. However, the AAUP is monitoring a number of disparities between faculty members' terms of appointment and their current positions and compensation. Some current issues related to terms of employment include:

- Some program directors no longer receive compensation and/or course releases for director appointments.
- Many 12-month appointments converted to 9.5 months have not been restored.
- Faculty in some units are currently overseeing credit-based independent studies with no compensation.
- An alarming number of teaching and clinical faculty report that their deans are currently proposing or implementing permanent increases to their teaching loads.

These changes are in direct opposition to the guidance of our faculty handbook, which states that a faculty member's "conditions of appointment...shall remain unchanged during the term of an individual's continuous employment at the University" (*Faculty Handbook, May 2021, pp. 6, 14, 21*). We encourage our colleagues who are being subjected to such changes to reach out to the Senate Policies and Compensation and Benefits committees to clarify the university's obligation to adhere to Faculty Handbook policies regarding terms of employment. The Senate ad hoc Workload Committee is also interested in workload increases and disparities. And of course, you can also reach out to us for support.

On a related note, this [recent article from the Chronicle of Higher Education](#) illustrates the importance of the faculty handbook as a powerful tool in the ongoing struggle for shared governance.

Understanding and Working with the Faculty Senate

The main system of faculty governance at the University is the Faculty Senate. The Senate includes 25 voting members, who represent roughly 6% of the full-time faculty at Quinnipiac University. All matters pertaining to the Faculty Handbook and faculty working conditions are deliberated and voted on by the Senate. Knowing who your senators are and how the Senate works can help augment your voice in university matters. You can find your college/school representatives in this document, [2021-2022 Senators and Committee Representatives](#). You may find the constitution and bylaws of the Senate here: [Senate Constitution and Bylaws](#).

Hillary Haldane, Vice-President of our AAUP chapter, also serves as an at-large senator and is available for any questions or concerns chapter members have that are related to the business of the Senate (hillaryjhaldane@gmail.com). One of the main functions of the AAUP is to ensure faculty governance is protected and enacted. Therefore, we value and support the work of our Senate as the body responsible for promoting faculty decision-making in the running of the institution.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the AAUP?

The [American Association of University Professors](#) is a 100-year-old professional organization founded to articulate and defend the principles of [tenure](#), [academic freedom](#), and [shared governance](#). The national AAUP advocates for faculty in many ways: by engaging with the media and the political process; by preparing and disseminating [reports](#) on major issues facing faculty; by investigating, warning, and sometimes censuring administrations that have breached academic standards; and by sharing resources, national standards, and best practices with chapters across the nation.

What is an advocacy chapter of the AAUP?

An advocacy chapter is different from organizations like unions, academic councils, or disciplinary associations. Our aim is to strengthen the voice of faculty in service of Quinnipiac's educational purpose.

This all sounds good, but we already have the Faculty Senate! What's different about the AAUP, and is it in conflict with the Senate?

The Faculty Senate and AAUP-QU have complementary functions: governance and advocacy. The Senate is an integral part of Quinnipiac as an institution; we are very grateful to our Senate for their ongoing hard work! By contrast, an AAUP chapter is an independent association of faculty; our concern is not to run Quinnipiac, but to hold it to the principles and standards of our profession.

I don't want to participate in something that has an adversarial, "us vs. them" attitude. I believe that the administration is doing the best they can in the face of difficult problems.

So do we! Higher education faces daunting challenges. We view administration, faculty, and staff as playing different and overlapping roles on campus. We all want our institution and our students to thrive, but naturally we sometimes have different information, incentives, or priorities. We believe that faculty safeguard the core educational purpose of Quinnipiac. Whether through building bridges or speaking our truth, we are committed to holding Quinnipiac to that purpose, and advocating for faculty so that we can serve it.

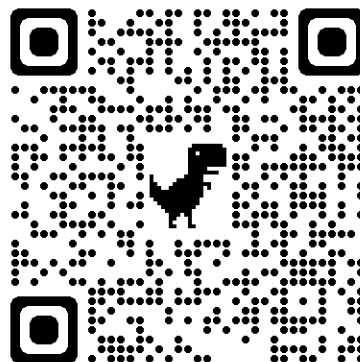
Can an AAUP chapter really make a difference?

We already have! Whether by providing a less hierarchical, more grassroots space for faculty to come together and share concerns in community; or providing AAUP resources to senators for their work; or coordinating email campaigns, our chapter is already working to strengthen the faculty voice at Quinnipiac. We have more work to do – so [join us!](#)

Still not convinced?

This article describes how an AAUP advocacy chapter can impact a campus: [Transform Your Campus](#).

This newsletter was written and prepared by Ken Cormier, Julia Giblin, Hillary Haldane, Ruth Kaplan, and Kimberly O'Neill.



Use the QR code to connect to the electronic version of this newsletter for access to the linked information.