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North Central State Faculty Association A Chapter of the AAUP

<http://ncscaaup.org/>

*Officers of the North
Central State Faculty
Association ~
A Chapter of
the AAUP:*

*Beth Franz
President*

*Jeff Taylor
Vice-President*

*Michelle Slattery
Treasurer*

*Pat Herb
Secretary*

*The NCSFA-AAUP's
Labor-Management
Team Members and
Building Reps:*

*Jean Jones
Contract Admin.*

*Brad Hays
Fallerius Bldg.*

*Jeff Taylor
Health Sciences*

*Lynn Damberger
Kehoe Center*

*Pat Herb
Bromfield &
Kee Hall*

*Beth Franz
NCSFA President*

*Contact us with your
questions, and we
will try to find
answers!*

As we prepare to kick-off another academic year, those of us on the NCSFA Exec. Team have a lot to share with you. And as always, it is a challenge to figure out how to “package” the mix of good news and bad news, the mix of optimism that we continue to hold onto – that we can, collectively, make this a better workplace for all, and one that really serves students as well as we believe this institution can and must – as well as the sobering reality that the administrative team with which we work continues to be only as effective as its most ineffective members.

Last fall we kicked off our first full academic year of living with a CBA, as our first Collective Bargaining Agreement was only ratified in Dec. 2008. Yet as we kick off this academic year, we are already preparing, once again, to go back to the negotiating table, for our current contract expires as we wrap up Spring Quarter 2011.

That first contract was an effort to “codify” those policies and practices that had, at one time, been published in something called the Academic Manual. Over the years, however, under the previous administration, changes were made to the policies and procedures that affect faculty members’ lives, changes that had NOT been through any kind of faculty review process. Hence, the “step system” that most of us were hired under, for example, whereby each year of service to the institution was rewarded by a longevity increase to faculty members’ salaries – separate from and in addition to any COLA increases – simply ... disappeared! Other policies and procedures changed too ... without faculty input. So our first contract was an attempt to capture (in the form of a contract with the administration) as much as we could from the historic Faculty Handbooks.

We hope that our second contract will “build” on what we were able to get into that first contract. In this issue, you will hear from our Chief Negotiator about the timeline that will govern negotiations, and you will hear some of what we feel we have been able to gain for faculty, to date, as well as what we believe to be some of the challenges that still lie before us.

There are several things YOU can do to help insure that our second contract is as good as it can be. You will hear about those things that YOU can do – whether or not you are a dues-paying member at this point.

We ask that you take time to read this issue and come to our lunch meeting (of ALL full-time faculty) at Fall Convocation, Sept. 16th, 11:30 to 1:00, prepared to ask questions and provide your input to this important process.

1. **First of all, as we prepare to kick off this academic year, we feel it is important to review and recommit to the mission statement and goals we committed ourselves to almost four years ago, when we decided to organize ourselves into the North Central State Faculty Association (now affiliated with AAUP).**

Mission Statement:

We, the North Central State Faculty Association, have organized in order to support the college's values, vision, and mission statement. We offer a strong, independent, unifying voice in an effort to create an environment of mutual respect in which faculty expertise and knowledge are valued.

Goals:

- To offer **a strong and independent collective faculty voice**, one that will be heard.
- To put **academic concerns back at the center of any dialogue that concerns the direction of the college.**
- To transform what has become an adversarial relationship between faculty and the administration into **a collaborative relationship built on mutual respect.**
- To address inequalities in the way the college develops and implements policies and procedures so that all faculty can be **equal partners in support of the college's mission.**
- To demand **clarity and accountability from the administration** whenever policies and practices are being developed, implemented, and enforced.
- To ensure that **faculty approval** is sought whenever faculty positions are being created and filled.
- To ensure that **faculty input** is sought whenever management positions are being created and filled, particularly when the position is that of Chief Academic Officer at the institution.

**Authored by the North Central State Faculty Association Organizing Committee
(November 2006)**

2. **Second, we think it is important to recognize that ALL faculty have enjoyed the benefits of the gains that have been made as a result of the important decision we made to formally organize and form a collective bargaining unit, one that is now protected by a CBA:**
- The “listening tour” that the Academic VP went on in the Winter Quarter was a direct result of faculty voicing their concerns about decisions that affected academic programs and students’ lives being made by administrators who themselves were not knowledgeable about the programs for which they had nevertheless been made responsible. *(As this newsletter goes to print, the decisions being made by the administration as a direct result of that listening tour are still being discussed with the Faculty Caucus and negotiated with the NCSFA.)* The fact that **faculty input is being sought as the administration is making decisions concerning the academic restructuring currently underway** is, in itself, a HUGE improvement from how business was done before we organized.
 - **DMT faculty are satisfied with their involvement in the creation of the new MAC lab.** (Compared to similar undertakings in the past, when DMT faculty had little to no input into the creation of such a learning environment, this summer’s involvement has been most encouraging.)
 - Since we organized, not a faculty chair, dean, or vice president has been hired without **faculty input.**
 - The committee responsible for **revising the faculty evaluation process into a more meaningful process** than it has sometimes been in the past, is chaired by a faculty member, and faculty have had ample input into the new process that is slated to be piloted this (2010-2011) academic year.
 - **The Faculty Caucus’s voice has been significantly strengthened** as a result of the CBA.
 - The **equity adjustments made to faculty salaries in the 2008-2009 academic year**, which we see as only a start on the part of the administration’s commitment to address long-standing salary inequities, would not have been granted had we not been at the negotiating table from June 2008 through December 2008.
 - The **guaranteed 3% salary increases for all full-time faculty** in 2008-2009, 2009-2010, and 2010-2011, actually benefitted more than just the CB unit we were negotiating on behalf of, as ALL college employees saw similar salary increases for the past three years.
 - **Nine-month faculty who are called on to work for the college in their off-quarter are now compensated**, something that NEVER occurred before we organized.
 - **Faculty are being compensated for converting courses from a quarter system to a semester system**, something that many faculty who are NOT organized are NOT being compensated for.
 - As the future use of space – particularly in Kee Hall, Fallerius, and the Kehoe Center – is being reconsidered, **administrators are contractually required to consult with faculty** when it comes to not only their individual office space but also their classroom and lab space.

3. **Third, we need you to consider how you can best contribute to the important work underway this academic year. Here is the timeline we are up against:**

I. Preparing for the Negotiation of our Second Contract

- **Spring 2010:** Initial Survey of Faculty (top 3 priorities) – completed!
- **September 8 – 17:** Follow-up Survey – final survey to set priorities for negotiations and gauge level of support for key issues.
- **Fall Quarter:** Faculty teams will conduct research and develop suggested contract language on key issues (e.g., compensation) – we will be recruiting you to help with this VITAL work.

II. Negotiations Time Line

- **Prior to December, 2010** – according to the contract “The College and the NCSFA-AAUP will meet at least 6 months prior to the contract expiration to discuss the possibility of engaging in alternative methods of bargaining.”
- **February 14, 2011** (February 13 is a Sunday) – We will notify the College of our intent to commence bargaining on a successor agreement (this is 120 days before contract expiration)
 - No later than (90 days before = March 15, 2011)
- **February 28, 2011 (1st negotiation session)**
- **Friday, April 29, 2011** (60 days after 1st negotiation session, IF no agreement, then follow the agreed to resolution process)
- **Saturday, April 20, 2011 through Monday, May 30, 2011** (Mediation)
- **Tuesday, June 1, 2011** – according to the contract “The parties shall have the rights granted by Chapter 4117 of the Ohio Revised Code as conditioned and restricted therein.”

(Come to the NCSFA Faculty Lunch meeting during Fall Convocation, Sep. 16th, 11:00 – 1:00, if you have questions about anything contained in this timeline.)

- **We need your input on the follow-up survey** about which you will be hearing more in the coming weeks. Our Chief Negotiator will be giving us all an update on what the initial survey (in the spring) told us, as well as what the follow-up survey (here in the fall) is telling us.
- **We need you to help us develop language** that we can take back to the negotiating table in the spring either (1) to create new articles regarding issues not covered in the current contract, (2) to clarify the language currently there on issues of importance to you, or (3) to offer significant changes to the language currently there, along with a rationale that supports those changes. The best way to do this is to be a part of a team of faculty, all of whom care about the same issue or issues. We will be talking at the lunch meeting during Fall Convocation on how you can do this.

4. Fourth, we need you ALL to consider the important matter of dues-paying membership.

Remember that the NCSFA represents ALL full-time faculty included in the Collective Bargaining unit. Whether you pay dues or not, if you are in the Collective Bargaining unit, we represent you.

Many of the issues that have taken considerable time to work out with the administration since we have organized have been issues brought forth from NON-dues-paying members. That is important to note.

But it is also important to understand why dues-paying membership is so important at this time.

Nothing ... NOTHING ... speaks more loudly at the negotiating table than the unified, collective voice of the faculty. If we could move our membership from the 75% range (where it has hovered, consistently, since we first organized) up to 100% as we prepare to go to the negotiating table, your team would be able to negotiate much more effectively on your behalf. (*Why is that? Read on.*)

If you are already a dues-paying member, we thank you. But we also ask you to talk with those faculty in your area who have not yet made the choice to start paying dues, despite the benefits they enjoy from our being organized. We need you to take the time to listen to those faculty who are NOT paying dues right now and to try to understand why they refuse to contribute, as you do, to a collective cause that benefits us ALL. We need you to take the time to explain to those faculty why you think it is important to do what you are already doing. **Yes, it is important to respect everyone's decision in this matter. But we also believe it is important that EVERYONE contribute to a process that we clearly see benefitting EVERYONE.**

If you are not yet a dues-paying member, we ask you to become one now ... before we prepare to go back to the negotiating table. Only by having 100% membership will we be able to concentrate effectively on those issues that you care the most about. If we don't have 100% membership, we will – in fairness to our dues-paying members – have to negotiate for what is called FAIR SHARE, something that will enable us to collect dues from ALL Collective Bargaining members, something that administrations typically use (at the negotiating table) to bargain away something else that the faculty care strongly about. **Let us take this tool out of the administration's hands right now. Let us go to the negotiating table not even needing to discuss Fair Share. Let us say to the administration that ALL our faculty already pay their Fair Share, willingly, so that we can keep the administration focused on those issues of most importance to faculty, issues that ultimately will benefit our students.**

If you are a new faculty member and have not joined yet because you don't feel you "know enough" about the issues that caused us to organize, (1) go to our website and educate yourself by reading over some of the archived newsletters from the past, or (2) talk to any dues-paying member – (There are almost 50 of us in a Collective Bargaining Unit that consists of 60-some full-time faculty!), or (3) contact nursing faculty member Carolyn Kaple, the NCSFA's Membership Coordinator. Carolyn would be happy to come to your office or meet you somewhere off-campus and answer any questions you have about becoming a member. She will also bring along with her the two forms you need to complete in order to become a dues-paying member: the NCSFA membership form, as well as the form to authorize the College to deduct the bi-weekly amount of \$16.62 from your paycheck to cover the dues.

Carolyn Kaple's office is room 240-Health Sciences; her extension on campus is 4775.

Her college e-mail: ckaple@ncstatecollege.edu

Carolyn's home e-mail: cmkaple@gmail.com

5. **Fifth, before we close, we need to share with you some of the challenges that we still face as we try to make our way forward with an administration that ... different people see through different lenses.**

- Once a month, members of the **NCSFA Labor-Management team** meet with members of the administration to try to resolve issues relative to the collective bargaining agreement.
- In addition to those monthly meetings with members of the senior administration, **a subset of the NCSFA Labor-Management team** has also started meeting with the 3 deans on a monthly basis, in an effort to try to resolve any issues BEFORE they become outstanding contractual matters.
- Once a month, **the NCSFA Exec. Team members** also come together to share issues of concern that need to be brought to the Labor-Management meetings ... and/or to share information that has come to light in the Labor-Management meetings ... that can then inform how faculty are trying to do their jobs in an effort to serve the students we are here to serve.
- In addition to these regular monthly meetings, the officers of the NCSFA Exec. Team, as well as the Contract Administrator and the Chief Negotiator, are often “on call” as faculty members and administrators alike call on these individuals to help “interpret” the contract and/or to try to get a handle on an issue that the faculty and administration seem to view differently ... at least at first!

All of these meetings are on the faculty members' own time, as faculty who work on behalf of the union receive NO compensation or release time. As you can imagine, all of these meetings and endless discussions are pretty exhausting ... especially on top of already full teaching loads(!) ... and especially when these meetings often reveal how much administrative work is NOT being taken care of by administrators whose job it is to take care of such administrative work! Discussions sometimes drag on for months with little action being taken to address the concerns that faculty have taken the time to outline to administrators. This is indeed disheartening at times.

Also disheartening is the LACK of ownership that many administrators demonstrate when it comes to the responsibilities that are theirs. We see this “lack of ownership” at all levels, and we believe this is one of the biggest problems that will continue to stand in the way of any discernible improvement that the administration's team claims it wants to make.

For example, in the latest Category 4 update on the AQIP's website, the College reports that as of March of this year, “of the 139 full-time and permanent part-time [non-faculty] employees” at the College, only “38.8% have received performance evaluations in the last three years.” Perhaps even more disheartening is this statistic: “13.67% have NEVER received performance evaluations.”

Faculty continue to have to perform; faculty continue to be evaluated on their performance. Now that we have a CBA, faculty are held to the terms of that agreement. But the administration, as a team, is not held accountable, apparently, by anyone BUT the faculty. And this is disheartening to many of us ... and it makes the work we are ALL trying to do as faculty harder than it needs to be.