

# AAUP Report

American Association of University Professors  
Bloomington Chapter

Fall 2000

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## What Is – and Where Is – Faculty Governance in Bloomington?

It's common to hear dissatisfaction with faculty governance in Bloomington. Colleagues sigh that the Bloomington Faculty Council is no more than a debating club, and there is a widespread sense that faculty have little leverage in determining the direction of our campus.

In fact, Bloomington has unusually strong structures for faculty governance, and the campus administration has a solid tradition of inviting faculty engagement and treating faculty determined policy as binding. As the campus administration continues to undergo the transformation already underway, this strong governance structure is our best insurance that this acknowledgment of faculty's guiding role will not change.

But participation in faculty governance is dwindling. In last year's elections of the 2000-1 BFC, only 18% voted, and the colleagues they chose from had been named in an open nominations process to which only 6% of us responded.

Promoting faculty governance is a central mission of the Bloomington AAUP, and we agree that our voices sometimes seem unheard, especially at the system level. But until faculty take advantage of their own governance structures, it is unlikely that we will be able either to gain as a group the type of focused knowledge we need to lead policy formation and implementation, or to demonstrate that the contributions we can make represent more than the views of individuals.

One reason colleagues may be skeptical about governance is because they

mistake BFC meetings as the focus of the faculty governance system. They are not.

The fundamental work of faculty governance occurs in three types of committees, whose faculty members are all appointed by an elected Nominations Committee of the BFC: standing committees, elected committees, and campus committees (jointly appointed by BFC and various administrative offices). Full lists of committees and members appear on the BFC website ([www.indiana.edu/~bfc/](http://www.indiana.edu/~bfc/)).

BFC standing committees largely set their own agendas according to the concerns of their members. They can work directly with administrators, reporting information and recommendations to the BFC, and can have tremendous influence on our lives. For example, the Faculty Affairs Committee has recently devised a new structure for academic appointments system wide, designed to provide us with leverage over the troublesome balance between tenure-track and non-tenure track appointments. The Educational Policies Committee has elected to focus on distance education, to ensure that no distributed education policy structure is implemented without full systemwide faculty participation in its development.

BFC elected committees include a mediation committee to deal with grievances and a board of review, which adjudicates matters such as appeals of denial of tenure. Campus committee appointments ensure that faculty are represented in administrative groups that decide

such matters as building priorities, parking and transportation, and classroom development.

Since Council members agree to serve on at least one of these committees, and standing committee chairs are drawn from BFC members, the composition of the elected membership of the Council bears importantly on the nature of governance work throughout the system. BFC meetings provide a forum for sharing information, and are the means of linking committees to broader faculty representation. But the impact of faculty governance is achieved in many ways other than through Council statements and policies. Faculty-administration interaction at the committee level is at least as important a force.

Each year, all of us receive a form from the BFC requesting that we indicate governance committees to which we are willing to devote time and energy. Few colleagues return these forms. To gain the knowledge necessary to have meaningful impact on policy issues that are increasingly complex and technical requires time and energy. If it is our desire to play a leading role in directing the future of this campus and the university, the burden of faculty governance will need to be shared much more broadly.

We are now embarking on the elections of next year's BFC. As we do each year, the AAUP will actively recruit colleagues with a commitment to academic freedom and faculty governance for nomination and election. We urge all faculty to take time to visit the BFC website, learn what issues have most recently been at the center of discussions, scan the lists of committees, and participate in this vote. Perhaps next Spring's lists of committee volunteers will also signal a broader faculty commitment to employ the leverage we have.

- Bob Eno (EALC)

## **Welcome to New Members**

More than 60 new members joined our chapter during last spring's membership drive. We now number 250 members, which makes the Bloomington chapter one of the largest among Big 10/CIC universities. The chapter convened a

gathering in the University Club on October 25, to welcome new members, and to provide an opportunity for members new and old to lay out some of the issues the chapter must address in the coming year.

Before discussion began, George Walker, chair of the search committee for the new Bloomington chancellor, reported on the search, and members were invited to comment on the criteria they felt should guide the selection process. These two topics turned out to be so closely related as to become, by the end of a spirited discussion, almost identical.

The search committee has considered its first group of nominees, but Vice-President Walker emphasized that the search is still open, and urged colleagues to continue to suggest names. Appropriate candidates may include not only provosts, chancellors, and vice-presidents, but also deans, institute directors, and others who have worked with administrators, faculty, and students in several disciplines. The new chancellor must be someone who has a successful record as a faculty member at a strong research university, who has shown commitment to faculty governance and a consistent attention to student and staff interests, and who understands the role the Bloomington chancellor plays as academic vice-president of the University. Vice-President Walker noted that the consulting firm working with the committee will collect, but not screen or judge, nominations and information. The committee hopes to submit a list of candidates to President Brand before the end of winter.

In the discussion that followed, one theme emerged that must command the attention of the Bloomington faculty and the new chancellor alike: the necessity of establishing a campus climate that supports intellectual innovation and community. One colleague of long tenure in Bloomington remarked that during his time many faculty members have shifted their attention from internal matters to the intellectual excitements and validation to be won in national and international academic associations. Another colleague more recently arrived remarked that there were two faculties on campus, one which had lived in and remembered the campus as a place of generous possibility, and a

younger faculty which knows mostly the constraints of limited resources and the centrifugal force of competition for a piece of them. In effect, a fuller discussion of these themes was adjourned to the January 30 Spring Forum, where they will be central to "The Debate Over IU-Bloomington."

- Don Gray (English)

### **The Community College Initiative**

The AAUP-IUB Executive Committee met with Bloomington area state legislators in October to discuss issues of concern, including the community college (CC) initiative of the Indiana Commission on Higher Education (ICHE). There is widespread recognition that a CC system could provide substantial benefit to Hoosiers, but chapter members are concerned that if the initiative is implemented without great care, it could have a destructive effect on existing higher education institutions.

If low-cost CC locations are settled near existing four-year campuses, as some initial sites have been, competition for students may force existing campuses to shrink or close. From an AAUP standpoint, such an outcome would lead to a reduced sector of higher education governed by the tenure system and full protection of academic freedom. In this regard, IU and

Purdue regional campuses are most vulnerable.

CC proponents note that while Indiana is well above average in residents served by traditional institutions, it is below average in the number of adults pursuing post-secondary education, suggesting a broad untapped market. But it is as likely that lower adult rates are the product of high participation by Hoosiers of college age. The potential market for added forms of higher education is likely, therefore, to be limited. But no matter how extensive it is, the least expensive form of higher education will likely enroll most of the adults who want to continue their educations, and they will study in colleges that do not include tenured faculty.

The ICHE plan also envisions changing profiles for IU and Purdue flagship campuses, which would become more exclusive, with less broadly based teaching missions. While some aspects of this may seem attractive, in the context of limited state support for higher education, aspects of a broader mission may be critical to sustaining future support.

The CC plan is moving forward with unusual speed. To ensure that the benefits are not outweighed by unintended damage, speed should give way to careful long-range planning.

- Bob Eno

### **Academic Freedom Isn't Free** **Join the AAUP!**

*Our chapter's recent membership drive has increased our numbers and strengthened our ability to influence events, but to fulfill our commitment to academic freedom and faculty governance, we need more colleagues to join us.*

**For membership forms and information on payroll deduction plans, please clip this form and let us know of your interest. Thanks!**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Campus Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form to chapter treasurer Julie Bobay, Library E002, or just send Julie an e-mail message at: [bobay@indiana.edu](mailto:bobay@indiana.edu).

**Please Mark Your Calendar!**

**AAUP**  
**Spring Forum 2001**

**The Debate Over IU-Bloomington**

**Quality & Community:  
Why Are We Worried and  
What Should We Do?**

**Tuesday**  
**30 January 2001**  
**4:00-5:30**

**Law School, Moot Court Room**

## AAUP Systemwide

Representatives of IU AAUP chapters from four campuses met in Indianapolis in November – the first such meeting to occur. Members of chapters at IUPUI, IU-East, IU-Northwest, and Bloomington discussed shared concerns about distributed education, the community college initiative, and a variety of other matters.

The occasion for the meeting was the seasonal gathering of the AAUP state conference (at which K. Vinodgopal of IU-Northwest was elected vice-president of the state conference, and Ann Gellis of Bloomington was reelected treasurer).

One of the outcomes of the meeting was an agreement that Bloomington chapter *AAUP Report* issues will be shared with the leadership of IU chapters, who may find it helpful to distribute them to colleagues on their campuses. To make issues of the *Report* more useful in creating a broader IU AAUP community awareness, we will seek to incorporate in future issues more information of systemwide interest.

*The Executive Committee wants to hear from both chapter members and non-members about matters that you think should be on the AAUP agenda.*

### **Executive Committee Members, 2000-1**

President	Bob Eno (EALC) eno@indiana.edu
Vice President	Ben Brabson (Physics) brabson@indiana.edu
Treasurer	Julie Bobay (Library) bobay@indiana.edu

Judith Anderson (English), David Austin (HPER) Ann Bristow (Library), Ann Gellis (Law)  
Don Gray (English), Ed Greenebaum (Law)  
Ted Miller (SPEA), Myrtle Scott (Education)

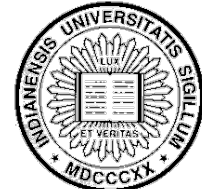
**Visit our web page: [www.indiana.edu/~aaup](http://www.indiana.edu/~aaup)**

*Standards of academic freedom and tenure built up by the AAUP over 80 years represent a body of persuasive professional opinion with high levels of organizational endorsement. The AAUP also seeks to strengthen faculty governance, provide fair procedures for resolving grievances, promote the economic well being of the faculty, and advance the interests of higher education.*

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