



AAUP at NYIT, Inc.

Upcoming Events
OW/CI General Meeting

Thursday,
November 17, 2011
Free Hour
HSH Lecture Hall
(Rm.130)

The AAUP at NYIT OW/CI Chapter Welcomes you back to the new Academic Year

The purpose of this newsletter is to keep our membership informed of the work being conducted on the membership's behalf.

The Union Office is located in Harry Schure Hall, Room 205 and is staffed by Ms. Deborah Tibrewala, Executive Director. Telephone: 516-686-1120. Email: dtibrewa@nyit.edu

We welcome all comments and suggestions. If you would like to send us a comment or suggestion, please email us at: aaupatnyit@optonline.net

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General Meeting Scheduled for November 17, 2011

The next AAUP General Meeting for the OW/CI Chapter will be held on November 17, 2011 during Free Hour in Harry Schure Hall – Lecture Hall (Room 130).

Below you will find scheduled dates for OW/CI General meetings for this academic year. Please mark your calendars accordingly. All meetings will take place during Free Hour and will be held in Harry Schure Hall – Lecture Hall.

- Thursday, November 17, 2011
- Thursday, February 16, 2012
- Thursday, March 15, 2012
- Thursday, April 19, 2012
- Thursday, May 17, 2012

President's Message - OW/CI Chapter President, James Fauvell

Welcome back colleagues to the new academic year. This issue marks the second monthly newsletter published by the AAUP of the New York Institute of Technology with Dr. Christopher Moylan serving as editor. Here are a few things to remember as we start the new semester:

Personnel Procedures – Please remember that before you submit your portfolio for reappointment, tenure or promotion this year, you should review your department/school's published criteria. If the chairperson of your SPC does not have a copy, please contact our Executive Director, Ms. Deborah Tibrewala at 516-686-1120 and let us know.

Teaching at other Institutions: Please remember that according to our contract, *“Full-time faculty members cannot teach at any other educational institution during the Fall or Spring semester, without the explicit prior permission of the President or his or her designee. Permission may be withheld only where a faculty member is teaching full-time at another institution or where the faculty member is part-time at another institution, which has as its purpose, or organizational structure elements, which are inconsistent with the interests of NYIT.”*

Multi-campus Teaching Assignments: Please remember that the contract states: *“Any faculty or professional staff member assigned to two or more campuses on the same day shall receive \$30.00 for each such day in lieu of expenses.”*

Call for committee members

“Many ideas grow better when transplanted into another mind than in the one where they sprung up.” **Oliver Wendell Holmes**

With contract negotiations beginning soon, the Joint Council of the AAUP at NYIT is seeking volunteers for the following committees:

- Academic Governance
- On-line teaching
- Student evaluations
- Research, Grants and Scholarly works
- Medical Insurance
- Retirement benefits
- Personal Procedures (Hire, , tenure and promotion)
- Legal Representation
- Global programs

Please call or email our Executive Director, Ms. Deborah Tibrewala at 516-686-1120 (dtibrewa@nyit.edu) and let her know the committees you would like to serve on.

Some thoughts to consider as we enter contract negotiations:

Following the lead of our National AAUP's Statement on Collective Bargaining, I'd like to try to explain some of the principles behind collective bargaining.

First and foremost we seek to protect and promote the professional and economic interests of our faculty. We strongly believe that the future success of the New York Institute of Technology lies in its faculty. Quoting President Guilliano in his September 1, 2011 State of the Institution address, NYIT must assure:

"...that pay is fair and benefits meet the needs of the employees; that faculty members say the institution recognizes innovative and high-quality teaching; that people are appropriately involved in decision-making processes in their area; that there is confidence in senior leadership, that the leaders have the knowledge, skills and, experience necessary for institutional success."

Next, we must enhance the institutional structures of representative governance. The Academic Senate is an advisory body at NYIT. We strive to see it become the primary academic governing body for the institution.

We must continue to further define academic freedom in this ever-changing world of technology in the classroom. New media, the Internet and the 24/7 classroom environment present many more challenges, and we need to address them now.

We also need to better define procedures for dealing with problems and grievances of members of the bargaining unit.

These are but a few of the many reasons we have collective bargaining.

The shared authority and responsibility embraced by the NYIT community require cooperation, understanding and compromise through discussion, persuasion, and accommodation.

It is with this understanding that we must enter this year's contract negotiations. We need mutual respect and cooperation to reach an agreement that will build a strong future for NYIT.

NYIT Financial Information Available

By Christopher Moylan

Under government regulations colleges and universities are obliged to submit financial information to the federal government, using Form 990, and to make these forms publicly available. (See Notice 2007-45 <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-drop/n-07-45>. Pdf) The 990 forms for this institute are available through the AAUP at NYIT website and through another website, Guidestar (www2.guidestar.org). Guidestar is free to use with a simple signup procedure. The forms provide a fairly thorough and succinct portrait of the activities, financial health, and organizational structure of the college. In a year leading to contract negotiations, faculty might well consider taking a look at the 990's, and requesting access to current forms.

Form 990 provides information on a wide variety of financial matters, including investment income, administrative salaries, instructional expenses (faculty salaries and benefits), revenue and costs associated with buildings and grounds, debt service obligations, income from tuition and financial aid, income from grants and special programs, expenses incurred by the global campuses and endowment income.

Fortunately, the form has been simplified in recent years, and information pertinent to faculty is only about five or six pages long. Most categories on the form—not all, but most—are fairly self-explanatory. One does not have to be an accountant to find interesting and useful information, although knowledge of accounting practices and terminology can certainly help. (However, any accountants on the faculty who would be willing to offer their professional expertise to mining the 990 forms should contact the editor of this newsletter.)

Faculty might consider the following items and categories in assessing the financial state of the college as indicated on the 990 forms.

It is a fairly simple matter to determine how much money the college is spending on instruction (faculty salaries and other related costs). The total alone means little in itself but when seen in ratio to total fund expenses (put simply, how much the college spends in a given year) instructional expenses give some indication of administration priorities. Lower ratios suggest one level of priority given to instructional expenses, higher ratios another. Naturally, the numbers are open to interpretation.

Of particular concern to our faculty, arguably, are the bond liabilities NYIT incurred some years ago to relieve the burden of more expensive debt obligations. The bond liabilities are listed on the forms, and one can track year by year the payment of principle and interest and determine the ratio

of bond liability to overall college expenses in a given year. It is common for universities and colleges to incur debt for building construction, land acquisition, refurbishment of labs and the like. Debt service, then, is a natural aspect of doing business, particularly for small private colleges.

Unfortunately, it is well-established that the expenditures that incurred this debt many years ago brought nothing of value to the college: no dorms, libraries, research facilities, and so on. That is an old story, comma, not semicolon one that Dr. Guiliano deserves great credit for saving from an unhappy conclusion. Nonetheless, the debt remains. As a consequence, any plant expansion or capital campaign must begin, in a sense, considerably challenged. This may provide some insight into the state of the physical plant in Old Westbury, for example. Or it may not. In any event, the numbers are there to review.

Gross tuition revenues should be seen in relation to so-called discounts, or the amount deducted in scholarship aid and, again, the fluctuations year to year in net tuition income may be correlated to any number of things, such as the economy, the standing of the college in national rankings, student retention efforts and so on.

The salaries and expense accounts of college administrators are listed year by year. One might focus on how much individual administrators earn, on the simple number of administrators earning incomes of a certain order, or on the total administrative figure. The money that administrators earn is an area of central importance in traditional labor discourse: how much does upper management earn, what is the relation of wages among upper management to ordinary workers, how much, if anything, do administrators sacrifice when they ask for givebacks, and so on. Academia is a special case, in some respects. For one thing, even the highest paid college administrator earns mere rounding off money compared to the income of an executive at a major corporation. Nonetheless, one might expect those traditional labor union questions, however modified, would be of some relevance to us.

One might investigate any number of other areas on the 990 forms: grants, income from external use of facilities, the losses or expenses in the global program mentioned previously (about seventeen million as of three years ago), costs of legal representation...

In short, the forms contain a good deal of information, information that could be considered as important to responsible academic citizenship as information on the federal budget is to national citizenship. All of us are concerned for the health and prosperity of the college; one would hope that this concerned be informed.

Twenty First Century Communication and the AAUP at NYIT

By Christopher Moylan

The publication of this newsletter has met with widespread support, judging by the email responses and some face-to-face conversations. In fairness, it should be noted that there have been some misgivings; should the newsletter not strive for a strictly neutral tone? Should the concerns of the institution be aired in what could be construed as a public forum? While such questions are being sorted out, to the extent they can be sorted out, we might take a look at communication within the AAUP at NYIT, and how any mode of communication, newsletter included, fits within it.



The AAUP at NYIT currently has three modes of communication with its members: meetings, its website (www.aaupatnyit.org) and this newsletter. Nothing can replace direct, person to person conversation and group discussion in meetings. If we think of the AAUP as a town

(I am borrowing the metaphor from Prof. Jason B. Jones, who gave a talk on the subject at the Summer Institute of the AAUP) then meetings can be compared to Vermont town meetings: direct, democratic, sometimes engaging, and sometimes routine. The website is an archive, as most websites are these days. If we took a poll of how often faculty members consult the website during a typical year, a good many of us







Town Hall



Burial Ground

would answer 'not once.' We are glad to have the website; the contract is available there, as are links to all kinds of useful information. Nonetheless, it is a quiet, rather dusty place and in its more obscure reaches, none, I fear, do there embrace (as Mr. Marvell would put it) or stir or do much of anything. In short, the website offers an archive, and someplace within it, sad to say, an information burial ground. That leaves the newsletter, the near equivalent of a newspaper. That is our town: a town hall, a newspaper and a library with a graveyard in the back.

There is no reason why the faculty at NYIT should continue in this mode: not now, not when the means to expand communication are so readily available. Social media need not be the exclusive domain of our students; we can use it as well to facilitate communicating within our campuses, across campuses and outside our campuses to the metropolitan area. A bit of a stigma attaches the term social media; a certain ex-Congressman from

Queens and Brooklyn has not helped matters in this regard. Nonetheless, there is nothing any more subversive or scandalous about Twitter , Facebook , Google+ , YouTube,  and blogs than there is about telephones or old fashioned letters. They are media, nothing more or less. In any event, many of us use social media in our personal and professional lives (Facebook contact with fellow writers, for example). Why not employ these media to expand discussion within the AAUP at NYIT?

Some faculty members may be reluctant to adopt media not yet sanctioned by the college. NYIT, however, encourages the use of these media via its own website. NYIT video clips are available via YouTube or through the website; one can watch reports on graduation in Abu Dhabi or Bahrain, LI News reports on NYIT events and so on. The union, likewise, is free to post its own material on YouTube. Similarly, anyone can create a Facebook page. The page is then owned, as in the colloquial sense of 'my page', by the person who establishes it. You can delete things you don't like, post what you like, invite people to join... It would be interesting, if perhaps anarchic, to see a hundred union Facebook pages bloom in the near future; a more manageable approach might be to establish a central AAUP Facebook page that anyone can join.

Should the AAUP at NYIT employ these media—we can get to the concerns and anxieties about doing so in a bit—the union village will add:

a cinema (YouTube),



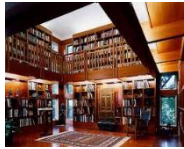
Cinema

a public park (soapbox blogs, Twitter),



AAUP Central Park

and library (Google, Yahoo, etc. Union links)



Library, (Google, Yahoo) 1



Neighborhood

to the neighborhood of Facebook pages and newsletter info, the post office email lists and archive website.



email

The union is an engaged, engaging town where no one need feel left out or apathetic or distanced.

Anyone might post an opinion, share a news article or news clip, get up on the soap box and make a speech or just keep in touch with people.

One can imagine various objections to doing any of this. First, someone might say something terrible on Facebook, perhaps allege that someone in the college is a socialist unnatural citizen who believes in climate change, or the like. Faculty members are entitled to their opinions, even silly opinions. Since the media in question would have no official aspect the expression of opinions would be protected as they are when, say, a group gathers somewhere off campus to discuss union issues or anything else. Moreover, the administrator of a Facebook page has the option of deleting material. Further, one might object that something could end up in the newspaper or local TV news. Would that be a bad thing? Why are union-related items not appearing in newspapers now? Why has the union not cultivated relationships with reporters, as the administration clearly has; try an NYIT-related search in the Times and Newsday webpages. Try a search under AAUP at NYIT and the results are quite different.

Obviously it is impossible to address all concerns and questions. Nonetheless, one might distill all this to the simple and essential idea that the AAUP at NYIT will establish an engaged and multi-faceted community of discourse around labor issues at the college, one in step with the technological ambitions of the administration. How this is to happen is up to a general membership remarkably well equipped to decide such things. We will discuss.

Student Evaluations of Courses and Instruction

By L. Silverstein

It has been a generally accepted principle in many institutions of higher learning that it is appropriate for the student body to have a formal mechanism to express (usually anonymously) opinions about various aspects of the instructional process in courses that they have attended.

When difficulties arise in this matter, or reservations are expressed by Faculty, or controversy exists about the process, or about the results and their

applications, it is usual for the following five central issues to be raised:

1. The appropriateness of the actual evaluation instrument
2. The process of administering the evaluation form
3. The process of collecting, collating, norming and interpreting the results
4. The process of reporting the results to Faculty
5. The role, IF ANY, which the results should play in personnel decisions relating to tenure, promotion, retention, etc.

AT NYIT, as at many other institutions, few (perhaps none) of the above concerns have been resolved to the satisfaction of thoughtful Faculty, who take the process seriously, and who have examined the current state of affairs. But that has begun to change recently. Old Westbury/Central Islip Chapter President James Fauvell decided to initiate a process to examine the issues, and to propose serious solutions. He directed OW/CI Vice President Larry Silverstein to form an Ad-hoc Committee of interested and concerned Faculty volunteers to take an active role in re-examining, inventing, and re-inventing all aspects of the Student Course Evaluation process.

The Ad-hoc Course Evaluations Committee met a number of times during the 2009-2010 Academic Year, and began a re-examination of all aspects of the Course Evaluation process. Particular emphasis was placed upon the specific design of the Evaluation instrument itself, and the content, and order, of the questions. The Committee formulated a Draft of a revised Evaluation instrument which will soon be presented to the Joint Council, and ultimately to NYIT Administration, during this Academic Year.

This is only the first phase of a multi-step process of creating a meaningful set of protocols, which will ultimately structure an exemplary Student Evaluation process.

There is a certain additional urgency to all of the above, in light of recent NYIT Administration initiatives to depart from current norms by converting the entire Student Evaluation process to a totally on-line format. Many Faculty view this move with grave reservations, as exemplified by the vote at the OW/CI General Membership Meeting in Spring 2011, in which the OW/CI Executive Committee was asked to communicate the many concerns about this to the NYIT Administration.

All faculty members with concerns, or an interest in participating in this important work, are urged to communicate with James Fauvell and Larry Silverstein. Let your voice be heard; become a part of the process.

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We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.aaupatnyit.org



About Our Organization

We are established as a chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). Founded in 1915, the AAUP is the only national organization which exclusively serves the interests of college and university faculty members. AAUP supports and defends the principles of academic freedom and tenure and promotes policies to ensure academic due process. Membership in the national organization is open to all faculty, librarians, and academic professionals at two- and four-year accredited public and private colleges and universities. Current AAUP membership is about 45,000, with over 500 local campus chapters and 39 state organizations.

The AAUP at NYIT, Inc. is recognized as a "collective bargaining chapter" of the national AAUP. This means that we are the official collective bargaining agent for faculty and professional staff at NYIT. Information about collective bargaining appears in the [AAUP Collective Bargaining web site](#), and a list of all collective bargaining chapters (with hyperlinks to their web sites) may be found on the [AAUP CB Chapter List page](#).

The Old Westbury Chapter of the American Association of University Professors at New York Institute of Technology was formed on September 29, 1967 at which time the chapter held its organizational meeting. At that meeting, a chapter constitution was adopted and officers were elected. At about the same time, the Metropolitan Chapter was formed for faculty and professional staff members based at the Metropolitan Center (now called the Manhattan Campus).

Because many faculty and professional staff members wanted these two AAUP chapters to represent them for collective bargaining purposes, an election was held on October 13 and 14, 1970 pursuant to an agreement of the parties made on May 25, 1970.

On October 29, 1970, the New York State Labor Relations Board officially certified "The Council of Metropolitan & Old Westbury Chapters of the American Association of University Professors at the New York Institute of Technology" to represent faculty and professional staff members at NYIT for the purposes of collective bargaining.