

THE TENNESSEE FAINTING GOAT

The occasional electronic newsletter of the

MTSU Chapter of the

American Association of University Professors

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Learned institutions ought to be favorite objects with every free people. They throw that light over the public mind which is the best security against crafty & dangerous encroachments on the public liberty.

James Madison

Dear Chapter Members,

I hope you've had a wonderful beginning to the new semester, and I trust you have found the time to talk to the new hires in your department about the many pleasures and delights of being a dues-paying member of the AAUP. If you haven't, you have been a very bad boy/girl!

In marked contrast to previous summers, the chapter has been quite busy this summer. Indeed, it feels as though we've already put in a semester's worth of work. The following is a brief summary of the highlights.

1. Pippa Holloway (President-Elect) and Alfred Lutz (President) attended New Faculty Orientation on August 18. We introduced our association to about thirty-five of our new colleagues. We had a good time, and I hope we convinced a few of them to become members.
2. The chapter helped a non-tenure-track faculty member who was let go by his department to regain his position. Everybody involved in the negotiations—faculty as well as administration—proved a delight to work with.
3. I assume you received an electronic copy of the *Study of Faculty Salaries at MTSU* (May 2015). Several of the authors are members of our chapter, and the chapter contributed substantially to the printing costs of the report. Working with the co-authors of the report was

a delightful experience.

4. The chapter is helping faculty members who are facing a case of administrative overreach in the person of their chair as well as a faculty members exposed to a bullying senior colleague. In response to the former, the chapter has produced a document outlining the basic principles of academic freedom and shared governance, and we trust that that reminder will suffice to resolve this problem.
5. Earlier this month, I met with Ms. Nneka Norman-Gordon, the state of Tennessee's Higher Education Resource Officer (HERO). (Don't get me started on the acronym.) The two documents accompanying this issue will give you a sense of our HERO's purpose and intended role. I assume--just my guess--that the legislature decided to create this office as a result of the rather embarrassing events at TSU a few years ago, but, as I said, that's just my guess.

In our conversation, I talked at some length about the principles of shared governance and academic freedom, about the role tenure plays in their manifestation, and I followed up our conversation by sending HERO a copy of the AAUP Redbook. Ms. Norman-Gordon will be a guest at the October meeting of the TBR Faculty Sub-Council, on which I serve for one more year.

All in all, a productive summer and, clearly, evidence for the continued importance of our chapter.

Best wishes,

Alfred Lutz

Chapter Officers Academic Year 2015-16

Chapter President: Alfred Lutz (English)

President-Elect: Pippa Holloway (History)

Secretary-Treasurer: Jackie Eller (Sociology)

Membership Chair: Becky King (English)

Member-At-Large: Norman Weatherby (HHP)

Editors: Becky King, Alfred Lutz