

# AAUP NEWS

Middle Tennessee State University

April 2007

As the chapter president of one of the strongest chapters of the American Association of University Professors in the state of Tennessee, it has been a pleasure to continue the work of my predecessor, **Prof. Alfred Lutz** (English), who worked tirelessly to persuade the Tennessee Board of Regents and the MTSU administration to adopt tenure and promotion policies in 2004 that substantially adhere to **AAUP national standards of best practice**.

Since becoming chapter president in 2005, I have been called upon several times by faculty colleagues across the university to look into and help interpret the new MTSU policies. Frankly, as I think everyone would admit, **there have been some hitches** in the transition from the “old” to the “new” policies, especially since there is a four-year period in which some faculty can choose to move forward with tenure or promotion under either policy. But all in all, the transition seems to be moving relatively smoothly.

**Diligence remains necessary**, however, for no matter the policy, there will always be irregularities in the implementation of university policies that not only violate policy but conflict with AAUP standards as published in the “red book.”

In addition to responding to faculty with concerns about tenure and academic

freedom, I have monitored the last two **tenure and promotion workshops** to understand what administrators are communicating to faculty in hopes of being better able to respond to queries and requests for investigation. The next tenure and promotion workshop is Thursday, April 26, from 2:30-4:30 p.m., in the Faculty Senate Chambers, JUB 100. I encourage all faculty preparing to apply for tenure or promotion to attend.

The AAUP at MTSU has an outstanding relationship with the **Faculty Senate**. As a senator this year, I volunteered to serve on the senate’s shared governance committee, chaired by **Prof. Dan Pfeiffer** (Recording Industry). I am pleased to report that the committee has submitted to the full senate a university policy on shared governance that may become a model for our sister institutions in the TBR system. We are hopeful that the full senate will endorse the policy in May and that President McPhee will approve it thereafter.

**Please contact me for more information about AAUP or with your concerns.**

**Jim Williams**

Chapter President, 2005-2007

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**AAUP: Because Academic Freedom Isn’t Free. Visit [aaup.org](http://aaup.org).**

# TENNESSEE CONFERENCE OF AAUP AT WORK FOR YOU

## **AAUP hires lobbyist to monitor legislation, seek faculty-friendly policies from state**

If you are a member of AAUP, part of your dues go to the state association of AAUP chapters in Tennessee (called the “conference”). With these funds we have once again employed a director of governmental relations, **Dr. H. Coleman McGinnis**. Coley tracks legislation with potential impact on higher education in Tennessee and alerts AAUP members to take action in favor of or opposition to certain bills. You may reach Coley at 615-356-5993, or [coleymac@comcast.net](mailto:coleymac@comcast.net).

## ***Part-time appointments and faculty workloads continue to be of concern to Tennessee members***

With the leadership of **Prof. Andy Smith** (English, Tennessee Tech), the Tennessee conference of AAUP continues to push for a revised TBR policy on part-time faculty pay scales. The current pay policy has not changed for more than a decade and even at the highest level pays far below comparable adjunct pay in the area. So far, community college presidents have blocked all efforts to increase allowable pay rates.

Tennessee Conference President **Prof. Tony Blasi** (Sociology, TSU) has undertaken a statewide study on the compensation and working conditions of faculty with part-time appointments. It is hoped that this study will result in incremental improvements to the pay and other working conditions for these faculty colleagues across the state. AAUP members will receive a copy of the study when it is completed.

## ***AAUP fights back dangerous “academic bills of rights” legislation***

The national efforts to corrupt academic freedom policies with so-called academic or student bills of rights thankfully seem to have died with no new bills introduced in the state legislature this year. Thanks in large part to AAUP efforts nationally and in Tennessee, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and the TBR opposed the last attempts to pass these bills.



### **AAUP Summer Institute July 19-22, 2007**

#### **University of Nevada, Reno**

Chapter members who are interested in attending AAUP “summer camp” and taking a more active role in the chapter should contact Jim Williams immediately. Travel and program costs will be paid by the chapter and state conference.

## **New TBR policy on full-time temporary appointments in danger of violating AAUP tenure standards**

State conference members will continue to monitor the implementation of a recent TBR policy that allows consecutive three-year faculty appointments with no provision for tenure after six years, a flagrant violation of nationally-accepted practices on tenure.

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## ***Women, Graduate Students, Work and Family, Retirement, Governance, and Faculty Compensation and Workload Top AAUP National Advocacy Efforts***

The AAUP is known mostly for protecting **academic freedom and tenure rights**, but it is much more than that. As the only professional association that includes faculty from all disciplines and types of institutions, the AAUP and its **45,000 members strive to preserve and to enhance all aspects of the profession** that were so appealing to us when we entered it.

In recent years, the AAUP national office—funded by member dues—has issued a number of reports that **highlight challenging issues and offer practical solutions**.

Recent reports from AAUP include:

- *Research on Human Subjects: Academic Freedom and the Institutional Review Board*
- *Recommended Institutional Regulations*
- *Academic Freedom and Outside Speakers*
- *Survey of Faculty Retirement Policies 2007*
- *AAUP Faculty Gender Equity Indicators 2006*
- *AAUP Contingent Faculty Index 2006*

**“Patriotic Correctness”  
topic of first  
AAUP visiting  
lectures**



John K. Wilson, Illinois State University, delivered the first AAUP visiting lecture on March 1, 2006. Wilson is the author of the forthcoming book *Patriotic Correctness*. AAUP chapter members funded his visit through their annual dues. The chapter plans more visiting lectures on timely issues relating to national AAUP issues.

## **Three MTSU faculty attend AAUP annual meeting for the first time**

Each year the AAUP meets in June in Washington, D.C. Last year professors **Russell Church (Speech & Theatre), Pippa Holloway (History), and Jim Williams (History)** attended the annual meeting for the first time. Prof. Church reflects on the experience:

*Although I have been an AAUP member since 2000, I had never been active or attended the annual meeting. When I decided to attend, I did not know what to expect. I assumed and sighed, “Oh, another academic conference-convention.” I thought about the feebly prepared, poorly attended and uninspiring presentations I would attend and wondered, “What was I thinking!”*

*However, I was very pleasantly surprised. I found that the presentations, panels, speakers, and other events offered were filled with great work presented by courageous faculty. At every session I heard the voices of faculty committed to making life better and more rewarding for their colleagues. In addition, there were other activities that were truly stimulating and reinvigorating. Events included a Capitol Hill Day with opportunities to visit and to “lobby” legislators, a panel on faculty life—private and professional, and outstanding speakers such as Stanley Katz from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University. One of my favorite sessions was a panel on “The Faculty, the Press and the Public.” The small room was packed and a crowd of more than twenty listened outside the door. There was spirited debate and laughter!*

*My favorite events also included the plenary address by Stanley Katz, Professor, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University and the finalists’ productions from the Film Your Issue competition. The showing of the award-winning documentary—Howard Zinn: You Can’t Be Neutral on a Moving Train—was an inspiring event. This is a film that everyone who believes academic freedom is important should see. **My first Annual AAUP meeting was a great experience and has helped me to think about new goals for the remainder of my academic life.***

Visit [aaup.org](http://aaup.org) for information about this year’s meeting.

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## **TENNESSEE AAUP SEEKS PAID CHAPTER SERVICES OFFICER FROM AMONG FACULTY WITH ADJUNCT APPOINTMENTS**

The Tennessee Conference, American Association of University Professors, seeks nominations and applications for the position of Chapter Services Officer. This will be a part-time position, compensated at \$4,500 per year. The successful nominee/applicant will have advanced web skills and experience as a member of the AAUP in Tennessee and as a faculty member with an adjunct appointment. Duties include establishing a permanent web page for the Conference, assembling e-mail addresses of professors in Tennessee (Conference members and others), and disseminating news items on a regular basis (minimum two per week) pertinent to AAUP issues. The latter encompass the compensation and working conditions of the professorate, especially First Amendment issues, tenure, and due process in the academy. For more information, to apply, or to nominate a faculty member, contact Prof. Tony Blasi at [Blasi3610@cs.com](mailto:Blasi3610@cs.com).

**ANOTHER REASON TO JOIN THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS: TENNESSEE MEMBERS HAVE ACCESS TO PROFESSIONAL LEGAL SERVICES AT FREE OR DRAMATICALLY-REDUCED RATES FROM AN EXPERT ON TENNESSEE LEGAL ISSUES PERTAINING TO ACADEMIA.**

**VISIT THE TENNESSEE CONFERENCE WEB SITE FOR MORE INFORMATION:**  
<http://web.utk.edu/~glenn/AAUP.html>.

## ***“Ideological Exclusion” Lawsuit Continues: AAUP Challenges Patriot Act***

The AAUP’s lawsuit on behalf of Prof. Tariq Ramadan continues against the U.S. State Department and Department of Homeland Security. The case, which was filed jointly with the American Academy of Religion and the PEN American Center and is being litigated by the American Civil Liberties Union, challenges the “ideological exclusion” provision of the USA Patriot Act. That provision allows the government to exclude from the country prominent persons who have allegedly used their positions to endorse or espouse terrorism and was used to exclude Prof. Ramadan in 2004. Ramadan, a Swiss national, is a widely respected scholar of Muslim affairs. Over the years, he had visited the United States frequently to lecture, attend conferences, and meet with other scholars. In January 2004, Ramadan was offered a tenured position at the University of Notre Dame’s Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies. But a few weeks before the beginning of the fall semester, as Ramadan prepared to move his family to Indiana, the U.S. government revoked his visa. In response to the AAUP’s Freedom of Information Act suit for information about the case, a federal court ordered the government to produce a number of the requested documents and statistical information, leading to a dismissal of this part of the lawsuit.

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