

AAUP NEWS

Middle Tennessee State University

February 2008

Adjunct pay effort advances at MTSU and statewide

MTSU moving forward with peer-based pay schedule for adjunct faculty: On November 12, 2007, the MTSU Faculty Senate passed unanimously a motion introduced by then AAUP chapter president Prof. Jim Williams (History). The resolution stated: "For the benefit of all faculty that the university undertake . . . a market study of part-time faculty pay at our peer institutions and create a campus pay schedule for part-time faculty that conforms to the findings of the market study, and that following the completion of the study and creation of the new market-adjusted pay schedule that President McPhee approve said schedule as a campus-wide exception [to TBR guidelines] for the AY 2008-2009." The full text of the resolution is available from your department senator.

To no one's surprise, peer data show MTSU adjunct pay significantly below the peer average: Since MTSU pay for adjunct faculty has not increased for more than ten years, it came as no surprise when our peer institutions reported, on average, significantly higher pay for their adjunct faculty. MTSU's highest pay for adjuncts is \$2100 per three-hour course, only slightly higher than the lowest average in our peer group: the University of Southern Mississippi. Our other peers reported averages generally in the \$2750 to \$3750 range. (The highest average was \$4919 at the University of North Texas, while Florida Atlantic University reported that its highest paid adjunct faculty receive \$6000 per course and Georgia State's highest pay tops out at \$7500). Needless to say, the AAUP chapter will advocate for reasonable increases that put MTSU inline with the median of our peer institutions.

At the state level, the AAUP committee on part-time faculty is lobbying the TBR for system-wide change: Members of the state committee and the AAUP lobbyist have met with TBR Vice-Chancellor Dr. Paula Short, who encouraged the committee to lobby on each campus for their faculty sub-council representatives and faculty senates to pressure campus president's to support an increase. Since the adjunct pay schedule is a guideline (not a policy), it can be changed in the TBR President's Council. The AAUP chapter hopes that President McPhee, who as expressed support of better compensation for all MTSU employees, will express his strong support to his colleagues on the President's Council. AAUP committee remembers report that the guideline may be split so that there is a two-tiered pay schedule for adjunct faculty at universities and at community colleges. The AAUP supports better pay for all faculty in Tennessee and objects to splitting similarly-qualified adjunct faculty into two groups.