

## Trigger Warnings? – or, Trigger Guarantees?

By David Linton

(In the previous issue of *NY Academe* I intended to comment on a new practice that seems to be taking hold on campuses, however, due to a transmission error on my part the entire piece did not make it into print. Therefore, I would like to explore the topic here in full.)

Here's a joke that only the older cohort of readers is likely to get: Didn't a Trigger warning once consist of Roy Rogers saying, "Be careful, the horse bites?"

Well, it seems that there's a new kind of trigger warning in higher education today and it certainly has its own bite. But this time it might be taking a bite out of free expression and willingness to deal with controversial topics. In its most extreme form it requires professors to post content warnings about readings, films, and discussions in case they might "trigger" memories of traumatic or painful experiences from students' past and to exempt them from engaging with the material.

A reaction against such a practice, described as a blight of caution and fear of offending due to an unwillingness to deal with "touchy" subjects, was expressed in an *Atlantic Magazine* article in September 2015 titled, "That's Not Funny!" The author, Caitlin Flanagan, focused on the filters and restrictions used by student activities boards in selecting stand-up comedians

to perform on campus. Rather than select comics who will rattle the chains of obedience and conformity, selection is based on how well the performer will avoid controversy. In the words of the guidelines published by the National Association for Campus Activities, the objective is to avoid anything that is "discriminatory or culturally insensitive." Now, no one wants to advocate insults, bigotry, homophobia, sexism, and other forms of hate or nastiness. But the flip side of the story is that, according to Flanagan, there has emerged a new form of "political correctness" that leads to blandness, fear and, at the very least, over-cautiousness. There seems to be no room under these guidelines for the next Amy Schumer, Chris Rock, Eddie Murphy, Bill Maher or Sarah Silverman. In fact, it has been reported that Chris Rock has given up performing on campuses due to demands for limits on the topics he will cover and the way he will express himself.

It seems likely that this trend will have a dampening effect on faculty selection of materials and assignments in their classes, particularly for junior faculty who are already concerned about student evaluations of courses and postings on sites such as RateMyProfessor.Com. It is yet another reason why faculty need to be actively engaged in crafting governance policies that protect academic freedom at all levels.

taught for the five years (and another 30 beyond that) thereby reducing her loan by half with no interest accumulation, and at the end of the waiver period she was able to pay off the remainder of the principle. It was a great deal all around.

We need to explore such a plan today and include a spin on another successful education support act, The GI Bill.

In this case we could simply reverse the previous flow of funds. Instead of providing monetary support for individuals only after they have served in

the military (which we should continue to do), we should also provide incentives to serve following college graduation by waiving interest on student loans during years of service as well as reducing the principle in significant increments.

The result would be an increased willingness to serve and an increase in the level of educational preparedness among new recruits, a significant gain in times of greater needs for skilled, educated military personnel.

## From the President's Desk: CRISES ABOUNDING

By David Linton



We know there's an education crisis going on when within two days of each other *The Wall Street Journal* ("Closed Minds on Campus" 11/28-29/15), *The New York Times* ("Lend With a Smile, Collect With a Fist" 11/29/15), and *The Chronicle of Higher Education* ("Weaponized Words" 11/27/15) all publish prominently placed stories about problems in academe. Two of the pieces, *Chronicle* and *WSJ*, focus on the issue of language, self-censorship, and race relations while the *Times* article, opening on the front page of the Sunday Business section, uses a "worst case" story of a woman who owes \$410,000.00 in student loans and interest to dramatize how severe the education loan problem is.

Unfortunately, none of the three articles makes the connections among the issues, nor how the current focus on language and political expression has the potential to distract us from addressing the deeply embedded social and economic inequities at the heart of the student debt debacle.

Two days following these three publications, Catharine Hill, the President of Vassar College, joined the conversation with a *New York Times* op-ed essay titled "Free Tuition Is Not the Answer" (11/30/15) in which she addressed calls by President Obama, Senator Sanders, and others for free tuition. She offered a nuanced discussion of the issues, claiming that, "Rather than free tuition, we need targeted policies that result in more money for need-based aid, from both public and private institutions, and from both state and federal governments."

As far as it goes, this sounds like a good idea. Yet, there's another remedy that has a proven history of success that I'd like to see brought back and expanded.

In 1958 during the Cold War, in response to Soviet achievements in technology and science as demonstrated by advances in space exploration, the US government passed the National Defense Education Act (NDEA), a system of supports for a wide variety of education initiatives, including loans for higher education expenses. One of its intentions was

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## The Crisis at The College of Saint Rose

In December 2015, 23 faculty members at The College of Saint Rose received termination letters, the result of the Administration's unilateral decision to eliminate more than two dozen academic programs without engaging in appropriate shared governance discussions and decision making.

Both the New York State AAUP and the national organization have rallied to support the besieged faculty. The letter below is AAUP State Conference President David Linton's most recent letter of support to the Saint Rose community.

### An Open Letter to The College of Saint Rose Community:

I am writing as President of the New York State Conference of the American Association of University Professors (NYSC/AAUP) to express our collective dismay at both the process and the result of the recent announcement by Carolyn Setefanco, President of the College, of the elimination of more than two dozen academic programs and the termination of 23 faculty positions.

President Stefano's letter makes it amply clear that the decision was reached without significant involvement of appropriate faculty bodies. Such a procedure is a violation of well-established principles of shared governance as outlined in numerous AAUP documents. It is also contrary to the sensible ways that many other similar institutions have dealt with the kinds of financial and enrollment pressures that the Saint Rose administration claims to be addressing. But worst of all, it flies

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## New York State AAUP Elections 2016

By Tom Policano

The NYSC Election Committee has obtained the following nominations for the offices listed below for our 2016 election.

These positions are for the Executive Council of the NYSC Steering Committee and for the NYSC delegates to the AAUP Assembly of State Conferences 2016 and 2017 meetings. Duties and responsibilities of persons holding these positions are enumerated in the NYS Conference Constitution (<http://nysaaup.org/library/1/nys-aaup-constitution>). All

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# Assembly of State Conferences Election Call

The AAUP's Assembly of State Conferences (ASC) is seeking nominations for the offices of secretary, treasurer, and member-at-large of the ASC Executive Committee.

The Nominating Committee shall consider nominations from any member resident in a state with an active state conference.

Any eligible candidate whose name is recommended to the ASC Nominating Committee by representatives from three or more state conferences shall be included among the nominees.

The nominations and election of candidates is governed by the ASC Constitution and bylaws available at <http://www.aaup.org/about/elected-leaders/ASC/constitution>.

The ASC elections for all three positions will take place at the June 17, 2016, ASC meeting in Washington, DC, by conference delegates to that meeting.

**Completed nominations must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 28, 2016.**

**Nominations may be e-mailed to the committee at [ascnominations@aaup.org](mailto:ascnominations@aaup.org) or sent via US mail to ASC Nominating Committee, c/o Alexis Pearlstein, 1133 Nineteenth Street NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20036.**

The ASC Nominating Committee members, appointed in accordance with the ASC Constitution and Bylaws, are Tina Kelleher (Towson University), Chair; Greg Comer (St. Louis University); and Jonathan Rees (Colorado State University-Pueblo).

[www.nysaaup.org](http://www.nysaaup.org)

Give the new site a try and send any suggestions or content corrections that you find.

# UUP: Performance-based Funding Would Harm SUNY Students, Campuses

The president of the nation's largest higher education union is urging the State University of New York (SUNY) to drop its Investment and Performance Fund, saying it would be harmful to SUNY and its state-operated campuses.

"As currently implemented, this program reallocates funds meant for all SUNY campuses to a select few, creating winners and losers and pitting departments, programs and campuses against each other," said United University Professions (UUP) President Frederick E. Kowal, Ph.D.

In its 2016-17 budget request, SUNY is asking the state for \$32 million more for the performance-based funding plan, which may tie state funding to specific performance metrics for SUNY campuses. The program received \$18 million in the 2015-16 state budget, but

the fund ballooned by \$100 million when SUNY—on its own—drained money from other resources.

Now, SUNY wants more, and UUP believes that further padding the fund is a waste of state dollars. The Investment and Performance Fund would require campuses to meet certain criteria to be eligible to receive additional state funding.

"With only 36 percent of SUNY's funding now coming from state coffers, we are concerned that the expansion of performance-based funding would be a poor use of scarce resources," Kowal said.

As an example, Kowal pointed to additional 2015-16 state budget funds for SUNY's Educational Opportunity Program—which provides academic

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# PSC Slams Governor Cuomo for Vetoing Bill to Support CUNY, Launches Ads

Governor Cuomo's veto of legislation to protect educational quality for a half-million mostly low-income CUNY students undermines CUNY's ability to offer an excellent education and betrays the hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers who rely on CUNY as a route to a better life, according to CUNY's faculty and staff union.

Both houses of the Legislature overwhelmingly supported the bi-partisan "Maintenance of Effort" (MOE) bill, which would have ensured that tuition hikes go to improve CUNY and SUNY, rather than to offset underfunding from the state. Governor Cuomo has failed to restore CUNY to pre-Recession funding levels, despite the resurgence in the state's economy. Under his administration, per-student investment in CUNY has remained essentially flat. Since 2008, it is down 14%.

After the veto of the MOE bill, the PSC announced a social media ad campaign to press Governor Cuomo to change course and stop starving CUNY of resources. The campaign will feature ads on Facebook and Twitter, an online petition and other tactics aimed at mobilizing the communities who depend on CUNY.

"With this veto, Governor Cuomo signals his refusal to invest in the education CUNY students need. Cuomo's decision to veto the bill will damage the quality of education CUNY can offer and reduce students' access to the top-quality faculty and staff they deserve. If the aim of the veto was to hurt New York's low- and middle-income communities, that aim has been achieved," said Barbara Bowen, president of the Professional Staff Congress, the union of CUNY faculty and staff. "CUNY is many New Yorkers' best opportunity to overcome the deep

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# UUP Innovative Action Plan

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come up with innovative ideas backed by detailed, workable plans to help bring those ideas to fruition. Today, we're proud to present our new set of legislative proposals for 2016, proposals that would help students, SUNY and all New Yorkers," Kowal said.

In an effort to foster the expansion of renewable energy programs at SUNY, Kowal called for the creation of the Green Energy Intellectual Capital Investment Fund.

"We're asking that dollars be budgeted to hire faculty and staff, and to purchase lab equipment and advanced machinery to train students in the burgeoning clean energy field," Kowal said. "Renewable energy is a growing field that creates jobs and economic opportunity for all New Yorkers."

The fund would draw monies from private clean technology and renewable energy businesses that locate on or near SUNY campuses as part of the START-UP NY program. The firms would pay a percentage of the cost to create and expand renewable energy programs on SUNY campuses. The amount they contribute would be matched by state dollars.

UUP is also looking to address the declining numbers of students studying to become teachers by introducing Recruiting and Educating Teachers for All. The teacher opportunity program would target the problem of attracting and retaining teachers by recruiting underrepresented and economically disadvantaged individuals to the teaching profession.

"The teaching profession is in crisis, with enrollments in New York's teacher education programs down by nearly 40 percent in a four-year period ending in 2013," Kowal said. "Who will be there to teach our children years from now? It's a problem we can't wait to address."

Modeled after the state's successful Educational Opportunity Program, the initiative would provide financial assistance and support from counselors to help future teachers earn their teaching degrees. Students would have to be state residents and meet strict income guidelines.

The union is also calling for a change to the state's procurement law that would stop for-profit testing companies from making a profit off of student teachers by charging—and recharging—their fees to take mandatory exams.

Currently, testing companies can enter into contracts with the state to develop and assess tests for free. The companies then administer the tests and charge students fees for their products; students can end up spending \$1,000 or more to take and retake tests.

The test companies have little incentive to fix flawed exams, since the firms profit every time a student retakes a test. The UUP plan would have the State Education Department pay companies to develop the tests. SED would collect testing fees from students.

"Companies like Pearson are taking advantage of struggling students. They are not being held accountable for faulty tests. This is unfair and it must end now," Kowal said.

UUP's final proposal would establish a Teaching Health Care Fellow program at the University at Buffalo's medical school. It would fund new positions for as many as 75 health care teaching fellows—medical and osteopathic doctors—who would be SUNY employees. They would teach, mentor and work with 750 resident physicians at nearly a dozen Buffalo area hospitals.

The program would help stabilize the relationship between the medical school and Buffalo area hospitals where it would place resident physicians. The university is the only SUNY medical school without an attached hospital.

The union's proposal asks for \$15 million in state funds to pay for the supervising physicians—who make up half of the medical school faculty, but who are not now paid by the state. This proposal supports the transformation of health care advocated by the Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) program in New York State and the Federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

"Our four programs are indicative of the leadership and foresight we bring to public higher education. We look to working with state lawmakers to gain approval of our proposals," Kowal concluded.

# Performance-based Funding

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support and financial aid to eligible low-income students who want to attend college. Under performance-based funding, the increased EOP funds would be allotted to a few arbitrarily selected campuses. EOP programs at other campuses would be shut out of this funding.

"We must ensure that every SUNY campus and every SUNY student has access to programs supported by tax dollars—not just a select few," Kowal said. "SUNY must be fully funded to provide a quality public higher education for all New Yorkers."

# PSC Slams Governor Cuomo

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racialized gaps in opportunity and income that divide our city. New Yorkers who count on CUNY need to know that the governor has made the political calculation not to invest in their children's college education and in the future of their communities."

Five years of tuition hikes, which the governor argued would "[make] it possible for public university systems to add faculty, reduce class size, expand program offerings, and improve academic performance" have instead gone to fill holes left in CUNY's operating budgets. The hole this year: \$51 million. Another tuition hike is proposed for CUNY's four-year colleges this year.

The MOE bill would have protected students' tuition dollars and the quality of their education by requiring the state to fund predictable increases to CUNY/SUNY operating costs, such as inflationary rises in utilities, rent and salaries. Without adequate state funding, CUNY

# The New York State AAUP 2016 Elections

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active members of the AAUP in New York State were invited to stand for election to a position on the Executive Council.

The open positions are listed below.

- NYSC President 2016-2020: **Sally Dear Healey**, SUNY Cortland
- NYSC Vice-President 2016-2020: **Jeffrey Baker**, Monroe Community College
- NYSC At Large Member 2016-2020 and AAUP ASC Delegate 2016 & 2017: **Steven Goldberg**, Adelphi University
- NYSC At Large Member 2016-2020 and AAUP ASC Delegate 2016 & 2017: **open**

# NYS AAUP Executive Director's Report

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David Linton who is NYSC President, Professor Emeritus Marymount Manhattan College. His topic, Upcoming changes in Middle States Standards, was based on a report prepared by our NY Academe Editor, Jeff Kraus of Wagner College.

The speaker presentations were followed by a very lively panel discussion moderated by our Vice President, Sally Dear-Healey. Excellent networking connections and actionable resolutions were made during the two-hour discussion.

## NYSAAUP.org update

At our NYS AAUP Conference Spring 2015 at Columbia University I asked for a modest budget to perform a complete rebuild and updating of our conference website. Most of the work is completed at the time of this writing except for the migration of some of our archive information. Some of the features of the new site are:

■ Complete new design including our conference logo to reflect the newest color scheme of the National AAUP.

■ A more intuitive menu bar that includes buttons for Home, About Us, FAQ, News & Events, Forum, Library, Contact. The Library and Contacts buttons have drop down sub-menu options.

### The Library button sub-menu includes:

- NYS AAUP Constitution
- AAUP - Censured and Sanctioned Institutions in New York
- NY Academe Issues
- NYS AAUP Chapter Service Program
- NYS AAUP Government Relations Program

### The Contact sub-menu includes:

- NYS AAUP Conference about your question
- AAUP leaders of the NYS AAUP Conference

## The NYSC Election Committee is:

- **Pat Cihon** [ pcihon@syr.edu ] - Chair
- **Mary Rose Kubal** [ MKUBAL@sbu.edu ]
- **Anne Friedman** [ afriedman@bmcc.cuny.edu ]

## Our Election Process is as follows:

- By January 15th, 2016, biographies and election statements for those that have been nominated will be posted on our nyassup.org website.
- Nominations for the open position and for all positions will include a write-in option. The nominees receiving the most votes will win the election.
- The Election will be piggybacked onto the AAUP National elections that are conducted in the spring and all NYS AAUP Conference will get the NYS Election slate in their AAUP election package.

- AAUP leaders in NYS Institutions
- AAUP National leaders
- Our affiliated organizations
- Representatives in the NYS Government
- NYS representatives in the US Federal Government
- or for information on how we can help you
- A forum that gives all NYS AAUP Members automatic registration approval based on your AAUP ID so you can participate in our discussions. Qualification will be based on AAUP NYS membership lists (3789 as of 11/3/2005. As we get updated membership spreadsheet lists from National AAUP there is a wizard that lets me update the website registration eligibility information. Others that are not NYS AAUP members will also be allowed to register but their request will have to be approved manually. We are hopeful that the registration feature will help manage spam and off-topic posts in our forums.

■ The Institution Contacts list has been updated and there is a form button for leaders to update what we have posted. This page can be sorted by Institution, number of members, contact person name, or email address.

■ The site has an intelligent search agent that allows you to modify which part of the site your search criteria will be pulled from.

**Please give the new site a try and do get back to me with any suggestions or content corrections that you find.**

## New York State AAUP Conference Spring 2016

The NYS AAUP Conference Spring 2016 will be held at Marymount Manhattan College in NYC April 22-23rd, 2016. The agenda and registration information will be posted on the nysaaup.org website. As always we extend this invitation to all NYS AAUP members – **do please join us!**

# The NYS AAUP Executive Director's Report

By Tom Policano

I will be reporting on the NYS AAUP Conference Fall 2015 that was held at the Albany Law College on October 24-25th, 2015, our new NYSAAUP.org website and its features, and our upcoming NYS AAUP Conference Spring 2016 to be held at Marymount Manhattan College in NYC April 22-23rd, 2016.

## NYS AAUP Conference Fall 2015

Thirty-four faculty members attended our NYS AAUP Fall 2015 Conference—Organizing Faculty that was held at The Albany Law School October 23-24th, 2015. On the day before the conference I met with the Saint Rose College faculty regarding issues that are reported upon in more detail elsewhere in this issue of NY Academe. Later that night I also participated at a similar meeting of The Sage Colleges' faculty who had invited Risa Lieberwitz to address them.

These two schools and several others in New York state are in economic and academic crisis. Administrations are bypassing AAUP principles of shared governance and academic freedom in making changes in curriculum and the renewal of faculty, some tenured, in order to address financial and enrollment issues.

Faculty want to be involved, but the administrations are dictating the outcomes they desire without any significant involvement or leadership by the faculty who are best able to evaluate and revise programs of study. We brought our state conference to the Albany area to help. We had four keynote speakers:

Risa Lieberwitz who is Professor of Labor and Employment Law in the Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR) and an Associate of the Worker Institute at Cornell. She is General Counsel of the national AAUP, and is a member of AAUP Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure. Risa's topic was Expanding Unionization in Private Universities: Labor Board Sets New Tests for Whether Private-College Faculty Members Can Unionize.

Fred Floss who is Professor and Co-Director, Center for Economic Education at SUNY Buffalo State. State Conference Committee on Government Relations Chairperson. His topic was Organizing Higher Education - AAUP & UUP Working Together.

Tom Policano (myself) who is NYSC Executive Director, Past President of the Rochester Institute of Technology AAUP Chapter, VP of RIT Academic Senate, seven year member of the RIT Academic Affairs Committee. My topic was Your Faculty Handbook the Pearl of Shared Governance.

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# The UUP Unveils Action Plan for 2016

Fulfilling a promise that the union would be a catalyst for positive change, United University Professions President Frederick E. Kowal, Ph.D., introduced the union's 2016 legislative action plan on December 15.

The agenda includes proposals to create and expand green technology and renewable energy programs at the State University of New York, and to increase diversity in teaching in New York by creating an opportunity program to recruit underrepresented and economically disadvantaged students to become teachers.

“When I became president of UUP, I pledged that we'd

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# The Crisis at The College of Saint Rose

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in the face of good sense and intelligent management.

The success of any institution like The College of Saint Rose depends in large part upon the level of confidence and commitment of its faculty and staff. College campuses are not factories where the morale of the employees is irrelevant to the production of widgets. Sadly, the ill-considered and arrogant behavior of the President, Board and administrative team is sure to have the opposite effect of that which it claims to intend: further destabilization of enrollment, lowered commitment by faculty to recruitment and retention, insecurity and a steady drain on the talent bank of every department. It is hard to imagine a better way of undermining the quality of the college than the steps that the administration has taken.

If it weren't so devastating in its impact, one could find some wry irony in the wording of President Stefanco's letter and those that the terminated faculty members have received. Her letter begins with the salutation "Dear Colleagues." But there is nothing "collegial" about the way the faculty are being treated nor the way the decisions were made. Furthermore, in her letter and in the termination letters one finds variations on use of the phrase "the College has decided" as though "The College" was the President. It seems that the President is following the lead of another royal personage and believes "L'Ecole C'est Moi."

The AAUP urges the Board of The College of Saint Rose to reconsidered its hasty decision, to rescind the termination letters, to suspend the program cancellations, and to enter into a full and open dialogue with the faculty and all other interested parties in order to arrive at plans that will advance the College's reputation and stability without threatening its identity and its future.

The AAUP, at both the state and national level, stands ready to assist in repairing the damage that has been done in any way we possibly can.

David Linton, Ph.D., President - NYSC/AAUP

# Re-visioning Collegiality in Academia; The Role of the AAUP

By Sally Dear-Healey, PhD · Vice President, NYSC AAUP; Chair, NYSC Committee on the Status of Women in the Academic Profession; District VIII Council Representative AAUP National; Member, Committee WAAUP National,

When I came to academia as an undergraduate student I was clearly unaware of the complexity of relationships – personal and professional – that formed the structure of the university. While I don't mean to sound naïve, from my limited student perspective all my teachers seemed to get along and I never heard any complaints about the administration. Now, perhaps because I am trained as a sociologist, or because I have made my way through the terminal degree and taught at several colleges and universities, my eyes are wide open and I see things much more clearly.

Articles written about “managing academic relationships” have tended to focus on the graduate student, e.g. dealing with stress, developing a supportive community, choosing an advisor and committee; teacher-student relationships in general; as well as romantic relationships between faculty members and between students and their teachers. However, very little has been written about relationships between and among academics. The term often used to describe these relationships is collegiality, defined by Merriam-Webster as “the cooperative relationship of colleagues.” But true collegiality is – or should be – so much more than that.

In a cursory search of articles the only one I could find that seemed to directly address this issue was in the January 18, 2013 issue of *Inside Higher Ed*. The article, entitled “What is a Colleague?” by Mary Shine Stewart, references her career column in *Inside Higher Ed* called “A Kinder Campus” (<https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2013/01/18/what-makes-good-colleague-academics-weigh-essay>). Over one winter break Stewart sought out definitions of the word colleague from some of her contacts. One of the descriptors they came up with was encouragement. According to Stewart, “Encouragement helps us do our best work, top-down, grassroots-up, and side to side.” Another was support. Here she quotes David Sierk, assistant professor of English at Cuyahoga Community College (CCC) Eastern campus, as saying

Someone is not a colleague simply because he or she happens to work in the same place as you do, or even the same hallway or department. Rather, a colleague is someone who listens and helps a peer when it would be easier just to focus on his or her own responsibilities.

Honesty was third in the list of collegial qualities. The example given did not, at least according to my expectations and experience, exemplify this quality. Instead I would have liked to see an emphasis on transparency (yes, I know this is an overused buzz word, however it is still a viable quality to possess) and truthfulness.

Adviser Julie Larsen commented on the word collaboration, and suggested that a colleague “will support you and aid in your professional development and training...challenge you when needed, but also be willing to stand by your decisions...” How many of us have actually experienced this type of collaboration from our own ‘colleagues’?

As I read through the article I found myself feeling a host of emotions, not all of which were positive. Take for example the offering of the word continuum as an example of collegiality. Carrie Buchanan, assistant professor at the Tim Russert Department of Communication and Theatre Arts at John Carroll University, defined a good colleague as “...someone who has your back, and for whom you try to provide the same kind of support.

A bad colleague actively undermines you...” Don't get me started on this one! She adds “Attitudes of full-timers toward part-timers can depend very much on whether they, and their department, see part-timers as being at approximately the same level.” Rapport was the next term used, described briefly as “time spent talking over the fence.” Stewart then adds the words risk and opportunity to the list.

While these may not initially seem relevant to collegiality, the explanation provided by Laura Pasquini, academic counselor and instructor with the Office for Exploring Majors in Undergraduate Studies at the University of North Texas, is inspiring. She argues, “Let's have student affairs, faculty, academic affairs, graduate teaching fellows, researchers, and administrators play in the same sandbox.” The last term deemed relevant to collegiality was guidance. Here Joan Steidl, assistant professor and program coordinator in human services at Kent State University (Ashtabula), suggests that

A colleague is a person who challenges me to grow as a professional, who helps me find the positive in situations when I have temporarily lost hope or am filled with self-doubt. A colleague may take on different roles: coach, counselor, confidante, model, scholar, friend (sic).

John Panza, assistant professor of English and humanities at Cuyahoga Community College, Eastern campus, echoes those sentiments, “A colleague is someone who recognizes you as an equal, respects your opinions, and values friendship as much as the work relationship.”

My own story serves as an example of how some of these terms have played out in my career in academia. As I am sure it is with others, my experiences with collegiality have varied within departments and between schools. I am also (painfully) aware of how quickly, and under what conditions, things can change within a department, a school, and a university. For example, when I first started teaching in the School of Education and Human Development (SEHD) at Binghamton University, the Dean's office had an ‘open door’ policy where ideas and issues were freely discussed without ramification. Co-workers were friendly and (truly) collegial to each other and faculty and staff had a respectful and supportive working relationship. Then things changed dramatically. SEHD became the College of Community and Public Affairs (CCPA) and a new Dean was

hired. Within a few short months the department of Human Development became a toxic environment for the vast majority of people who worked there. The same faculty and staff who were once very collegial no longer ‘played well’ together, mistrust was rampant, and colleagues became everything but collegial to each other.

Signs of emotional and physical stress and low morale permeated the department. Tenure-track faculty were denied tenure, contingents were ‘non-renewed,’ and long-time staff were either forced to leave or take other positions at the university. People spoke openly of the department being “decimated.” Needless to say this had a trickle-down effect on the students as well, but they too felt powerless to do anything.

Then there was the “scandal” – allegations that university officials had “manipulated” the Department of Human Development “in part to make room for academically challenged basketball players” and attempts to get professors, aka me, to change grades for students who were also athletes. The ensuing million dollar “audit” of the university, commissioned by the State University of New York Board, described a “litany of transgressions.”

The following article, entitled “At Binghamton, Concern That Sports Still a Focus,” clearly illustrates the main issues and concerns: ([http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/28/sports/ncaabasketball/28binghamton](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/28/sports/ncaabasketball/28binghamton.html?_r=0)

[.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/28/sports/ncaabasketball/28binghamton.html?_r=0). Needless to say any sense of collegiality had flown straight out the window and what was left was anything but.

Since I left Binghamton University, other (and obviously less public) experiences at different universities have also contributed to my understandings of collegiality. Some of these have been overwhelmingly positive, some were decidedly not. Yet each of these experiences has taught me some valuable lessons. As a social activist, and a publically described “whistle-blower,” I'm obviously not content with hearing “That's just the way it is.” Instead I like to think in terms of what do we do with this information and how can we use it to make academia a better place for faculty, staff, and students. Here I draw upon an article by Peter Stewart entitled “Re-envisioning the Academic Profession in the Shadow of Corporate Managerialism” (*Journal of Higher Education in Africa* [JHEA/RESA] Vol. 5, No. 1, 2001, pp. 131-147). Stewart (Peter) recommends the formation of a “critical collegial movement...which will empower academics through increased collegiality” (131). He argues that

The changes in the situation and function of universities have produced an environment in which evolving differential academic identities are constantly under pressure from managerial attempts to determine aspects of these identities. In this context, (he believes), many academics have become increasingly passive and reactive, rather than engaged and creative (132).

He further points to the need for “a review of the core of academic roles...because previous imaginaries of academic professionalism were entangled with privilege and strategies of symbolic domination (cf. Bourdieu 1988; Robbins 1993)” (132). In fact, in his own search for articles on the Council on Higher Education's (CHE's) website, he found “some seventy publications listed, many of which (dealt) with issues of tuition and research; but none of them (were) directly concerned with the changing academic role and working environment, nor with the politics of collegiality” (132). In addition he argues that “certain academic functions have become grossly overloaded,”

resulting in “a sense of malaise, stress and cynicism among many academic staff, and that new initiatives and directives by management are greeted with suspicion, disdain and exasperation” (135).

Referring back to his vision of a critical collegial movement, Stewart maintains that the “move towards a renewal of the ethos and purpose of academics must come from the academics themselves” and that “some form of a collegial movement must be formed.” This is where I see the AAUP stepping up and into this conversation. Quoting the work of Bennett (1998) on “collegial professionalism” he states, “Collegiality, in Bennett's conception, is relational, stressing intellectual community, working together, and co-mentoring” (143). Stewart further argues that

A collegial movement could catalyze the empowerment of academics vis-à-vis managerialism exercised by university managements and government (and) subsequently inspire academics with a new sense of their role, not prescribed from above, such that they are able to intervene creatively in their university context – university politics, academic relationships, teaching and research – to re-establish an academic force in university politics, to promote collegial structures and debate, and to reach decisions on university policy (144).

So what is the AAUP's role in all of this? AAUP offers information and support to individuals, departments, and institutions towards the creation of a collegial atmosphere. At both the state (NYSC AAUP) and the national (AAUP) levels, AAUP is ready and available to talk with you, come to your university, visit your department, and meet with members of the administration to help you make your academic work environment more collegial.

In addition, AAUP has numerous resources available to make this a reality. One example is the statement “On Collegiality as a Criterion for Faculty Evaluation,” approved by the Association's Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure and adopted by the Association's Council in November 1999. An additional resource is “Grappling with Collegiality and Academic Freedom” (Timothy Shiell (November-December 2015 issue of *Academe*).

Moreover, AAUP has the ability to censure a university if it does not comply, as it did with Northeastern Illinois University and the case of Dr. John Boyle. Here AAUP Committee A concluded that “NEIU's president arbitrarily and capriciously used collegiality as an unacceptable criterion to deny Dr. Boyle tenure.”

Directly related to the topic of collegiality, some of the other issues that AAUP regularly addresses include: academic freedom, shared governance, contingent faculty positions, faculty compensation, sexual harassment and assault, civility, conflicts of interest, collective bargaining, hiring and promotions, discrimination, diversity and affirmative action, and professional ethics (for a complete list of issues that the AAUP deals with go to <http://www.aaup.org/issues-higher-education>).

It is time to bring collegiality back to the forefront of academia and AAUP is here to help you. Please contact us and let us know how we can help you, your department, and your college or university accomplish this goal. The NYSC AAUP website is <http://nysaaup.org/> and the national website is <http://www.aaup.org/>.

We look forward to hearing from and working with you!