



"Committed to Academic Excellence"

NEWSLETTER

February 28, 2008

CHAPTER COMMENDS PRESIDENT AND ART FOR INITIATING EVALUATION OF VPAA

Wartburg AAUP commends President Ohle and the Appointment, Rank, and Tenure Committee (ART) for involving the faculty in an evaluation of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) for the first time in five years.

According to ART minutes, on January 31 Chair Keith McClung noted that the VPAA evaluation had not occurred last year as scheduled and agreed to meet with the president about the issue. Not long afterwards, President Ohle consulted with ART, and on February 18, he distributed two evaluation surveys—a twenty-nine item quantitative form and a memo asking participants to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the VPAA's performance. The long survey went to department chairs; the members of the ART, the Educational Policies Committee and the General Education Committee; the assistant deans; and the program coordinators who work with the VPAA. The short survey went to "all other faculty."

The minutes of ART indicate that, since the last review in 2003, the committee has been working steadily to improve the process for faculty evaluation of the VPAA. The committee's first task was to revise the quantitative form used in 2000 and 2003, which it found seriously deficient, in order to make it more academically oriented. Among the new items in the revised form were "Provides leadership for advancing the academic excellence of the college," "Serves as an advocate for the academic program of the college and its faculty," "Supports teaching excellence," "Fosters effective shared governance," "Adheres to the policies and procedures in Faculty Handbook," and "Operates from a principled basis (honesty and integrity)." The committee's second task was to amend the process so that ART would review and respond to the VPAA's self-assessment. ART completed its revisions to the quantitative form in the spring of 2006 and, according to its March 30, 2006, minutes, recommended "that the evaluation instrument be distributed as soon as possible" and that "subsequent components of the evaluation," including "ART review of and response to [the] VPAA's self-assessment," be carried out in the 2006-2007 academic year.

When that distribution did not occur, the 2006-2007 ART asked Chair David McCullough at the first meeting of the academic year to "remind President Ohle to distribute the VPAA evaluation recommended by ART" the previous spring. The December 6 minutes, however, note that "[t]he evaluation of the VPAA has not yet been distributed to faculty by the President's office. Chair McCullough will ask the President to do this early in Winter Term." And the March 1 minutes state that "Chair McCullough has reminded the President's Office to distribute the evaluation for the Vice President for Academic Affairs."

On February 12, 2008, Wartburg AAUP added its voice to that of ART. In a letter to the President Ohle, President Warren Zemke—noting that "any further delay would surely raise questions"—stated that the chapter expected a VPAA evaluation to occur soon. Referring to the 2006 AAUP document entitled *Faculty Evaluation of Administrators* and other AAUP statements, Zemke went on to recommend that, in conducting the review, the president (1) give "all faculty the opportunity to fill out a questionnaire, in this case the one developed by ART," (2) entrust the review to ART as "a body perceived as credible and fair," and (3) issue a report of the evaluation, because (quoting the above-mentioned document) "when the faculty is not provided with a report following a review, there is likely to be pervasive suspicion that its role in the process has not been important."

While the president did not use the recommended questionnaire, the chapter expects that the committee will review and respond to the VPAA's self-assessment, as ART had recommended, and that the president will issue a report of the long-awaited review to avoid the problem just noted.

CHAPTER COMMENDS AAUP STANDARDS TO REGENTS FOR PRESIDENTIAL EVALUATION

In a February 26 letter to board of regents chair Fred Hagemann, chapter president Warren Zemke, writing on behalf of the chapter, urged the regents to consider including faculty in the board's next periodic evaluation of the president (the last evaluation in which the faculty participated occurred six years ago). Zemke also commended to the board the same AAUP-supported standards for administrator evaluation that he had commended to President Ohle for review of the VPAA. In this case, Zemke suggested that the board ask Faculty Council, "as a body ... perceived as credible and fair," to conduct the faculty review of the president's performance. The letter concluded by stating that the college's recent accomplishments—most notably, the completion of Commission/Campaign Wartburg and ten-year reaccreditation by the North Central Association—make the present an especially appropriate time for such an evaluation. "Moreover," Zemke added, "faculty inclusion in the evaluation would improve faculty morale considerably."

SCHOLTZ: RETIREMENT TRIBUTE TO "THE Z-MAN"

President Ohle asked Greg Scholtz to "roast" Warren Zemke at the Faculty-Staff dinner last spring in recognition of Zemke's retirement. Since so few faculty were there to hear it, a slightly abbreviated version of Scholtz's remarks is included here.

I met Warren in the fall of 1989 when I first came to Wartburg. By that time he had already taught here for twenty-three years. I must confess that my first impressions were not totally favorable. I remember finding him a bit intimidating—well, he's large, for one thing, and, when he's not being jolly, he can come off as brusque and sometimes even austere.

But I really got to know him in the fall of 1992 when he approached Ted Reuter and me and asked for our help in resuscitating the Wartburg chapter of the American Association of University Professors. As a few Old Timers may recall, Reuter and I had been forced to appeal our tenure decisions that spring. Let me hasten to add that tenure standards were much, much, higher then. At any rate, Warren must have thought that our tenure experience had radicalized us. And he was right.

It takes seven national members to form an AAUP chapter. Fortunately, people like Don King, Bill Shipman, Janice Wade, Dave Hampton, Moira McCluney, and Steve Main had kept up their memberships during the years of inactivity, so, with the addition of Ted and me, we were easily able to surpass the required minimum. After we elected Warren president, one of his first actions was to write a letter to President Bob Vogel to give him the "good news." In this letter (dated October 19, 1992), Warren lists the officers, states that the new chapter members were looking "forward to contributing to the promotion of the interests of higher education and the welfare of the academic profession at Wartburg," and mentions that "the revision of the faculty handbook would be a foremost concern." But Warren also hints, ominously, that "there are other concerns as well." And then there's this classic Warrenism: "I am excited that our chapter has been rejuvenated!" Just think how excited Bob Vogel must have been.

Well, that was fifteen years ago. Since then, as Warren relates in the reminiscences printed in last week's *AAUP Newsletter*, the Wartburg chapter has grown to become one of the largest and most active in the state, if not the region. Being a modest kind of guy, what Warren doesn't say in his "Reflections" is that, not only was he the person responsible for the chapter's resurrection; he was also the person chiefly responsible for the chapter's success in the last decade and a half.

And Warren's leadership has not been confined to the chapter. He also served two terms as president of the Iowa Conference of the AAUP. And it is no exaggeration to say that Warren is chiefly responsible for the continued success of the conference as well. Even now that he's no longer conference president, he's still, as he is at Wartburg, "the man behind the curtain."

Operating as Warren's AAUP sidekick, I quickly learned a few things about "The Z-man," as some of us call him. One of the first things I learned was that if you're going to have a conversation with him, you'd better set aside a whole lot of time. There are some people who don't open their mouths until they are exactly sure what it is they want to say and how they want to say it. Warren Zemke is not one of those people. His discourse in my mind conjures up an image of a hawk circling and circling and circling and circling before it finally swoops down to take its prey. He always gets to the point, but it can take a while.

The second thing I learned about Warren kind of surprised me. Unlike most AAUP activists nationally, Warren is not a tenured radical, a flaming liberal. In fact he's a card-carrying Republican with a subscription to the *Wall Street Journal*. So what explains his AAUP activism?

The answer, I quickly learned, was his commitment to two ideals: service and professionalism.

As for professionalism, Warren views the college teaching profession as an honorable and dignified one. And he believes training and expertise qualify academic professionals to play a major role in how the educational enterprise is conducted and to pursue their scholarship and teaching without interference from those who lack such training and expertise. That's what the AAUP means by academic freedom and shared governance.

As for service, Warren is what I would call a chronic do-gooder. He is all about sharing his time, talent, and treasure. And not just at Wartburg, but, along with Barbara, in the community and in the church as well. Some indication of Warren's commitment to Wartburg, beyond time and talent, is the fact that over the years he and Barbara have contributed almost \$40,000 to the college. In fact, it occurred to me today when I was composing these remarks that if anybody ever fulfilled the Wartburg mission statement, it is Warren Zemke. He has truly been living a "life of leadership and service as a spirited expression of his faith and learning."

Five minutes is obviously not sufficient time to extol Warren's virtues. I haven't even mentioned his honesty, his courage, his humility, his willingness to change his mind when he's wrong, his insistence on playing by the rules, his perennial optimism, his affability, his sense of humor, and his tolerance for people who don't agree with him. He is truly what in Yiddish is termed a real "mensch." In Leo Rosten's definition (*The Joys of Yiddish*, 1968), a mensch is "someone to admire and emulate, someone of noble character." And, as Rosten goes on to explain, the key to being "a real mensch" is nothing less than character, rectitude, dignity, [and] a sense of what is right, responsible, and decorous." Thank you for your contribution, Warren—and congratulations.

THE COLLEGE'S CURRENT FINANCIAL PICTURE LOOKS ROSY, BUT . . .

We have heard repeatedly from President Ohle that Wartburg College has never been in better financial condition. The college's just-released "Annual Report on Revenues and Expenses," confirms that assertion and provides a more complete view of the financial growth of the college over the past four years.

Table 1 presents operating revenues and operating expenses, as well as the margin by which revenues exceed expenses (all in 1,000s of dollars), along with student enrollments.

Table 1. Revenues and Expenses for 2003-2004 through 2006-2007

<u>Year</u>	<u>Student Enrollments</u>	<u>Revenues (\$1,000)</u>	<u>Expenses (\$1,000)</u>	<u>Revenues over Expenses (\$1,000)</u>
'03-'04.....	1775.....	44,598.....	44,569.....	29
'04-'05.....	1804.....	47,552.....	47,549.....	4 (rounded)
'05-'06.....	1811.....	51,547.....	51,516.....	31
'06-'07.....	1769.....	54,337.....	54,292.....	45

Table 2 compares financial aid with tuition and fees, and tuition and fees with total revenues. The ratio of tuition and fees to total revenue shows a dip below 70% for 2006-07. Apparently, this decline was caused by last year's downturn in enrollment; it demonstrates that Wartburg is very strongly dependent upon tuition revenue for its financial well-being. The table also shows that the ratio of financial aid over revenues has increased steadily over the last four years. That means more financial aid for students, but it also represents an increase in the college's tuition discount rate ("Ratio of Financial Aid to Tuition and Fees").

Table 2. Tuition and Fees and Financial Aid for 2003-2004 through 2006-2007

<u>Year</u>	<u>Tuition & Fees (\$1,000)</u>	<u>Financial Aid (\$1,000)</u>	<u>Ratio of Financial Aid to Tuition & Fees (%)</u>	<u>Ratio of Tuition & Fees to Total Revenues (%)</u>
'03-'04.....	31,520.....	13,294.....	42.2.....	70.7
'04-'05.....	33,880.....	14,669.....	43.3.....	71.2
'05-'06.....	36,435.....	16,078.....	44.1.....	70.7
'06-'07.....	37,988.....	17,477.....	46.1.....	69.9

Table 3 presents information most relevant to the college's future. All data come from Wartburg's IRS Form 990s, which are financial disclosure statements that the Internal Revenue Service requires non-profits to file annually. (Wartburg's Form 990s from 1998 to 2006 are posted at <http://home.mchsi.com/~wartburgaaup/issues.html>). Required information includes net assets, total liabilities, and mortgages. Data in Table 3 cover from 2000-01 through 2005-06 (the 2006-07 Form 990 will not be available until later in 2008).

The large increases in indebtedness in the years 2002-03 and 2005-06 are the result of the college's heavy borrowing through two bond issues in order to cover the costs of the new Science Center plus Student Center and the Wartburg-Waverly Sports and Wellness Center, respectively. The high debt ratio and the college's resulting weak credit rating (BBB-) sorely restrict the college's borrowing power in the future or in case of an emergency.

Table 3. Mortgages and Debt-to-Assets Ratios for 2000-2001 through 2005-2006

<u>Year</u>	<u>Mortgages</u> <u>(\$ millions)¹</u>	<u>Debt-to-Assets</u> <u>Ratio (%)²</u>
'00-'01	10.748.....	19.7
'01-'02	10.154.....	22.1
'02-'03	50.68.....	45.2
'03-'04	49.939.....	43.5
'04-'05	49.173.....	42.1
'05-'06	85.126.....	54.1

¹ Form 990, Part IV, line # 64.

² Form 990, Part IV, lines # 66 (total liabilities) and # 74 (total liabilities plus net assets). The ratio is the total liabilities divided by the total liabilities plus net assets.

—Warren Zemke

WARTBURG GRADUATES CARRY RELATIVELY HIGH DEBT LOADS

On October 30, 2007, the Iowa College Student Aid Commission released information on Iowa's college student debt ("Student Debt and the Class of 2006"). Along with average debt for students from the Regents institutions, the study included data on Iowa's thirty four-year independent colleges/universities. The Commission also reports trends in financial aid for the years 1995-96 through 2005-06, including aid from loans, scholarships, and work study. In Iowa over this period, loans have increased from 18.6% to 23.6% of students' financial aid packages, and work study has decreased from 3.6% to 2.0%. The Commission states, "Throughout this period, over half the budget costs of a college education came from parents, outside employment, or other sources."

The top part of the table compares Wartburg's average student debt for the class graduating in 2006 with that of other private schools in the region (non-Iowa numbers are from the premium online edition of *US News & World Report's "America's Best Colleges"*). For further comparison, the bottom part of the table shows average student debt at the three Iowa Regents institutions and all thirty Iowa independents.

	<u>No. students</u> <u>with debt</u>	<u>Percent</u> <u>with debt</u>	<u>Average</u> <u>debt</u>
Wartburg	296	85.8	\$28,798
Loras	153	68.9	\$27,797
Central	250	86.8	\$27,596
Simpson	228	88.7	\$27,328
Coe	224	77	\$26,625
Cornell	159	68.5	\$24,955
St. Olaf		62	\$23,993
Neb. Wesleyan		79	\$18,944
Luther	427	82.3	\$18,271
Grinnell	195	57.2	\$17,975
Augustana, IL		73	\$17,100
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Iowa Independents	4,358	80.6	\$24,729
Regents Institutions	5,773	66.7	\$23,993