



# WARTBURG AAUP

*"Committed to Academic Excellence"*

## NEWSLETTER

May 14, 2007

### **WARTBURG AAUP COMMENDS ADMINISTRATION FOR ITS HANDLING OF 2007-2008 RAISES**

At the March 1, 2007, faculty meeting, President Ohle announced that every faculty member would receive at least a 2% increase in salary for the next academic year (2007-08). In an apparent attempt to address salary compression, every assistant and associate professor would receive an additional \$600, and every full professor an extra \$1,000 beyond the base 2%. An informal survey by Wartburg AAUP discovered no one whose raise (as detailed in faculty contract letters) was not consistent with this formula.

In September 2006, Wartburg AAUP officers had reported faculty concerns that the administration last year had allocated individual raises for the current academic year by some unknown method other than the customary across-the-board approach. (For a full account, including pertinent documents, see <http://home.mchsi.com/~wartburg-aaup/issues.html#merit>.) Wartburg AAUP therefore commends the Ohle administration for the manner in which it handled raises this year—both for employing the traditional across-the-board approach and for communicating publicly how raises were distributed.

### **HLC TEAM REPORT SUBSTANTIATES FACULTY CONCERNS**

On Tuesday, May 8, President Ohle distributed the report of the visiting team from the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association (HLC), an event that some faculty had been looking forward to with eager anticipation, especially after the date of the report's release was postponed by several months (see "Long-Awaited HLC Team Report Released to Faculty on May 8, 2007," page 5, below). Readers with extremely high expectations, however, may have been somewhat disappointed by the report's brevity. According to individuals familiar with the institutional accreditation process, reports of visiting teams are typically 30 to 50 pages long. This one, however, comprises only 21 pages, with an average of six "evidentiary statements" under each of the five criteria (see below).

Though it may be succinct, the report does contain mainly favorable comments regarding areas for which faculty exercise primary responsibility. These comments are found under Criterion Three (Student Learning and Effective Teaching), Criterion Four (Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge), and Criterion Five (Engagement and Service). In fact, of the fifteen evaluative statements included under these three criteria, all but one are positive.

Criticisms in the report (about a third of the total number of evaluative statements) tend to be directed to areas for which faculty currently bear little, if any, responsibility. Found mainly under Criterion One (Mission and Integrity) and Criterion Two (Preparing for the Future), they also serve to confirm what the faculty has been asserting for several years about the weakened condition of shared governance, the absence of strategic planning, and the college's risky financial situation. Some highlights:

#### *Shared Governance*

- We sense that the college has made efforts to find a shared consensus on the direction of the college, but it is clear that all parties continue to struggle with this issue. Not only are faculty concerned about having an important role in helping to guide the College's future, but there are anxieties about some of the recent directions the college has taken (e.g., the Wellness Center partnership with the local community).
- In both group and individual meetings, faculty and staff expressed concern and frustration that they often were not involved in discussions about the future of the college. As planning processes evolve, campus leaders must make extraordinary efforts to involve the commitment and expertise of faculty and staff in determining the strategic direction of the institution.
- [R]ationales for decisions are not always communicated effectively so that the campus as a whole can understand and support them. Decision-making in general would benefit from a greater level of transparency and consultation, particularly at the cabinet level.

- To build an even stronger college community, board members, cabinet officers, and faculty should make a concerted effort to listen to one another, to demonstrate mutual respect at all times, and to recognize that all parties are deeply committed to the success of the college.
- There are untapped resources among the faculty and staff which should be engaged in the development of enrollment and retention management strategies including an examination of the impact of current financial aid policies.

### *Planning*

- Commission Wartburg, although not a strategic plan in the traditional sense, identified a number of near-term resource needs to which the college has directed its efforts since 2000. As a more traditional strategic plan is developed, clear efforts should be made to align budgeting and other financial decisions with the academic mission and core purposes of the College.
- As planning processes evolve, campus leaders must make extraordinary efforts to involve the commitment and expertise of faculty and staff in determining the strategic direction of the institution.
- Proactively adopting enrollment management policies to counteract the declining demographic realities of the upper Midwest will be crucial to the College's future success.
- Faculty and staff members and students expressed concern and confusion about the number of seemingly disconnected approaches to campus diversity.
- Continued efforts should be made to develop and implement an institutional diversity plan that integrates diversity initiatives across the campus, is embraced by faculty, staff, and students, addresses campus climate issues, and increases the number of diverse employees and students.

### *Finances*

- Although Wartburg's 2005-06 fiscal year ended in May 2006, the team did not have access to the audited financial report from that year at the time of our visit [the second reference to this particular issue]. That report will reflect the full impact of the \$87 million of debt that the college has now incurred, an increase of more than 75% since 2004-2005. It was clear from our review of previous financial reports and discussions with members of the cabinet and the board that expansion of the debt load (related primarily to the construction of the Wellness Center) is perceived as "a risk," particularly in light of possible enrollment management challenges in this tuition-dependent college.

The visiting team apparently considered the college's financial problems to be so serious that it required the college to submit a "**progress report**" to the Higher Learning Commission by November 1, 2010. This report must contain information "for the previous three academic years related to enrollment, retention, and net tuition revenue, as well as a detailed report on whether the financial projections of the Wellness Center have been met to date." If the report does not satisfy the HLC, "a focused visit may be required." (In its November 16, 2005, letter to the Board of Regents, Wartburg AAUP had expressed similar concerns about the debt incurred to fund the Wellness Center and predicted that it would affect the college's upcoming accreditation. See [http://home.mchsi.com/~wartburgaaup/files/AAUP\\_to\\_Board\\_11\\_05.pdf](http://home.mchsi.com/~wartburgaaup/files/AAUP_to_Board_11_05.pdf).)

On a happier note, the administration did receive special recognition for Commission Wartburg, about the success of which, the report states, "there can be little doubt. . . Enrollment has increased, there are more faculty members, the curriculum has been strengthened, and the facilities are first-rate."

One glaring factual error in the report (which might have been corrected had members of the Steering Committee been allowed to review the draft) is this statement: "[T]he recent inclusion of faculty leaders in some . . . Board of Regents meetings is an important step in improving communication among the faculty, the administration, and the board."

And, finally, since Wartburg AAUP's October 30, 2006, letter to the visiting team is the only document to mention the issue, the chapter deserves credit for the inclusion of this recommendation in the consultative section of the report: "There should be continued attention to . . . salary compression at the associate and full professor ranks." (See "Salaries Show Severe Compression; Top Two Ranks Continue Relative Decline," page 6, below.)

### **ZEMKE REFLECTS ON 41 YEARS AS A WARTBURG FACULTY MEMBER AND AAUP ACTIVIST**

As I look back on my 41 years as a professor of chemistry and AAUP member at Wartburg College, I find the following impressions and observations most worth sharing. First of all, I have noticed that presidents at Wartburg seem to hang on while deans come and go. During my four decades, the college was

led by only four presidents—Bachman, Jellema, Vogel, and Ohle. But over the same period, twelve men and women held the office of academic dean—Chellevoid, Hellerich, Matthias, Christiansen, Steeples, Schnabel, Williams, Welch, Haaland, Pence, Smith, and Menzel. Of these twelve, only four came from the ranks of the Wartburg faculty (Chellevoid, Matthias, Christiansen, and Williams), and all of these four held interim, one-year appointments. If interim deans are removed from the count, the average tenure of a Wartburg dean of the faculty in the last 41 years has therefore been 4.5 years.

Speaking of administrators, the number of top administrators has exploded since I first came to Wartburg. John Chellevoid, the dean who hired me in the summer of 1966, had been promoted to become the college's only vice president by the time I arrived on campus in the fall. He was replaced in the dean's office by Mahlon Hellerich, who had been hired to spearhead the implementation of the new 4-4-1 academic calendar. But today there are *five* vice presidents—even though student enrollments have risen only 24% since 1966. Moreover, while ranked faculty have increased by 24% over the last nine years (according to the college's 2006 HLC self-study report), administrative staff have increased by 37%. In other words, while the college has increased the number of faculty appointments to accommodate the 21% increase in student enrollments from 1997 to 2005, the increase in administrative appointments outpaced the increase in faculty appointments by *more than 50%*.

Can you believe that the Wartburg administration for several years actually included a provost? In the 1980s President Vogel promoted Dean of the Faculty and Vice President for Academic Affairs Ed Welch to that newly created position. The dean of students (now called the vice president for student affairs) became the assistant provost and directed the office of student affairs. Thus, under Welch, student affairs was subordinate to academic affairs, a situation that did not survive Welch's departure in 1989.

It is noteworthy that direct communication between faculty and board members has not always been as infrequent, informal, and brief as it is today. For example, until the 1980s, the faculty personnel committee (now the Appointment, Rank, and Tenure Committee) consisted of 5 members: two tenured faculty elected by the faculty, two administrators (the president and the dean of faculty), and the chair of the Board of Regents. When the faculty personnel committee became faculty-only, the faculty lost regular, substantive faculty-board interaction: in the "good old days," the chair of the board participated with faculty in discussions about salary and about tenure and promotion before any recommendations went to the board for final action.

In regard to faculty appointments, many newer faculty may not know that while tenure-line appointments were the norm at Wartburg when I first arrived on campus, the college deviated from that norm at least once. In the early 1980s, President Vogel and Dean Welch ceased offering tenure-track contracts to new appointees and instead offered 3-year renewable term contracts, a decision that may have stemmed from uncertainty about student enrollments, which had fallen from 1450 to 1100 during my first 15 years at Wartburg. Faculty felt much anxiety about how the new hiring policy would affect the quality of the faculty, and therefore teaching, at Wartburg. But by 1987 the policy reverted to tenure-track contracts, perhaps because enrollments were increasing or perhaps because the visiting accreditation team from the North Central Association had criticized our "current hiring policy" in its 1987 report.

My AAUP membership parallels my Wartburg faculty membership. I joined the Association in October 1966, one month after I joined the Wartburg College faculty. I thought the small group of stalwarts on the campus voiced a strong message in support of academic excellence and needed my support. It didn't hurt that my department chair took me to an AAUP dinner and encouraged me to join.

In my early years, Wartburg AAUP resembled a book club, more form than substance. Faculty were allowed to join by paying only "local" or chapter dues, which were minimal, instead of national dues, which, like today, were significantly high for most faculty. It is not surprising that the chapter could always focus on salary increases: annually we submitted resolutions on salary increases to the faculty personnel committee and worked hard at electing at least one AAUPer as faculty representative to that body.

Today, most major committees will include several AAUP members without any need for electioneering. And the chapter's main activities extend far beyond making salary recommendations. In recent years, for example, the chapter has worked to improve faculty personnel and grievance procedures, to involve faculty in the routine evaluation of president and dean, and to upgrade the faculty handbook. Another of

the chapter's primary roles in recent years has been to speak on behalf of faculty interests when administrative actions have not been consistent with the principles of shared governance and academic freedom. And of course the chapter's main function has always been to educate ourselves and others about AAUP principles and policies by means of letters, forums, meetings, the Web site, and this newsletter. [Editor's note: for more on the chapter's accomplishments, see [http://home.mchsi.com/~wartburgaaup/.](http://home.mchsi.com/~wartburgaaup/)]

Conflict between faculty and administration, by the way, is not just a recent phenomenon. The Jellema years (1974-1980) were especially notable for faculty-administrative tension. One big issue was merit pay, which President Jellema tried to implement without consulting the faculty. Opposition was faculty wide, and the chapter had no need to take a position. Witness the 1976 resolution by the full faculty: "We are distressed about an increasing trend that seems to be excluding the faculty from the process of decision-making on our campus" (Ronald Matthias, *Still on the Move: Wartburg College*, [2002], p. 72). Jellema's top-down decision-making style eventually wreaked so much havoc that the Board of Regents asked him to leave.

In the late 1980s—more peaceful times—the local chapter went inactive, even though some individuals maintained their national memberships. In 1992, however, the chapter rose like a phoenix from its ashes, just in time to participate significantly in the revision of the faculty handbook as well as to defend two tenure-track faculty members who were not reappointed in their sixth year, without prior warning, for reasons of "institutional need." For these efforts and others, the national AAUP in 1994 bestowed its prestigious Beatrice G. Konheim Award for Outstanding Chapter in the Nation upon Wartburg AAUP.

One final AAUP-related observation: I have over the years become more and more impressed by the fact that our faculty handbook is loaded with policies and procedures taken directly from the AAUP's *Policy Documents and Reports*, the so-called Redbook. For example, our handbook includes *verbatim* the AAUP's classic statements on academic freedom and tenure, professional ethics, and plagiarism. Our new policy on sexual harassment, furthermore, closely parallels that of the AAUP Redbook, as do our policies on grievances, faculty evaluation, non-reappointment, dismissals, termination, suspension, and disciplinary actions. The team report of the 1996 North Central accreditation visit highlighted the conformity of college policies with the widely accepted professional standards articulated by the AAUP. The report also praised the college for having put "firmly in place a new system that honors the *principles of shared governance* and respect for all members of the community. In recent years, the development of new policies reflect this commitment to involvement, integrity, *full discussion, and disclosure*" (italics for emphasis mine).

As noted earlier, the AAUP is a force on our campus. The chapter has grown steadily since its resuscitation in 1992 and today sustains its membership in the low 50s, which means that Wartburg AAUP has more members than any chapter at any private college or university in Iowa. And because the membership easily exceeds 50% of Wartburg's full-time instructional faculty, Wartburg AAUP is also one of the largest non-collective bargaining chapters, *per capita*, in the Midwest. Not surprisingly, with such a large number of members, the chapter has also provided leadership to the AAUP beyond the local level. Currently both Josef Breutzmann and I serve as officers of the Iowa Conference of the AAUP; formerly I also served two terms as conference president. And Greg Scholtz serves at the national level as an officer of the Assembly of State Conferences and as chair of the Committee on College and University Governance.

As I reflect on the accomplishments I've witnessed in the last 41 years, I must concur with Ron Matthias's opinion (expressed in the title of his history of the college) that Wartburg College is "still on the move." I would only add that Wartburg AAUP is still on the move as well. And I am proud and grateful to have been part of both organizations.

—Warren T. Zemke

#### **DESPITE DIFFICULTIES, CHAPTER MANAGES TO COMMUNICATE WITH VISITING TEAM**

In the hope of contributing an AAUP perspective to the college's self-evaluation for reaccreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association (HLC), chapter officers asked to meet with the HLC evaluation team during its November 6-8, 2006, visit. Following HLC protocol (see HLC, *Handbook of Accreditation* [3rd ed.], Section 5.4), the officers transmitted the chapter's request on September 1 through President Ohle's office, a request confirmed in writing by the president's secretary.

On October 19 the chapter met to discuss the proposed meeting. After reaffirming their officers' decision, members agreed that any statements that chapter representatives intended to make to the visiting team,

for the sake of transparency, should be put in writing and published both in the newsletter and on the Web site. The chapter's observations and suggestions were therefore cast into the form of a letter to team chair Jack Rossmann.

On October 31, two chapter officers delivered to the president's secretary a copy of that letter enclosed in a Wartburg AAUP envelope addressed to Rossmann. That same day the letter was also published in the *AAUP Newsletter*, which, as always, was sent to all full-time faculty, a number of administrative staff, the executive committee of the Board of Regents, and all administrative officers, including of course President Ohle and Dean Menzel.

The president's office did not, however, convey to the visiting team the chapter's request for a meeting, nor did the administration forward the chapter's letter to Rossmann. Since there is no mention of the chapter in the self-study, the team thus did not become aware of the chapter's existence until Monday, when a faculty member being interviewed by one of the team members happened to mention Wartburg AAUP.

However, having learned that there was a thriving chapter on campus and that its officers wished to meet with the team, Rossmann asked the administration to schedule a meeting with the chapter president. Immediately before that meeting, which occurred Tuesday morning, President Ohle handed Rossmann the envelope containing the chapter's letter. During the ensuing meeting, the chapter president went over the contents of the letter with the visiting team chair. (For more on this story, including documentation, see <http://home.mchsi.com/~wartburgaaup/issues.html#hlc>.)

#### **LONG-AWAITED HLC TEAM REPORT RELEASED TO FACULTY ON MAY 8, 2007**

Last Tuesday, President Ohle sent an e-mail memorandum to all faculty and staff announcing that he had "received formal notification" the day before that the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association (HLC) had finalized Wartburg's ten-year reaccreditation decision. Consequently, he added, the report of the HLC visiting team would be posted on the college's Web site by the end of the week (it was actually posted the same day).

May 8, 2007, thus brought the first opportunity for any Wartburg College faculty member—even the members of the HLC Self-Study Steering Committee and of Faculty Council—to read the HLC team report, despite repeated requests from Faculty Council (as recorded in its minutes) and despite the president's having shared it months earlier with his vice presidents and with the members of the governing board.

Originally, the report was to be distributed to the faculty as soon as the draft had been made final, which occurred sometime in early February. In a November 8, 2006, e-mail memorandum, President Ohle had announced that the team report would "be shared with the Wartburg community" after having been "finalized and sent to the Reader's [sic] Panel."

This approach would have been consistent with past practice. In 1996, following the college's last accreditation visit, President Robert Vogel distributed the *draft* report, upon receipt, to President's Council, Faculty Council, and the Steering Committee. (One reason he did so was to allow these various entities to examine it for errors in fact, which the visiting team could then correct.) After receiving the corrected final report back from the accrediting commission, President Vogel then sent copies to all faculty and administrative staff. This distribution occurred before the report was reviewed by the Readers Panel.

This time around, however, the administration did not share the final team report with the Wartburg community when it was sent to the Readers Panel, as the president had stated would happen. Instead, in a February 27 e-mail memorandum, President Ohle specified a new date for the release of the report—"after final [HLC] approval"—which he predicted would occur in June.

The delay in distributing the report naturally fueled speculation about its content, which some began to suspect might not reflect altogether favorably on the administration, a suspicion reinforced by the president's brief oral summary of the report at the March 1 faculty meeting (also given to Faculty Council). Although the president's synopsis accentuated the positive, it left the impression that the team report had confirmed many of the concerns the faculty had expressed in the self study and elsewhere (see "HLC Team Report Substantiates Faculty Concerns," page 1, above).

**SALARIES SHOW SEVERE COMPRESSION; TOP TWO RANKS CONTINUE RELATIVE DECLINE**

Newly released data for 2006-2007 faculty salaries (table 1) and compensation (table 2) reveal that compression at Wartburg College continues to be highly problematic when compared to other private church-related institutions, Wartburg peer institutions, and Luther College. Whether one is assessing salary or compensation, compression is significantly greater at Wartburg College than at any of the other comparison groups. Most egregious is the compression between the instructor and assistant professor ranks.

The data also reveal how faculty salary and compensation have fared, comparatively speaking. Most disconcerting is the fact that full professor salaries have fallen to a record low rating of 4 (5 is the lowest possible). The ranks of assistant and instructor at Wartburg, however, continue to compare most favorably with the ranks of full and associate as well as with their counterparts within the comparison groups. It is also instructive to note that the range of salary percentiles between the assistant and full professor ranks within the comparison groups is never greater than 3 points. At Wartburg College, however, the range is five times larger: the percentile of the rank of assistant professor is a staggering 15 points higher than that of the rank of full professor. A quick glance at the instructor rank only makes one more disillusioned about the structural repression of the full and associate ranks.

**Table 1. Wartburg College: Annual Average Salary (in thousands), Salary Rating, Salary as a Percentage of Salary at Next Highest Rank, Actual Salary Percentile, by Rank**

2006-07	Professor			Associate Professor			Assistant Professor			Instructor		
Wartburg College	65.0 (4)	39	75.2%	54.8 (3)	40	84.3%	48.9 (3)	54	89.2%	48.7 (1)	84	99.6%
Church-Related	68.9 (3)	48	68.9%	56.1 (3)	46	81.4%	47.5 (3)	45	84.7%	40.5 (3)	48	85.3%
Peer Institutions	68.6 (3)	47	69.0%	55.7 (3)	44	81.2%	47.3 (3)	44	84.9%	40.6 (3)	49	85.8%
Luther College	73.6 (2)	60	67.5%	58.9 (3)	57	80.0%	49.7 (2)	60	84.4%	42.6 (2)	60	85.7%

**Table 2. Wartburg College: Annual Average Compensation\* (in thousands), Compensation Rating, Compensation as a Percentage of Compensation at Next Highest Rank, Actual Compensation Percentile, by Rank**

2006-07	Professor			Associate Professor			Assistant Professor			Instructor		
Wartburg College	85.9 (3)	44	76.6%	74.2 (3)	52	86.4%	65.8 (2)	64	88.7%	70.3 (1)	93	106.8%
Church-Related	88.4 (3)	49	68.8%	72.6 (3)	47	82.1%	60.8 (2)	44	83.7%	51.7 (1)	46	85.0%
Peer Institutions	88.4 (3)	49	69.7%	73.0 (3)	48	82.6%	61.6 (3)	47	84.4%	51.4 (3)	45	83.4%
Luther College	96.6 (3)	54	71.1%	78.4 (2)	63	81.2%	68.7 (2)	74	87.6%	56.8 (2)	67	82.7%

Source: AAUP Faculty Salary Survey, 2006-07 (*Academe*, March-April, 2007)

\*Compensation equals "salary plus institutional contributions to benefits."

**Rectangle Block:** Salary/compensation as a percent of salary/compensation at next highest rank.

**Gray Block:** Actual percentile compared to same rank at other IIB (baccalaureate) institutions.

**Gray Rectangle:** Assistant professor salary/compensation as a percentage of full professor salary/compensation.

( ): Salary rating. Each rating represents the percentile interval in which the institution's average salary in a given rank lies (1\* = 95<sup>th</sup> percentile; 1 = 80<sup>th</sup>-94.9<sup>th</sup>; 2 = 60<sup>th</sup>-79.9<sup>th</sup>; 3 = 40<sup>th</sup>-59.9<sup>th</sup>; 4 = 20<sup>th</sup>-39.9<sup>th</sup>; 5 = 0-19.9<sup>th</sup>).

—Bret Billet

**AAUP FACULTY PICNIC SET FOR MAY 23 AT THE RESIDENCE OF TED AND LAURIE REUTER**

Wartburg AAUP invites all Wartburg faculty and their families to join chapter members on Thursday, May 23, for the Fourteenth Annual May Term AAUP Faculty Picnic. As always, pizza, chips, salad, and beverages (including beer) will be provided free of charge (though donations are welcome). Festivities begin at 5:00 p.m. and continue until 7:00-ish. Formal invitations, with RSVP capabilities, will be distributed soon.