



Unit Ties

Faculty Working Together for Superior Education

Spring Spurs Time for Change

Susan Reese

Newsletter Editor

*T*his is a spring of extra significance to me, as I am sitting at my desk, in my office at PSU, writing to you, after a December diagnosis of breast cancer, a mastectomy and reconstruction in January, and some recovery time away.

How much we take for granted. I am so fortunate to be here, cancer-free. Every lilac, every tree, seems a special gift. A friend at my church said he thinks the best thing that can happen to a middle-aged person is to be diagnosed with a life threatening disease and then to survive. I don't know; he may be on to something.

But my intent is not to write another one of those "I'm so lucky I had cancer, it's changed my life" stories that can be kind of hard to swallow, but to bring your focus to the concept of taking things for granted, to being taken for granted.

This issue of *Unities* contains two articles, one by Tom Luckett and one by Gary Brodowicz, that meticulously investigate salary issues at PSU in terms of lack of equity with national, even state, levels of financial

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Reflections on Contract: Trends in Real Salaries

Thomas M. Luckett

Associate Professor of History

*I*n the January election to ratify the contract, the ayes carried 84% of the vote. Compared with political elections this may sound like a mandate, but past contracts negotiated by the PSU-AAUP have typically passed with near unanimity. At 16% this is our largest nay-vote in memory, and it reflects much of the frustration over salaries voiced by

faculty and academic professionals in a series of forums and protests over the fall term. Still, a two-year contract with salary increases totaling 8% (or 9.25% for those who qualify for the low-salary pool) sounds pretty good.

Even if the risk-sharing agreement in article 31 kicks in, salary increases will total 7% (or 8.25% for those in the low-salary pool). Are union members right to conclude that this just isn't enough?

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Maintaining Momentum: Health Care & Salaries

Javier Ayala

Vice President Elect Collective Bargaining & Interim President

A AUP bargaining unit members are the bedrock of this institution. Our values of academic freedom and fairness cut across the academy and are reasons why we are, and will remain, strong. Over the last year your strength and commitment to these core values has produced momentum for negotiations that resulted in a pay increase. Your strength has also changed the landscape of involvement by increasing the size of our membership. This energy and devotion to our core values has resonated well with the public and positioned us for greater achievements in the next round of negotiations. On the horizon are two key agenda items that will require your energy and devotion once again: 1) salaries and 2) health care.

First, salaries: Although we made a salary gain this year, we remain behind our comparator institutions. Additionally, University administration continues to act on bargaining unit salaries as an afterthought instead of a key priority for quality higher education.

Second, health care: Prior to this round of negotiations we had no risk-sharing language regarding health care in the Contract. The insistence by University administration of the inclusion of risk-sharing language regarding health care was a
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Unit-Ties is published on a quarterly basis. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP), established in 1915, is the only National Organization exclusively representing faculty of higher education. AAUP has pioneered the fights for tenure, academic freedom, and due process for all faculty. The Portland State Chapter (PSU-AAUP) operates as both a professional association and as the exclusive collective bargaining agent for all PSU faculty employed at least .50 FTE.

Legislative Report: Insights into Primary Election

Tom Barrows

Dave Barrows & Associates

Oregon's Primary Election will be Tuesday, May 16th this year. With Oregon's vote by mail system, this date is not as significant as it once was. Ballots have already been mailed and a number of voters have already filled them out and returned them. This makes for a significantly different campaign strategy for those who have a primary race.

Instead of a build up to a set date when everyone votes, there is a need for candidates to have a sustained presence in the days leading up to ballots going out and continuing for more than two weeks until ballots have to be in. It is difficult to know who has already voted, so it is almost impossible to target a message specifically toward the declining number of voters who have not yet cast their ballot as Election Day approaches.

Looking at the Governor's race it appears at this point that Governor Kulongoski will get the Nomination from the Democrats, though former Treasurer Jim Hill is giving him real race and showing that he is potentially vulnerable. The Governor has lost a number of endorsements that he received

in 2002, especially among public employee unions.

Lane County Commissioner Peter Sorenson is expected to come in a distant third. A new statewide poll conducted by The Oregonian and KATU-TV shows Kulongoski getting support from 43 percent of Democratic voters while Hill is at 30 percent.

Sorenson is pulling 8 percent with the remainder undecided.

On the Republican side, the same poll shows Ron Saxton leading Kevin Mannix among Republican voters 31 percent to 24 percent. Sen. Jason Atkinson is pushing up from third but making a good showing at 18 percent in spite of his not being as well funded as the other two. There are still a number of undecided voters so this race could go either way.

Looking ahead to the General Election, there is another factor that must be taken into consideration. State Senator Ben Westlund is gathering signatures to get on the ballot as an Independent in the race for Governor. He seems to be gaining some momentum as an alternative to the either/or nature of the partisan race. The Oregonian/KATU poll shows that he has very low name familiarity at this point, but that would likely change if he is able to get on the Ballot in November.

“Looking at the Governor's race it appears at this point that Governor Kulongoski will get the Nomination from the Democrats, though former Treasurer Jim Hill is giving him real race and showing that he is potentially vulnerable.”

Focus Needed on Reviews, Scholarly Agenda, and Minorities

Susan Lindsay

Vice President Grievances & Academic Freedom

Spring marks the time of promotion and decisions from the Provost to be decided by the President in June. Again, as last year, members of the Grievance Committee find ourselves working on several interesting cases.

This year, through positive relationships with OAA, we have been able to settle some cases where it is in the best interest of the University, the Association, and the faculty member to do so without engaging in a formal grievance procedure.

As we saw last year, the trend continues that the majority of cases are women and/or faculty members of color. This continues to be an area of concern for the Association and the Grievance Committee in particular. We have seen very hard working

tenure-track faculty members find themselves against new standards and requirements that exceed letters of offer.

Reviews, reviews, reviews! As tenure-track faculty members, it is crucial that you receive reviews. Your department chair or director is responsible to assure that you are given yearly reviews. These reviews should include an assessment of your progress toward tenure and adequate advice about how to achieve it.

If you do not have a scholarly agenda, now is a good time to start. A scholarly agenda is a plan each faculty member's evolving scholarly goals and activities. Despite what you may have heard about the importance of effective teaching, community outreach, and service, the Grievance Committee finds that scholarship prevails when seeking tenure.

The Grievance Committee meets bi-weekly during the academic year as an eclectic group of faculty advocates from all ranks and schools/colleges. We are seeking new members. Committee members must agree to sign a confidentiality statement because we discuss many sensitive personnel cases. Faculty advocates find their work to be interesting and satisfying as their efforts make a difference for people who are challenged at key times in their career.

There will be an opportunity for excellent grievance training at the AAUP Summer Institute at PSU July 27-30, 2006. If interested in becoming a faculty advocate, please contact Susan Lindsay, VP for Grievances and faculty member in Applied Linguistics, at 5-8257 or Julia Getchell, PSU-AAUP Executive Director, at 5-4414.

Independent Research to Provide Potential Solutions

(Continued from page 2)

step backwards and has moved fully-paid health care closer to the chopping block. Accomplishing positive gains in these agenda items will not be easy. Success will require many actions but, most importantly, it will involve the creation of an active membership and independent research.

Although we have increased our overall membership numbers, we are only at half capacity when it comes to members assuming Unit representative roles. I encourage you to find and meet your Unit representative. If you cannot find him or her, then volunteer to become a Unit representative. Without an identified and engaged Unit leadership group, we will be several steps behind when feedback and action is necessary on salary and health care issues affecting the bargaining unit.

This year we had a budget shortfall. At one point this number was \$4 million, at another \$5 million, then \$7 million. Even today it is hard to pin down University administration on the exact figure. This shortfall not only affected the campus but also eroded AAUP's ability to negotiate properly on salaries and health care with the University administration. Instead of relying on University manufactured data, we must invest in creating stronger independent research and analysis. We need to start conducting and investing in research now to strategically position the bargaining unit for increased salaries and a reversal of health-care risk-sharing language.

Imagine having salaries that are up to par with peer institutions and health care benefits that we can continue to be proud of. Thanks to your imagination, hard work, and a solid bargaining team, this year we moved closer to reality. The next round of negotiations we will get closer to our goals and maintain our core values. By increasing the number of Unit representatives and relying on independent research, we will be successful not only for the membership but for sustaining a quality institution of higher learning.

A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words (here's 295)

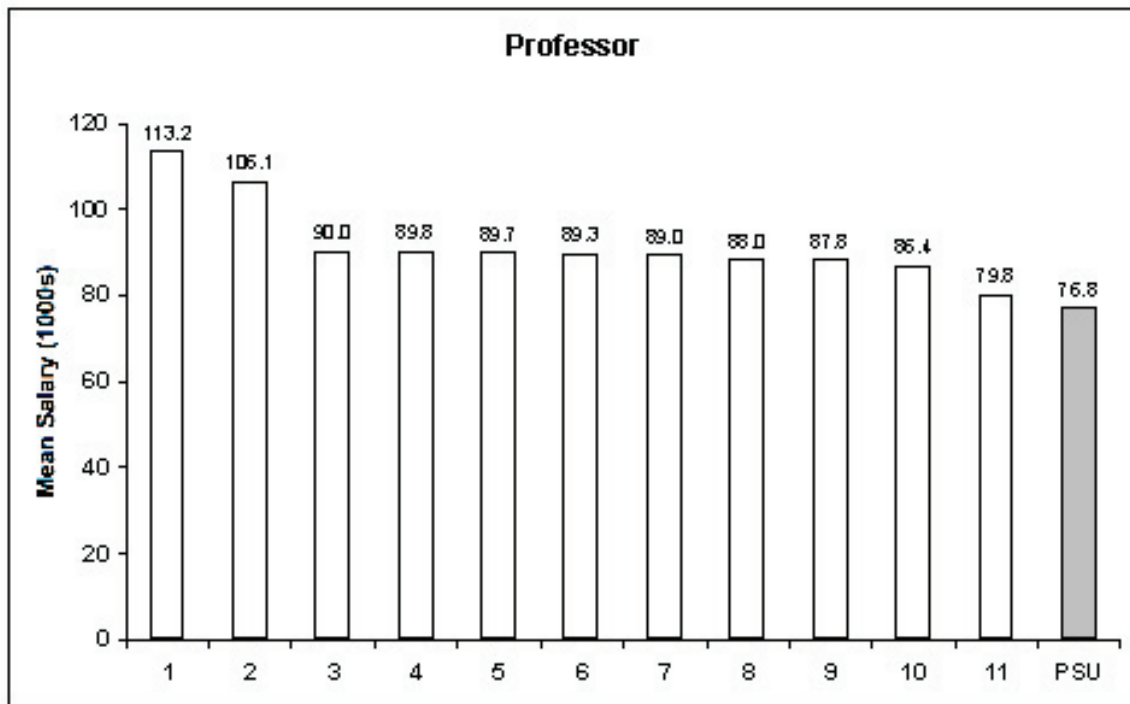
Gary Brodowicz

Councilor

The March-April issue of Academe has arrived (“The Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession”), and I’m sure many readers find that the mountains of data can be overwhelming. If you’re like me, you check out the information provided for PSU and other Oregon universities, wonder whether your salary will ever make it to “average”, and then skip through the various institutions where your friends and colleagues work before you reach for your first drink. The process of comparing your situation with others can be frustrating and discouraging, so in this issue of our newsletter I thought I’d try to simplify some of the comparisons you might want to make. I created an Excel spreadsheet with data from PSU and our statistical peers*, and then constructed graphs that illustrate how the PSU 2005-06 salary data compare at the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, and instructor. I also compared PSU with its “sister” institutions, UO and OSU, at each rank, since our contract lists these institutions as our in-state comparators, salary-wise. Rather than trying to write something for you to think about, I thought I’d try to provide you with visual aids. As they say, a picture is worth a thousand words.

Note: I have also created spreadsheets that illustrate the 2005-6 comparisons for “average compensation”, since we are often reminded that “salary” comparisons don’t tell the whole story. In addition, I’ve summarized comparison data for 1994-2006, using the PSU statistical peers as well as the OUS-derived list of comparator institutions**, and I’d be happy to send it to those of you who request to learn more about how you can be involved in PSU-AAUP. To get the data, simply send an e-mail to brodowiczg@pdx.edu with the subject line “I want to help.”

| | | | | |
|------------|-----|---------------------------|--|--|
| *PR | | | **OUS Comparator Institutions | |
| 113.2 | 1 | George Mason U. | (list shared by PSU, OSU, and UO) | University of Iowa |
| 106.1 | 2 | U. of IL at Chicago | | Western Michigan University |
| 90.0 | 3 | U. Memphis | University of Arizona | SUNY Buffalo |
| 89.8 | 4 | Western Michigan U. | San Diego State University | North Carolina State University |
| 89.7 | 5 | Indiana U./Purdue U. | University of California Davis | University of North Carolina Chapel Hill |
| 89.3 | 6 | U. of Toledo | University of California Santa Barbara | University of Toledo |
| 89.0 | 7 | U. of Texas at Arlington | University of Colorado Boulder | Oregon State University |
| 88.0 | 8 | U. of Oregon | University of Illinois Chicago | University of Oregon |
| 87.8 | 9 | San Diego State U. | Indiana University Bloomington | University of Memphis |
| 86.4 | 10 | U. of Wisconsin-Milwaukee | IUPUI | University of Texas Arlington |
| 79.8 | 11 | Oregon State U. | Purdue University | George Mason University |
| 76.8 | PSU | Portland State U. | Iowa State University | University of Washington |
| | | | | University of Wisconsin Milwaukee |



Average 90.5
Median 89.2
Minimum 76.8
Maximum 113.2

Long-term Trends Reveal Growing Income Inequality

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A good rule of thumb is that the package of salary increases in any given 2-year contract should exceed the biennial rate of inflation (that is, the percentage rise in prices over a two-year period). Here in the Portland-Salem area, the biennial inflation rate has averaged 5.05% over the last 10 years.

If we negotiate salary increases of exactly this percentage then the average purchasing power of the bargaining unit holds steady – anything less and we fall behind. If we obtain more than 5.05% then we are probably making progress (however slowly) toward the Holy Grail of parity with our comparator institutions.

Across-the-board increases of 8% (or even 7%) are considerably ahead of inflation over the period of this contract alone. On the other hand, the contract cannot be judged in isolation since it comes on the heels of a two-year state-mandated salary freeze. The quadrennial rate of inflation has averaged 10.36% for the last decade, so that salary increases in the current contract are still far from enough to make up for all the damage done by the previous contract. Whether or not they knew the exact figures, union members were certainly aware of this when they voted in January.

The problem with the above analysis is that it ignores many other determinants of the movement of average salaries, including new hires and terminations, promotions, and individual pay increases negotiated outside the contract. To get a better sense of how real salaries have actually evolved at PSU, I took the OUS's salary figures and adjusted for inflation.³ Figure 1 (see insert) shows average faculty salary by rank for the

last twenty years in constant dollars. (Unfortunately, I have not been able to obtain comparable data for academic professionals.⁴)

The numbers move at first in surprisingly regular 6-year cycles: a peak in 1987-88, a trough in 1990-91, a new peak in 1993-94, a new trough in 1996-97, and then a long, hopeful rise until we hit the salary freeze in 2003-2004. For the two higher ranks (full and associate professors) the long-term trend is strongly upward, but for the two lower ranks (assistant professors and instructors) it is flat.

This difference in long-term trends reveals a growing inequality of income at PSU. The point becomes clearer in figure 2 (see insert), where the average salary of the three lower ranks is calculated as a percentage of the average salary of full professors. While associate professors have lost some ground in comparison with their senior colleagues, assistant professors and instructors have lost far more.

The dotted lines at the right side of figure 1 roughly estimate the effects of the 5% across-the-board increase we have received under the new contract in January-February 2006.⁵ The percentage increase is the same for everyone, so it does not exacerbate the widening income gap, but nor does it remedy the problem. For full professors, the increase raises average real salaries to their highest level ever. For associate and assistant professors, it returns real salaries to roughly their level before the pay freeze. For instructors, amazingly, the increase actually fails to halt the decline: they will have less purchasing power now than one year ago.⁶ This too helps to explain much of the 16% nay-vote on the contract.

Over the same period the PSU

faculty has also witnessed a downward demographic shift toward the lower ranks, as shown in figure 3 (see insert). As recently as 1997-1998, full professors were half the full-time instructional faculty; today they are less than a third. The ranks of assistant professors (one third of whom today are fixed-term) have risen by nearly half; those of instructors have more than double.

Combine this shift in headcount with stagnating real wages at the lower ranks, and we understand better why the average real salary for all ranks has also stagnated (fig. 1). If current trends continue, associate and full professors can perhaps look forward to a day (however distant) when they will earn salaries comparable to their peers at other universities, but there will be fewer of them, and they will have achieved parity at the expense of their junior colleagues.

That would be a shame. Beyond a certain point, inequality between ranks degrades faculty devotion and collegiality, and undermines our ability to hire and retain junior faculty of quality. The quality of instruction will decline, and with it institutional prestige. As we work toward future contracts, we need, of course, to find ways to raise the real salary of the faculty as a whole. We also need to make sure, however, that salary increases are structured progressively.

**(Please note that all footnotes, sources, and figures are included on special insert.)*

Remember to Take Nothing for Granted

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compensation, along with total lack of synchronicity with cost of living increases in our area. Please read and consider these carefully.

As the sun emerges, warmer, and with greater frequency, as the flowers bloom and rivers and lakes beckon, it is important not to become anesthetized; as we begin to awaken to our gorgeous natural surroundings, no longer taking them for granted, we must not

allow ourselves to be taken for granted. We must not let

“We must not let our guard down, must remain vigilant, and must continue to work together, through AAUP, for greater equity.”

our guard down, must remain vigilant, and must continue to

work together, through AAUP, for greater equity.

Tom Barrows writes of the upcoming election; voting is one way through which we can effect change and take control. So, please stay tuned in to AAUP's regular updates, keep your eyes and ears open, vote, and stop and smell the Portland roses that are coming soon whenever possible. Thank you.

Summer Camp for PSU Faculty Members

All PSU-AAUP members are invited to attend the 2006 AAUP Summer Institute. For the first time ever, this annual event will be held at PSU July 27-30!

The goal of the 2006 Summer Institute is to provide you the opportunity to strengthen your strategic planning skills, enhance your expertise, intensify your knowledge, and network with fellow AAUP members.

The Summer Institute benefits collective bargaining and advocacy chapter members, and any current or potential activists with an interest in developing effective local organizations. The registration fee for commuters (those not needing housing in Portland) is \$200.

PSU-AAUP will pay registration

fees for those who wish to attend. This fee includes all workshop and seminar materials and the following meals:

Thursday : Opening Reception and Welcoming Dinner

Friday: Breakfast, Lunch and Reception

Saturday: Breakfast and Lunch

Sunday : Closing Breakfast

A wide variety of interesting and useful workshops and seminars are offered each year.

This year's workshops include:

- 1. Organizing Contingent Faculty**
 - 2. Membership Development**
 - 3. Grievance and Contract Administration**
 - 4. Faculty Governance**
 - 5. Collective Bargaining**
- including:**

Contract Negotiations
Negotiating Benefits

Resolving Bargaining Impasse
Safeguarding Intellectual Property

6. Government Relations
including:

Oregon, Ballot Initiatives, and You

7. Strategic Communications
including:

Communications and Public Relations Campaigns

Deeds Speak Louder: Events, Demonstrations, and Work Actions

8. Higher Education Data and Research **including:**

Trends in Faculty Status

Faculty Gender Equity

Demystifying Budgets: Analyzing Institutional Finances

Faculty Compensation

If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Julia Getchell 5-4414 or aaup@psuaaup.net. The registration deadline is June 30, 2006.

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**American Association of University Professors Port-
land State University Chapter
Membership Application**

Name _____
Last First M.I.

Campus Home
Mail Code _____ Address _____

Academic Field & Rank _____

Extension _____ PSU E-mail _____

Automatic Deduction Authorization

As provided under ORS 292.043, I authorize the monthly deduction of my dues to the American Association of University Professors, Portland State University Chapter. The amount of the deduction is based on my salary and AAUP status, and is calculated by the AAUP office and the Payroll Office. The monthly deductions will continue until I provide written notification to the Payroll Office.

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Department _____

Date _____

I.D. _____

Annual Dues

Normal Annual dues for PSU-AAUP members are 3/4 of one percent (.0075) of academic salary.

Active Entrant dues (must be new to the PSU-AAUP bargaining unit) are 3/8 of one percent (.00375, half of normal dues).

Send completed form via campus mail to mail code "AAUP"