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Good Contract in Tough Times

Yesterday, members of the University of Akron AAUP chapter ratified a contract with the administration. Akron-AAUP is a collective bargaining chapter that represents over 750 full-time, tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty. The contract covers four years, with a re-opener to address healthcare, tuition remission, and pay for the next three years.

Highlights of the contract include the following:

- The nondiscrimination article adds “gender identity” as a protected classification.
- Governance now provides for the formal review of interim deans in their fourth year, includes "school directors” throughout, and permits faculty to provide anonymous professional written comments when deans are evaluated.
- Compensation includes a 2 percent “bonus” for 2009 and for 2010-11 a 5 percent overall increase: 2 percent across-the-board, 0.75 percent merit, 1.5 percent market, and 0.75 percent special equity adjustments.
- A joint administration/chapter committee will examine healthcare and make any changes in the coming years.
- A comprehensive article on nontenure-track faculty covers the reappointment and promotion of lecturers and instructors and establishes two new ranks, allowing non-tenure-track faculty to be promoted.
- Benefits will be provided to same-sex domestic partners.
- Protection of academic freedom, tenure, and shared governance continues.

Even in difficult economic times, with the help of the national AAUP’s department of organizing and services, the chapter was able to maintain the favorable elements of the first contract while negotiating advances in many areas, including compensation. Sticking to AAUP principles made the difference in this negotiation, says the chapter. (1/29)