The final three decades of the twentieth century were a period of rapid change for the AAUP. In 1971, the Council for the first time formally endorsed collective bargaining. The growth of organized AAUP chapters in the years that followed brought new political power to proponents of faculty collective bargaining, leading in 1975 to the creation of the Collective Bargaining Congress. The Association’s efforts to organize faculty members at private institutions, however, were dealt a serious setback by the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1980 ruling in NLRB v. Yeshiva University. The AAUP’s progress in other areas during this period is most apparent in the work of committees. The Special Committee on Nontenured Faculty is cited as an example of the joint effort of the Association and the AAUP to develop policies that would help advance the status of nontenured faculty. The standing Committee on Part-Time and Term-Appointed Faculty was not created until 1990, but the AAUP’s work on contingent faculty issues had begun in the late 1960s with the creation of the Committee on Contingency and the Profession. The AAUP issues the 1971 Collective Bargaining Institute—the predecessor to the Summer Institute—and for the first time in its history provides training in collective bargaining for faculty members at private institutions. At the same time, the AAUP was addressing the complex issues of affirmative action, including censure, against colleges and universities practicing illegal salary discrimination on the basis of race or sex.

The Committee on Part-Time and Term-Appointed Faculty was established in 1974. The committee's charge would later be broadened to include scholars of color at all types of institutions. The standing Committee on Contingency and the Profession was established in 1984 and was later renamed the Committee on Part-Time and Term-Appointed Faculty. The committee’s work on contingent faculty issues had begun in the late 1960s with the creation of the Committee on Contingency and the Profession. The AAUP issues the 1971 Collective Bargaining Institute—the predecessor to the Summer Institute—and for the first time in its history provides training in collective bargaining for faculty members at private institutions. At the same time, the AAUP was addressing the complex issues of affirmative action, including censure, against colleges and universities practicing illegal salary discrimination on the basis of race or sex.