

FORMING AN AAUP ADVOCACY CHAPTER

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AGENDA



- What is an AAUP Chapter?
- Formation Process
- Chapter Operations
- Building a Strong Chapter
- Examples of Successful Chapters
- Q&A / Open Discussion

WHAT IS AN AAUP CHAPTER?

AND WHY SHOULD I WANT ONE?

WHAT IS A CHAPTER?

- Nearly 500 “advocacy” chapters in AAUP nationwide, representing **many thousands of faculty members, graduate employees, and post-docs**
- A chapter is a **formal association** of those members, organized at the **campus level**
- Chapters are the **backbone of AAUP**—they advocate and fight for AAUP policies and standards at the campus level
- Chapters are the way to **express your collective voice** on shared issues

WHY FORM A CHAPTER?

- Being an individual member is good, but individual membership is often insufficient to **make lasting changes** on your campus
- A chapter is an **independent faculty organization** that can coordinate and mobilize faculty
- A chapter is a **voice for faculty** as well as a vehicle to build power and alliances on campus
- AAUP policies and standards only exist insofar as faculty are **willing to fight for them**

PURPOSE OF A CHAPTER

- Promote **sound shared governance** and **AAUP standards**
- Advocate and **fight for better working conditions** on campus
- Pursue **grievances and violations** of faculty rights
- Build **solidarity with campus community** and constituencies
- Connect you to other chapters in your state and give **access to the chapter-focused services** of AAUP national

CHAPTER FORMATION

THE PAPERWORK AND DETAILS



THE (MINIMUM) REQUIREMENTS

- **Minimum 7 AAUP members** to form a chapter
- Written **bylaws** that conform to the AAUP constitution
- **Three officers:** President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer
- Approval by the **national AAUP Council**

BE MORE AMBITIOUS...

- You want to **build representational authority**
- 7 members is a **minimum** **it is NOT a goal**
- Start organizing ****now****
- Consider **additional officer positions**, like VP of membership or VP of organizing even if only informally

FORMATION PROCESS

- Bring the seven **(or more!)** faculty AAUP members together
- **Draft Bylaws**
- Elect officers and **vote to form the chapter**
- Send list of officers, election results, and by-laws to organizing@aaup.org
- AAUP Council will **approve chapter charter** at next quarterly meeting

ON BYLAWS

- The AAUP constitution is clear: **chapter members *must* be dues paying members of AAUP**
- When in doubt, **follow the sample bylaws** on the AAUP website
- Changes **within the bounds of the AAUP Constitution** are okay, but they may delay the process
- Only consider changes that will **further the core mission** of your chapter

SOME COMMON BYLAW PITFALLS...

- Trying to **avoid requirement** to pay national dues
- Excessively **burdensome decision-making** processes
- Remember: Bylaws are your **governance documents**, they should be sufficiently general and flexible to operate in future, unpredictable contexts

BANK ACCOUNT

- You **DO NOT** need to file as a 501c3 non-profit
- If you want to collect or store money, you will **need a bank account** (and treasurer)
- File for an **EIN number** on the IRS website as a “**Sole Proprietor**”
- Go to a local bank and **set up an account** the treasurer can access

AFTER FORMATION

THE DAY-TO-DAY



BEST PRACTICES OF A WELL-MANAGED CHAPTER



GMU-AAUP COVID-19 FORUM

SEPTEMBER 25, 2020
12:00 - 1:00 PM

Zoom link:
<https://bit.ly/2FG2bHJ>

Join the GMU-AAUP for an update on current campus issues
and goal setting for 2020.

All current GMU-AAUP and GMU colleagues interested in
learning more about the AAUP are welcome.

Executive Committee

- Manages chapter business
- Builds agendas and communicates to members
- Identifies issues and builds strategy
- Builds *leadership pipeline* for sustainability
- Maintains database, web-based platforms

Organizing Committee

- Promotes membership recruitment
- Leads actions
- Supports liaison engagement

MEMBER RECRUITMENT

A flyer for the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) recruitment campaign. The background is a collage of open books. The text is centered and reads: "American Association of University Professors" at the top, followed by "SMALL COMMITMENT BIG IMPACT" in bold. Below that, "BECOME AN AAUP@MASON LIAISON FOR YOUR DEPARTMENT" is written in large, bold, purple letters. At the bottom, it says "For more information visit our [AAUP Liaison Page](#)".

American Association of University Professors

**SMALL COMMITMENT
BIG IMPACT**

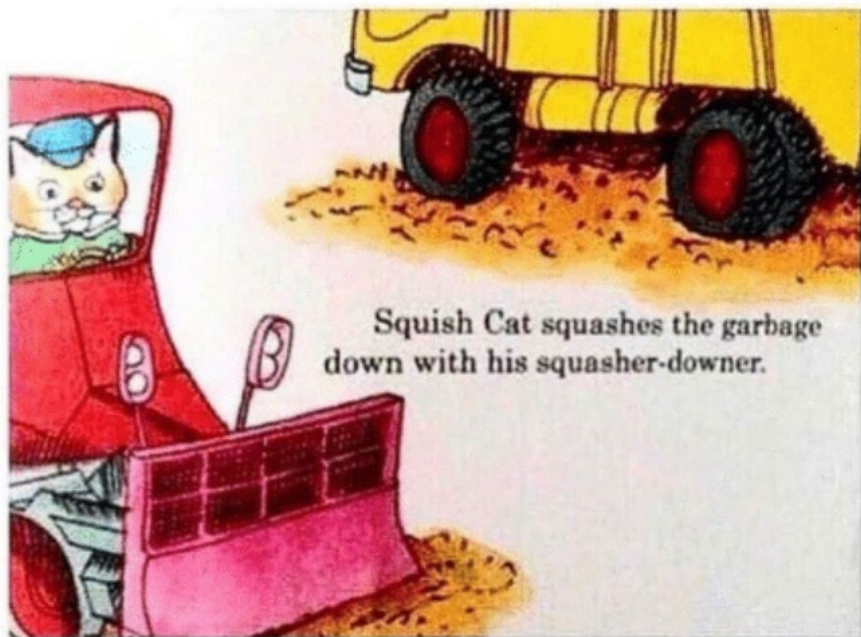
**BECOME AN
AAUP@MASON
LIAISON FOR YOUR
DEPARTMENT**

*For more information
visit our [AAUP Liaison Page](#)*

- Why recruit?
- **1-on-1s essential** to build relationships, identify faculty concerns, promote actions, recruit members, build power
 - Faculty list building; Tracking system
 - Rating system (e.g., supportive, unsupportive?)
- Campaigns/actions support member recruitment

COMMON CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

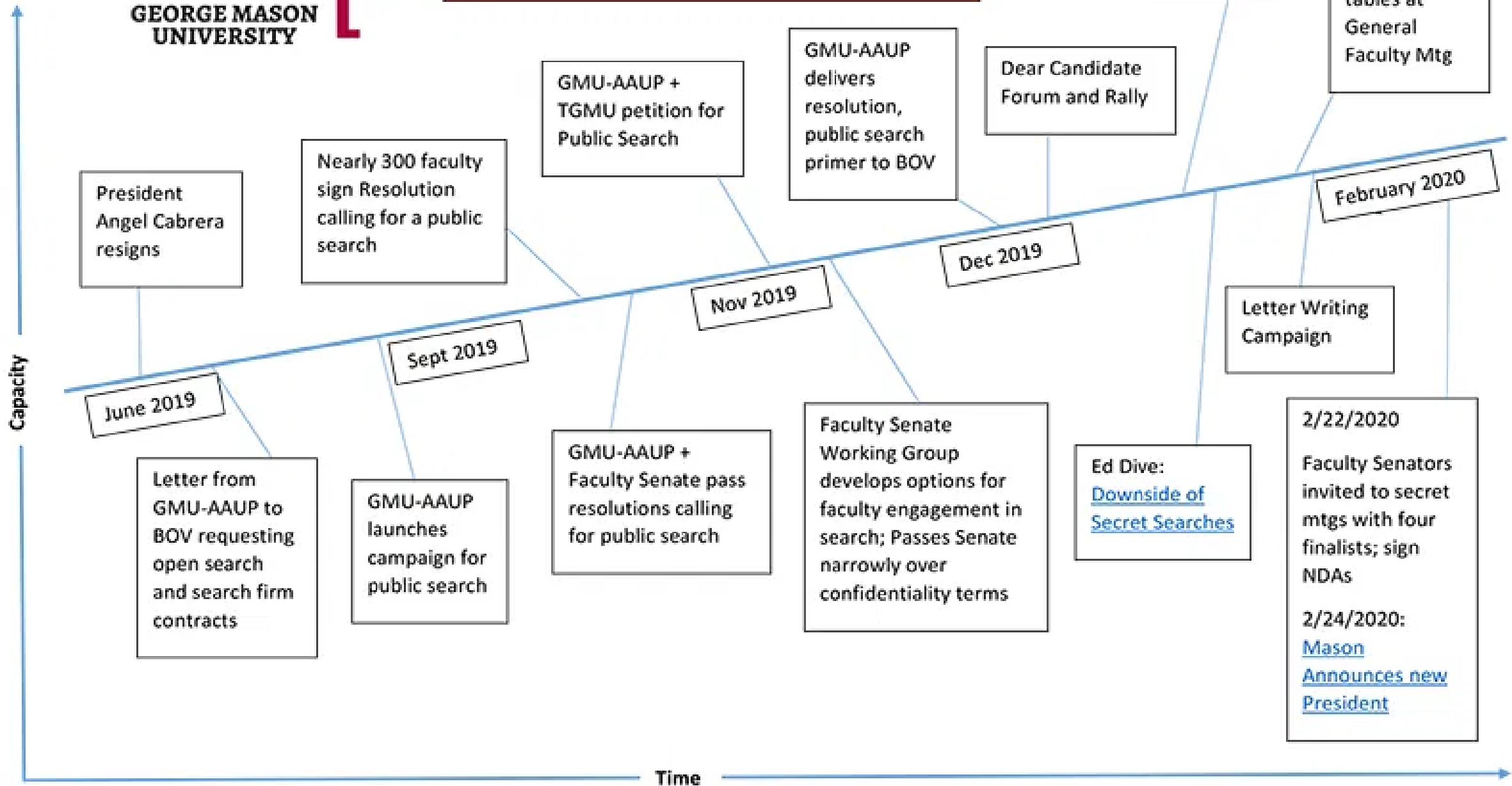
How the Mason admin handles damaging revelations



Squish Cat squashes the garbage down with his squasher-downer.

- Member Meetings
- Liaison 1-on 1s + Debriefs
- Issue ID and Strategy Planning with members
- Webinars – Training sessions (e.g., IP rights 101)
- Social Media – **Memes!**
- Petitions, Resolutions, Rallies, Allyship
- Happy/Unhappy Hours
 - Organizing should be fun!
 - Build camaraderie and solidarity

**GMU-AAUP Presidential Search Campaign:
 Building Capacity + Time = Escalation of Actions**



GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY CHAPTER

GMU-AAUP is an advocacy chapter that during the past year:

- Increased membership to **over 100**
- Successfully organized to **change presidential search process**
- Shifted from a secret search process to one involving faculty senators as representatives of the general faculty
 - **Partial win still a win**
- Built an **organizing committee** that recruits faculty and builds power!

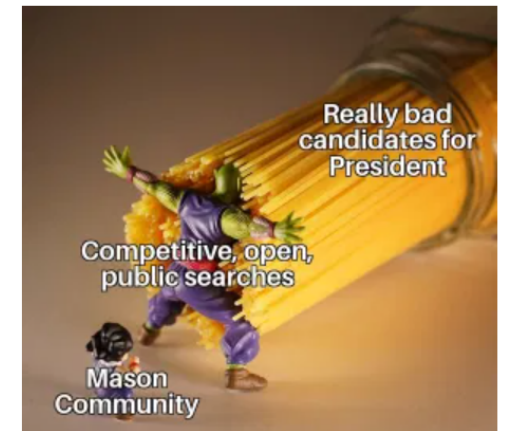
GMU's Campaign for a Public Presidential Search

Guest Blogger / March 11, 2020

BY BETHANY LETIECQ, TIM GIBSON, AND BETSY DEMULDER

This is the first in a series of three George Mason-AAUP Academe Blog posts on lessons learned from the presidential search campaign.

Presidential searches conducted at public universities have become secretive processes that exclude most if not all forms of public vetting and engagement. Historically, finalists for presidencies were invited to campus to make public presentations and answer questions posed by the faculty, students, staff, and the public at large. These constituencies were provided opportunities to weigh in on whom they thought was best to lead them. As Judith Wilde and Jim Finkelstein, our George Mason University (GMU) colleagues and experts on presidential searches, [document](#), these once public and open processes are now closed and conducted in secret. Executive search firms and the privatization and CEO-ization of university presidencies are largely credited with this hiring shift or, as [faculty](#) at Miami Dade recently lamented, "the death of transparency."



SO I HAVE A CHAPTER, NOW WHAT?

CREATING A STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE CHAPTER

THREE MAIN VARIETIES OF ADVOCACY CHAPTER

Watchdog

- Small group of engaged faculty
- Keeps other faculty informed of issues
- Hope/trust that information is enough

Faculty Voice

- Informs, but also mobilizes/convenes faculty
- Creates independent process for faculty discussions
- Chapter educates and advises faculty on issue, who then return to the formal channel armed with alternative option

Organizing Chapter

- Informs and arms faculty, but also organizes
- Plans and executes “issue campaigns” to push for changes outside of formal structures
- Goal is to build critical mass of faculty power to change status quo

Chapter Strength



FACULTY VOICE CHAPTER BEHAVIORS

- Holding member meetings to **solicit feedback** and ideas from faculty on **shared problems**
- Representing the **faculty position** to the public and media
- Focusing on **formal governance channels**, like senates, as the means toward change
- Chapter is an **active player in campus politics** and is treated as a **legitimate representative** of faculty interests and positions

ORGANIZING CHAPTER BEHAVIORS



All the practices of robust faculty voice chapters plus...

- Focused on **building power** through issue-based campaigns that **pressure decision makers** to change
- Works with and through formal governance channels primarily as a **tactic** and option in a larger campaign
- **Acts like a union**, despite lack of bargaining rights
- Chapter builds authority as the **organized body of the faculty**, not just as a representative advocating on their behalf

CYCLE OF CHAPTER BURNOUT

1. **Crisis emerges** (COVID, new administrative overreach, state budget cuts, etc.)
2. Small group of faculty **create a new chapter or revitalize** a stagnant chapter
3. Leaders **send emails** to members and **write statements** in response to admin's odious actions in order to **raise awareness**, possibly engage with senate
4. Faculty **uncertain** how/what can be done beyond these statements
5. Core leaders eventually **burn out** and/or the **crisis ends**
6. Chapter **reemerges in response to the next crisis**, starting cycle over again

Result: Weak chapters caught in a cycle of **unsustainable reaction** to crises

AVOIDING BURNOUT

Organize!

- Always be **actively recruiting** new members and leaders – people don't join because they were **never asked!**
- Hold **faculty meetings** to discuss problems and **develop solutions**
- Use the chapter as a vehicle to solve problems; faculty will join if you have a **history improving people's lives** and **advancing the ideals of the profession**
- **Be visible!** Take every opportunity to demonstrate the value of your chapter to faculty and the campus community

SUPPORT FROM AAUP NATIONAL

No one is a **born organizer**; we all need help building strong chapters

AAUP National can **provide trainings and support for:**

- Membership recruitment drives
- Strategic campaigns to change the balance of power
- Guidance on implementing AAUP policies and standards
- Investigations on administrative overreach and malfeasance
- And much more!

ADVOCACY CHAPTER SUCCESSES

EXAMPLES AND INSPIRATION

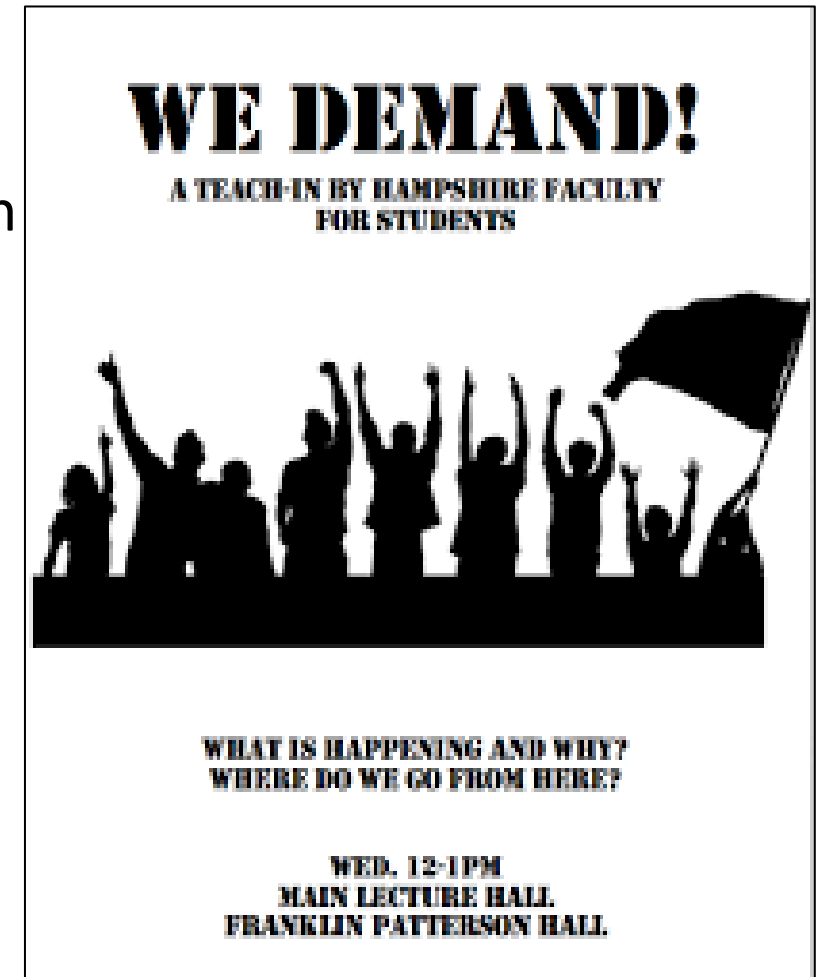


HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE CHAPTER

In 2018, the AAUP chapter saved Hampshire College:

- Administration was **set on layoffs** of staff and faculty
- Faculty **built their chapter to record numbers** in coalition with other stakeholders
- Organized to force the president and board chair **to resign**
- They compelled the new president to work with them, and **jointly developed a budget proposal** that resulted in ZERO faculty layoffs

“Organize even if you can’t unionize. An organized faculty is always stronger than a fragmented one.”



FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY CHAPTER



Formed almost 30 years ago, Fairfield's AAUP advocacy chapter **bargains with the administration** like a union:

- The chapter built enough power that they **negotiate their faculty handbook, pay, and policies** with the president and board
- The administration ***must* contend with the chapter**, because they know it can organize & mobilize faculty to fight
- You don't need to be a union to **build power** and fight back!

Q&A

<https://www.aaup.org/membership/start-chapter>

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Organizer

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