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.
• 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](mailto: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
• 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

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

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

- 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

How the Mason admin handles damaging revelations

*Squish Cat squashes the garbage down with his squasher-downer.*
GMU-AAUP Presidential Search Campaign:
Building Capacity + Time = Escalation of Actions

- Fairfax Times runs story
- GMU-AAUP tables at General Faculty Mtg
- Letter Writing Campaign
- 2/22/2020: Faculty Senators invited to secret mtgs with four finalists; sign NDAs
- 2/24/2020: Mason Announces new President

- December 2019
  - GMU-AAUP delivers resolution, public search primer to BOV
  - Dear Candidate Forum and Rally

- November 2019
  - GMU-AAUP + TGMU petition for Public Search
  - GMU-AAUP + Faculty Senate pass resolutions calling for public search

- June 2019
  - Letter from GMU-AAUP to BOV requesting open search and search firm contracts
  - GMU-AAUP launches campaign for public search

- President Angel Cabrera resigns

- Nearly 300 faculty sign Resolution calling for a public search

- February 2020
  - Ed Dive: Downside of Secret Searches
  - Faculty Senate Working Group develops options for faculty engagement in search; passes Senate narrowly over confidentiality terms
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!
SO I HAVE A CHAPTER, NOW WHAT?

CREATING A STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE CHAPTER
### THREE MAIN VARIETIES OF ADVOCACY CHAPTER

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Watchdog</th>
<th>Faculty Voice</th>
<th>Organizing Chapter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Small group of engaged faculty</td>
<td>• Informs, but also mobilizes/convenes faculty</td>
<td>• Informs and arms faculty, but also organizes</td>
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<td>• Keeps other faculty informed of issues</td>
<td>• Creates independent process for faculty discussions</td>
<td>• Plans and executes “issue campaigns” to push for changes outside of formal structures</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Hope/trust that information is enough</td>
<td>• Chapter educates and advises faculty on issue, who then return to the formal channel armed with alternative option</td>
<td>• Goal is to build critical mass of faculty power to change status quo</td>
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**Chapter Strength**
• 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
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
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
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.”
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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