

Michael DeCesare, PhD ([Faculty webpage](#))

### ***Biography and Selected AAUP Service***

Michael DeCesare (PhD, UMass-Amherst) is professor of sociology at Merrimack College. His most recent book is *Death on Demand: Jack Kevorkian and the Right-to-Die Movement*. His articles, essays, and reviews have been published in a variety of scholarly outlets, including *The American Sociologist*, *Teaching Sociology*, and *Contemporary Sociology*. He serves or has served the AAUP in a number of positions at the national, state, and local levels (please see below). He has also been an active member of the Merrimack College Faculty Senate over the last 13 years, serving twice on the Executive Committee and chairing the Appointment, Rank, and Tenure Committee and the Faculty Development Committee. His teaching and research interests are in social movements, education, academic governance, and quantitative methods.

#### **National AAUP:**

2018-Present	Member, Council Executive Committee
2018-Present	Member, Election Appeals Committee
2018	Chair, Investigating Committee to St. Edward's University
2017-Present	Member, <i>Bulletin</i> Advisory Board
2017-19	Member, Contingency Planning Working Group
2017	Guest Editor, <i>Academe</i> (May-June issue on academic governance)
2017	Chair, Investigating Committee to Spalding University
2016-Present	District X Representative, Council
2016	Chair, Investigating Committee to The College of Saint Rose
2015-Present	Chair, Committee on College and University Governance
2015-Present	Book Review Editor, <i>Academe</i> magazine
2015	Member, Investigating Committee to the University of Iowa

#### **Massachusetts AAUP Conference:**

2018-Present	Second Vice President
2015-18	Vice President

#### **Merrimack College AAUP Chapter:**

2012-Present	Webmaster
2012-19	President

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### *Candidate Statement*

When I was first elected president of Merrimack College's advocacy chapter in 2012, I wasn't thinking about service to the AAUP at the state or national levels. I just wanted to help out on my campus, to defend and strengthen the ideals and principles that the Association has always led in promoting, and to work on improving my and my colleagues' working conditions and, by extension, our students' learning conditions.

Soon, though, my belief in the importance of preserving and strengthening shared governance, in particular, pushed me beyond my institution. After all, the problems we faced at Merrimack were not unique to us. They existed in roughly the same form at institutions not only throughout Massachusetts but across the country. So I ran for a state conference officer position and was elected in 2015. The following year, I was elected to a four-year term on the national Council. In those capacities, as well as in my role as a member of four investigating committees appointed by the AAUP's Executive Director, I have had the privilege of working with dozens of dedicated, conscientious, and thoughtful members and national staff. And I've loved every minute of it, which is part of the reason I am now running for an at-large Council seat.

I'm also running because I wish to continue contributing to the AAUP, to the noble yet embattled profession it serves, and to the labor movement of which it is a critical part. I am honored and fortunate to have been recognized for my contributions and for my potential to offer more. In late 2017, for example, I was jointly appointed by President Rudy Fichtenbaum and CBC Chair Paul Davis to the Contingency Planning Working Group, a small advisory body to the Council and the CBC Executive Committee that was charged with reviewing scenarios for restructuring the AAUP and providing options for its parent bodies to use in decision making and planning in response to the 2018 U.S. Supreme Court case *Janus v. ASCME*. In addition, my colleagues on the Council elected me to two consecutive terms as an at-large member of the Executive Committee, in 2018 and 2019.

My experiences on the Council, on the Executive Committee, on the Contingency Planning Working Group, and on investigating committees have allowed me insight into the AAUP's operation, from budgetary matters to departments' functioning to the relationship between the three (now two) entities. At the same time, my commitment to defending and strengthening academic freedom, tenure, shared governance, and due process protections—ideals and principles that the AAUP has always led in promoting—has only grown stronger. Observing and insisting on those ideals and principles will continue to be a fundamental part of my professional life, just as serving the Association has become a fundamental part of my professional identity.

I would enthusiastically welcome the opportunity to continue serving the AAUP, this time as an at-large member of the Council, and I respectfully ask for your vote. Thank you for considering my candidacy.