

AAUP Statement for 5.13.20 Faculty Meeting

While today's meeting is to vote on the Beloit model, we'd like to address our faculty colleagues today on how we will make decisions during this crisis--decisions that will affect individual job security, the financial position of the college, and our strength as a community.

After our meeting, we polled our members and found that 91% of the 68 faculty who answered the poll support the following statement:

In order to help close the College's projected budget shortfall, while also demonstrating sensitivity to each individual employee's judgment and their particular financial circumstances, AAUP calls for a faculty- and staff-led, bottom-up process of identifying options to respond creatively, equitably, and voluntarily to balancing the current crisis with our long-term health as an institution.

We call for a collective envisioning of how we -- the entire workforce of Mount Holyoke College -- can come through this crisis together. Payroll and benefits may be 70% of our operating budget, but that is because our employees are our institution. That is what brings students to Mount Holyoke College. That is our excellence. Our long-term survival, then, depends on our faculty and staff. We must not sacrifice our competitive edge in the higher-ed marketplace for short-term budget-balancing. All of our peer institutions are facing similar shortfalls, and the most visionary institutions are thinking creatively about how to draw on all the resources -- indeed, abundance -- of their institutions, as a way to weather the current storm and even strengthen their outlook, rather than shrink into scarcity, pessimism, and fear.

We're not afraid of the task ahead -- but we need to be in partnership. Faculty and staff are critical to the decision-making process, and we reject a model in which we are *subject to* decisions made by the administration. The decision-making process needs to be participatory. This is an investment in our collaborative enterprise.

We also would like to share that we spent time at our chapter meeting on Monday hearing the concerns of our **non-tenure-track** colleagues. Some of their concerns included:

1. **Job security.** We, as the AAUP, are very concerned about the employment status of visitors and permanent non-tenure-track faculty. We request a guarantee in writing to college employees that all NTT contracts, including visitor contracts, be renewed for AY20-21.
2. **Insurance:** we request a guarantee of continuity of insurance benefits for all employees, faculty and staff through June 2021. A global pandemic is no time to kick any Mount Holyoke College employees or their dependents off their health insurance plans.
3. **Housing:** we request an official statement guaranteeing continuation of faculty housing for those who currently have it, even if their teaching appointments are not renewed.

We also note that **no information** has been given to **staff** about their employment status. Staff have been only guaranteed employment for the next 9 days. This is unacceptable.

Finally, regarding the motion on the modular half-semester model:

We have not polled our chapter, but the steering committee, as individual faculty and in conversation with each other, is in support of this model and we plan to vote in favor of it. We thank the members of the APG for their hard work in developing this plan. We also reiterate our remark at the previous Faculty Meeting, which is that approval for this schedule must not be considered a tacit endorsement of increased teaching load.

All faculty are invited to join the MHC chapter of the AAUP. Our next chapter meeting is **this coming Monday, 5/18, at noon.** Please email us to join our list.