

VIRGINIA CONFERENCE

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

Fall 2004

<http://www.aaup-va.org>

Adieu to an AAUP Leader

VMI Col. Mike Harris died Sept. 23, 2004

The Virginia Conference of the AAUP has lost one of its most outstanding members. Michael S. Harris, a Colonel in the Virginia Militia and Professor of Modern Languages at Virginia Military Institute died on September 23, 2004. Professor Harris received a bachelor's degree in French from Northwestern University and an M.A. and a Ph.D. in French Language and Literature from Indiana University. Mike joined the faculty of VMI in 1972 where he taught both French and Spanish. He served as Head of the Department of Modern Languages for eleven years. He was very supportive of his students and served as an advisor to the VMI Theatre group, the boxing club and as an academic advisor to the varsity swimming and diving teams. Mike was a leader in the development of study abroad programs at VMI. He taught at VMI's sister institution Ecole Polytechnique near Paris and organized student tours in France.

A past-president of the Virginia Conference, Mike was deeply dedicated to the AAUP. He had previously served as treasurer and most recently as newsletter editor. Mike had a wonderful sense of humor and we all looked forward to seeing him at meetings. I remember that at one national meeting, the chair called upon Mike as the "gentleman at the microphone" Mike replied,

"Not only a gentleman, but an officer and a gentleman."

The Virginia Conference of AAUP suggests you honor Mike Harris by making a donation to the Stern-Greet Fund for Justice. This fund provides financial help for faculty around the state who face legal bills incurred as a result of defending themselves in academic freedom or due process issues. Mike

was an enthusiastic supporter of this fund, and you may remember him passing the hat for contributions at state meetings. Please send contributions of any amount to the Conference Treasurer: Professor Robert Webber, Department of Math and Computer Science, Longwood University, Farmville, VA 23909.



Col. Mike Harris

Also in this issue:

- State meeting set for April 23rd
- Post tenure review
- Chapter development
- Leadership training
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- Treasurer's report

Higher Education Lobby Day Set for Jan. 13 in Richmond

For Details Check the Virginia Conference Webpage
<http://www.aaup-va.org> Contact Persons for this event

- **Pat Cummins** until December 26 and after January 1, at pcummins@vcu.edu or at (804) 897-8030
- **Brian Turner** at bturner@rmc.edu or at (804) 644-1526
- **Bob Andrews** (VCU) at rlandrew@vcu.edu or at 804-651-0695.

AAUP Leadership Training helps you protect your rights

By Kay K. Jordan, President, Virginia Conference AAUP

One of the most important functions that the AAUP performs is to educate faculty for leadership. As college faculty we have invested time, money and energy in developing expertise in our chosen fields of study. Most of us, however, have never taken a course in academic freedom, shared governance, or the rights and responsibilities of being a faculty member. One of the crucial roles of faculty in American life is to provide active and informed discussion regarding our values to evaluate our social, political, and economic policies and institutions in the light of those values. Academic freedom is both a right and a responsibility of college faculty. Higher education differs from businesses that provide goods and services to consumers because higher education is devoted to the public good over time, rather than the immediate and temporary satisfaction of the consumer. The importance of the academy as the arena for the discussion of values makes shared governance imperative. Faculty must be active participants in shaping the policies and the culture at their respective institutions to ensure that students are educated to reflect critically and participate actively in our democratic society.

The AAUP provides training sessions and meetings to foster discussion on how faculty can protect their right to academic freedom and due process, participate in faculty governance, contribute to the development of

Opportunities for Leadership Training

ASC/CBC Spring Training Workshop

April 9, 2005

Albuquerque, NM

For more information, please contact [Eileen Garner](#).

AAUP Annual Meeting

June 9-12, 2005

Washington Court Hotel

Washington, DC

Summer Institute

Usually late July

Location TBA

effective faculty handbooks, responsibly guarantee an appropriate curriculum, communicate effectively, and organize for collective bargaining. Please contact me (kjordan@radford.edu) if you are interested in attending any of the training sessions or meetings listed above. Some financial support is available for participants.

Committee A is for Academic Freedom

Committee A is active state-wide in assisting faculty with problems relating to academic freedom issues and academic procedural issues, especially those regarding tenure and retention decisions.

We will help you place your problem in perspective, guide you in a course of action, be an advocate for you, and, in some instances, provide financial support derived from the Stern-Greet Fund for Justice.

If you are having problems or want to ask a question,

please contact one of us:

Ron Mollick, Chair (Christopher Newport University., 757-594-7123, rmollick@cnu.edu);

Kay Jordan (Radford University, 540-831-5899, kjordan@radford.edu);

Doug Rendleman (Washington and Lee Law School, 540-463-8934, rendlemad@wlu.edu);

Mary Houska (Hollins University), 540-552-2717, mfdh@aol.com).

Post-Tenure Review: Watch Out!

By Ron Mollick
Chair, Committee A

Post-Tenure Review (PTR) has come to Virginia.

For years, faculty around the nation fought against PTR with the AAUP taking an early (1983) stand against it, stating that there would be little benefit, unacceptable costs, a dampening of creativity, and a threat to academic freedom. But time marches on and PTR is a fact around the nation. Somewhat belatedly, the AAUP bowed to reality and adopted a new position on PTR which was accepted at the 1999 Annual Meeting. We still don't like it, but we now have guidelines which you can find on the National website (<http://www.aaup.org>).

We believe that PTR should concentrate on faculty development rather than disciplinary sanctions. Institutions should set aside money and resources for these things. If they are unwilling or unable to do that then they have no business instituting the process. This must be funded at a meaningful level to be effective. In addition, PTR should not be undertaken for the purpose of dismissal.

There are other procedures for that already established. All PTR procedures must be fair and allow the faculty member to participate in the process rather than have the process done to him or her. There **MUST** be due process here. We cannot let PTR weaken essential procedural safeguards. Faculty needed to be involved not only in producing the procedures but in reviewing them regularly. After all, PTR procedures are still new and they should rightly be on trial, and the faculty should be the ones occupying most of the seats in the jury. We also must not forget to protect academic freedom. PTR should not be allowed to drive what we do and how we do it.

'We must watch out for ourselves; no one else will.'

We as faculty have responsibilities. Regular evaluations are nothing new. The difference is that PTR systems can lead directly to punishment and even dismissal. There have always been ways for the slackers among us (and they do exist) to be held accountable and



even dismissed. But PTR has been created for everyone as a means to get at the few. As a result it is not cost effective and has the potential to turn into a coercive mechanism imposed without adequate protection of our academic freedom. For example, faculty may try hard to please others because of these yearly reviews which could then influence how they do their professional development. Student evaluation of instruction can be given too much weight which in turn can influence faculty to adjust their teaching in ways that in the long run are not good for students.

Faculty must be on guard. PTR has been invoked as a method to pressure older faculty to retire and has also been used to directly dismiss at least one professor here in Virginia. This happened without invoking a separate dismissal process. Begin checking your systems NOW and demand that they be reviewed regularly. Consider establishing a standing university-wide committee that monitors evaluation processes and procedures.

We must watch out for ourselves; no one else will.

Chapter development fueled by grants, imagination

This year the University of Mary Washington proposed an innovative plan to print post-it notes with “AAUP UMW” across the top and “Academic Freedom, Tenure, Shared Governance” along the bottom. These will be sent to faculty as a recruiting tool, especially new faculty. The programs developed by the chapter at Radford University are another good example of one way to use the State Conference’s Chapter Service Program grants. Building your local chapter is one of your most important tasks. A chapter that is growing in numbers will have higher visibility with non-member colleagues and with the administration. Likewise, a chapter that keeps itself active and visible is likely to attract new members. Chapter Service Program grants are available to support your efforts to recruit new members and to keep your chapter visible.

Specific activities for which grants might be requested include inviting speakers from the national office, receptions for newly hired and/or newly tenured faculty as part of a recruitment drive, and educational activities to inform the campus community about AAUP

positions. Proposals can really be for any activity that supports chapter development.

To apply for a grant, your chapter needs only to contact Christina Turner, School of World Studies, Box 842021, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA 23284-2021. I am easily available by email at: cturner@vcu.edu. I will then send you a copy of the Chapter Service Program Grant Application. Grants of up to \$500.00 can be approved by the State Conference officers and, once approved, made available to you quickly. Projects that are more ambitious are also encouraged! As these take more long-term planning, now might be a good time for your chapter to think strategically about its long-term goals and how support from the State Conference might help you realize those goals in the 2001-2002 academic year. I look forward to working with you in making the AAUP a prominent voice for faculty in the Commonwealth.

Christina Turner

State Conference Chapter Development officer
Virginia Commonwealth University

Virginia presence felt at national AAUP meeting

The 90th National Meeting of the AAUP was held in Washington from June 10-13, with strong participation from Virginians. The conference was represented by four members: Margaret Klayton Mi, Ron Mollock, Brian Turner, and Christina Turner.

The conference visited all members of the Virginia congressional delegation on **Capitol Hill Day**. Kathy Burns, a new member of the George Mason University chapter, joined us as we made the rounds in the House and the Senate. Although schedules were adjusted by the funeral of President Reagan, we made all of our

appointments and pressed the Association’s concerns regarding the reauthorization of the higher education act, federal funding, and other issues. Along with meeting the legislative assistants, Margaret and Kathy also met with Congressman Tom Davis.

The Association thanked General Secretary Mary Burgan for her ten years of leadership, and welcomed Roger Bowen, who will officially take his post as General Secretary on July 1.

Christina Turner began her three-year term as District X council member, and Brian Turner joined the Committee on Government Relations.

Radford University wins award for newsletter

The Assembly of State Conferences awarded the prize for the Outstanding Chapter Newsletter to **Radford University!** Newsletter editor Forrest Green has been

crucial in keeping the Radford chapter visible at the university, colleagues at RU said. Congratulations to the Radford chapter for this much-deserved recognition.

PUT THIS DATE ON YOUR CALENDAR!!

Virginia Conference Spring Meeting

Saturday, April 23, 2005

Radford University

The Virginia Conference AAUP newsletter is produced by the American Association for University Professors and edited by Bill Kovarik, Ph.D., professor of Media Studies, at Radford University. Send comments, questions, articles and suggestions to wkovarik@radford.edu or PO Box 6929, Radford University, Radford, VA 24141

**Virginia Conference
Treasurer's Report**

May 2, 2004

Total on hand	50,286.02
Stern-Greet Fund for Justice	35,245.05
Operating funds on hand	13,688.23

Oct. 9, 2004

Total on hand	51,310.25
Stern-Greet Funds for Justice	35,273.23
Stern Development Fund	2,874.63
Operating funds	13,162.39