



A Message From The CSU-AAUP President:

This spring, CSU-AAUP has begun preparing for negotiations, advocating for our members and continuing our efforts to protect quality public higher education. With respect to protecting quality public higher education, recently, the five faculty and staff unions of the CSU system issued a "Statement of Unity", expressing our deep reservations about the necessity of the consolidation plan known as "Students First." CSU-AAUP made a Freedom of Information request to the System Office for contracts with external consultants related to work associated with Students First.

We have a busy semester ahead of us. Please keep your eyes out for when we ask for input regarding priorities for the upcoming (starting October 1, 2020) negotiations. A survey for members will be coming sometime in March. With respect to the General Assembly, this will be a short legislative session, and we are cautiously optimistic that legislation making the Board of Regents more transparent may succeed this session. I look forward to working with you all on these efforts!

In solidarity,
Patty

CSU-AAUP Hits The Capitol:

Higher Education Lobby Day:

On Feb. 21, CSU-AAUP members joined union brothers and sisters at the 4Cs, AFT, SUOAF, and AFSCME Council 4 to advocate for quality public higher education that is accessible and affordable to all Connecticut residents. Participants engaged in a training and a lively question and answer with CSU-AAUP veteran lobbyist and former Connecticut state representative Joe Grabarz. Groups of union members took to the halls of the Legislative Office Building to speak with leadership, legislators, and their staff on both sides of the aisle. Together, advocates worked to make lawmakers and their staff aware of four pieces of legislation raised in the Higher Education committee and are aimed at increasing transparency and accountability at the Board of Regents. For a fact sheet on these four bills, [click here](#). For more photos from Lobby Day and other union events, visit the CSU-AAUP [Flickr page here](#).



Above, CSU-AAUP President Patty O'Neill speaks with legislators and staffers during Lobby Day. Below, members from the five higher education unions attended Lobby Day to advocate for quality public higher education.



Appropriations Hearing:

Faculty leaders, members and students joined CSU-AAUP to advocate for adequate funding for public higher education on Feb. 18 during the Appropriations Committee public hearing. Through earnest and at times personal testimony, students and faculty brought home the need to keep costs down for students and their families, while ensuring programs of study remain plentiful and vibrant. Legislators thanked faculty and remembered students whom they had met earlier in the semester at campus events hosted by local AAUP chapters. To read testimony from the Feb. 18 hearing, [click here](#).



Above, CSU-AAUP leaders and members testified along with their students at the Appropriations Hearing for increased funding for public higher education.

Labor Committee Hearing:

Bills that protect workers' rights to join a union and offer other important benefits such as expanding access to workers compensation and fair scheduling were heard during a Feb. 25 Labor Committee Hearing. Union leaders, including CSU-AAUP President Patty O'Neill, issued a joint statement in support of bills protecting workers' rights to unionize. To read the statement, [click here](#).

Higher Education Committee Hearing:

Four bills due to be heard in the Feb. 27 Higher Education Committee address the issues of consolidation and lack of transparency at the Board of Regents. Higher education union leaders and members plan to submit written and deliver spoken testimony during the committee hearing. If you wish to submit testimony on any of these bills, you can submit it directly to the Higher Education Committee by emailing HEdtestimony@cga.ct.gov or emailing it to Liz Newberg and she will take care of that for you. Should you wish to testify in person, email Liz Newberg by 9:30 a.m. Feb. 27 and she will sign you up to give spoken testimony before the committee. The hearing begins at 11 a.m. in Room 1D of the [Legislative Office Building](#).

ECSU and SCSU Chapters Host Legislators:

Diverse panels of ECSU and SCSU students were able to engage with their state legislators as ECSU-AAUP and SCSU-AAUP held meet and greet events on their campuses in January and February. New Haven area lawmakers including Rep. Toni Walker, who is also the Appropriations Committee chair, Rep. Dorinda Borer, Rep. Dave Yaccarino, and Sen. George Logan heard from students about concerns and challenges in earning a higher education degree.

During two separate events at her campus, ECSU-AAUP President Nicole Krassas gave brief presentations that offered a historical look at state funding levels for public higher education. Legislators attending these sessions included Rep. Gregg Haddad, who is the Higher Education Committee Chair, Rep. Susan Johnson, Rep. Quentin Phipps, Rep. Michael Winkler, Rep. Brian Smith, Sen. Mae Flexer, Rep. Tim Ackert, and Rep. Doug Dubitsky. Legislators and students engaged in lively roundtable discussions that included students' stories of one-of-a-kind opportunities at ECSU, overcoming personal hardships, and encouraging support received from ECSU faculty.



Above, Rep. Dorinda Borer meets with SCSU students. Below, Rep. Toni Walker chats with SCSU students in February.



At the meet and greets, legislators heard from students about the difficulty of paying for college as tuition and fees keep rising; some shared they were facing more than \$25,000 in student debt. Others shared their realities of not knowing where or when their next meal would come and facing homelessness. Students urged lawmakers to find the political will to increase investment in public higher education, which equates to investments in all students' futures.

Two members of the SCSU student panel joined CSU-AAUP faculty at the Feb. 18 Appropriations Committee Hearing. After the students testified, Appropriations Chair Toni Walker commented that she remembered meeting the students and commended them for coming to the hearing to lend their voices and advocated for their future. That exchange offered a perfect example of how higher education is integral to encouraging and developing active, engaged citizens.



Above and below, legislators meet with students and ECSU-AAUP members at ECSU in January to discuss adequate funding for public higher education.



Save The Date! FAC Conference:

The 2020 Faculty Advisory Committee Conference, The Challenges To Public Higher Education In The Era of Globalization, is being held April 3 at the O'Neill/Feldman Center, Westside Campus, at WCSU. The conference is from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and will include breakfast and lunch.

Presentation topics being considered include: funding public higher education; digital pedagogies and immersive technologies; explanations for low enrollments, retention, and graduation rates in public higher education; the corporatization of public higher education; the effects of immigration on higher education; and the structure of shared governance and curriculum management.

The FAC Conference is one not to miss!

To register, [click here](#)