

From [Dean Saitta <dsaitta@du.edu>](mailto:dsaitta@du.edu)
Sent Tuesday, December 5, 2006 9:10 am
To mhulen@alumni.duke.edu
Re Top Problems

Hi Myron--

As noted last Saturday, we don't have an active AAUP chapter at DU but I'm looking into reviving it. The top problems on our campus for faculty, as I perceive them, are the following:

1. Low faculty salaries. Although most of us get raises every year (average "merit" pool is 3.5% or so, but any gain usually amounts to a cost of living increase), our salaries are very low compared to peer institutions. Thus, there is a significant problem of faculty morale and faculty "check out" as concerns involvement in university governance.

2. Competition borne of decentralized budgeting. This presents obstacles to faculty collaboration and interdisciplinary work as academic units pursue their own agendas and self-interest. This has led some deans and even department chairs to change the rules of the game as concerns expectations for, and evaluation of, faculty work as they try to get the most out of their units in the struggle to look good and "entrepreneurial". Collegiality has also taken some hits. I've noticed faculty becoming less-than-charitable in how we deal with each other in this environment (for example, faculty committees reviewing shared programs like the Core Curriculum and Honors programs will too often focus on problems rather than successes, especially when the critical review stands to support a committee member's home unit's self-interest).

3. Insufficient response structures to faculty grievances. It has been very hard for faculty to get satisfaction when they pursue a complaint around hiring processes, working conditions, treatment at retirement, etc. The grievance process can take forever...

I enjoyed the meeting last Saturday-- thanks for organizing it. Is there a listserv for AAUP members in Colorado or at least for the chapter heads? It might be useful to establish one, as sometimes I find myself wanting to know how issues affecting faculty are handled on other campuses.

Cheers,

Dean

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