

## **From: *Faculty Forum Web Log***

### **[Moving Forward with AAUP at DU](#)**

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Last December 11 in this blog I reported on the annual meeting of the Colorado Conference of the American Association of University Professors. I suggested that an active AAUP chapter at DU could benefit the work of our Faculty Senate by providing a broader perspective on issues affecting faculty and a direct link to the policy resources offered by the national AAUP. A local chapter would also give us a platform for offering moral support to colleagues on other campuses whose shared governance machinery might not be working as well as our own. I also thought that such networking would introduce us to interesting people in other places who are also concerned about protecting the faculty's franchise at a time when it is under intense scrutiny, if not siege.

With the support of a critical mass of our faculty (way more than the seven faculty members required to constitute an active chapter), I arranged a meeting with national and local AAUP representatives at DU on February 8, 2007. These included [Cathy Jones](#), a staff member from the national AAUP, [Myron Hulen](#), president of the Colorado Conference of AAUP, and [Markie LeCompte](#), president of the AAUP chapter at CU-Boulder. Twelve DU faculty and one graduate student attended. Nine more faculty sent regrets but asked to be updated. Interestingly, these faculty members come from nine major Divisions, Colleges, and Schools across the DU campus.

Cathy Jones introduced us to the national AAUP and its resources. She stressed that AAUP doesn't specialize in making legal arguments on behalf of the professorate, but rather moral ones. And, these arguments have proven particularly effective where AAUP has taken up the faculty's cause.

Myron Hulen described AAUP organization in Colorado, noting that there are 13 active chapters in the state. These are primarily advocacy chapters, not collective bargaining chapters. This year AAUP-Colorado is focusing on chapter development and on drafting legislative bills addressing different aspects of faculty work. He indicated that the AAUP chapters at both CSU and CU have been instrumental in improving grievance processes on those campuses. He made a special point emphasizing that the AAUP presence on Colorado campuses is proving to be a win-win for both faculty and administrators if, indeed, both parties are concerned to avoid the campus tensions (and, of course, costly lawsuits) that can arise from misunderstandings about the reciprocal rights, responsibilities, and obligations associated with doing the job.

Markie LeCompte described AAUP activities at CU-Boulder with respect to the issues that I briefly described in my December 11 blog post. The Boulder AAUP chapter is also a revived one, only a year old. It includes 70 members, about 20 of whom are active in the everyday workings of the chapter. The Boulder chapter formed in response to the central administration's appointment of a new Chancellor without any faculty input, as

well as to the Ward Churchill affair and the much more compelling Adrienne Anderson affair (see the December 11 post). Markie noted the “moribund” nature of the Boulder Faculty Assembly and its ineffectiveness in championing the faculty’s cause. She underscored the importance of having a separate entity on campus—the local AAUP chapter—that can take up this cause in ways that faculty senates can’t. She noted that the CU chapter is proving successful in bringing the Faculty Handbook on that campus into greater alignment with the time-honored and battle-tested policies suggested in the AAUP’s [“Redbook”](#). She extolled the joys of chapter meetings that bring together people who genuinely like and care for each other on a campus riven by deep divisions over the Churchill case and other issues.

A period of Q&A followed these presentations. This provoked additional conversation about the rights of untenured as well as tenured faculty, the role of graduate students in governance, and the need for *everyone* on campus to become better educated about the policies that AAUP has been developing and championing for nearly one hundred years. These conversations continued past the meeting’s scheduled end time.

Bottom Line: there is enthusiasm for moving forward with a revival of the AAUP chapter at DU. Interested parties should email me with their contact information and availability, and I’ll schedule a follow-up organizational meeting.