



EQUITY ☆ OPPORTUNITY ☆ EXCELLENCE

AAP Advocate

Association of Academic Professionals
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
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2005 Budget Underscores Importance of Solidarity

By Jenny Barrett

What can APs expect from the FY05 budget? At his February 18 budget address, Gov. Rod Blagojevich proposed a \$14 million cut to the University of Illinois, despite a recommendation from the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) that state operations money for universities remain steady. Instead of the nearly \$697 million funding for the University of Illinois—including about \$283 million for this campus—in FY04, \$683 million is slated for next year.

The governor estimated that overall spending, however, could rise with the 8% tuition increase that the University Board of Trustees has recommended, according to the February 19 *News-Gazette*. The University wants to use the money to give 4% salary increases and to restore some of the classes and sections that have been lost during the past three years of budget cuts.

The IBHE has recommended that universities reallocate \$27 million from administrative costs to core mission activities, part of a three-year commitment to trim such costs by 25%, or \$100.6 million (see <http://www.ibhe.state.il.us/>).

At a recent Council of Academic Professionals meeting, Provost Richard Herman said that the 25% cut in administrative costs would include cutting administrative positions in student and research support and in development. When asked if those AP positions that were cut are gone forever, Herman said that the UI is seeking to increase the size of the faculty. As new programs and departments are formed, new AP positions will be created. However, these positions probably will not be the same as the ones lost during budget cuts. The cuts have been made in administrative areas to protect general education, the library, and fellowships. This will continue to be the way cuts are made in the next budget round.

The AAP asks that in any hiring the University first consider highly qualified APs who have been terminated because of budget cuts. Current policy already allows internal searches that are restricted to people already in the system. A recent search of the University of

In this atmosphere of budget cuts, a collective bargaining contract that ensures fair terminations, without regard for age or gender, is more important than ever for APs

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The Association of Academic Professionals is a group of academic professional employees at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign that is attempting to organize for the purpose of collective bargaining. The AAP is affiliated with the Illinois Education Association and the National Education Association. We are part of a national movement of academic professionals who seek collective bargaining rights.

In order to maintain and improve on the benefits of working at this great university, we believe that we need to organize so that our voice commands attention when administrators make decisions that affect our jobs.

The AAP seeks to ensure certain rights such as:

- ☆ clear paths for career development and advancement
- ☆ third-party resolution of disputes with supervisors
- ☆ fair, timely, and consistent evaluation procedures
- ☆ safeguards against arbitrary dismissal
- ☆ rewards for good job performance
- ☆ compensation for mandatory overtime
- ☆ paid and unpaid leaves
- ☆ *a meaningful voice in decisions that affect our employment*

AAP Advocate—UIUC Association of Academic Professionals

AAP Officers:

Chairperson, Jenny Barrett, *Psychology*
 Vice Chairperson, César Augusto Romero, *ACES/ITCS*
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IEA STAFF: Dan Chambers

Message to APs: Is Your “Work Environment” Being “Enhanced”?

Recently, Chancellor Nancy Cantor sent a message to all deans, directors, and department heads (DDDH) that AAP thought you ought to see. In the message (printed below) the chancellor encourages administrators to “Help us find ways to enhance our work environment!”

AAP applauds the chancellor’s intentions, but we fear that these “enhancements” and possible programs and flexibilities will again be a function of the willingness of individual department heads. Those who work in a department with an enlightened department head may be offered more flexibility than those in a department with a director who is less enlightened.

AAP believes the kinds of programs, flexibilities, and enhancements suggested by the chancellor should be equally available to all APs. The current system of merit-based raises is similarly a function of the individual department head. Now, some get great reviews, work day and night, and get no raise, while others in a different department doing the same kind of work can be given a good raise even if they are performing at a minimum level.

Let AAP know what kinds of “enhancements” you would like to see, and also let Chancellor Cantor and your department head know. If you work for an enlightened department, let us also know what programs your department initiates so we can tell the rest of the campus. ■

Date: Tuesday, January 20, 2004 2:44 PM
 From: Chancellor Cantor <chancellor@UIUC.EDU>
 To: DDDH-L <DDDH-L@LISTSERV.UIUC.EDU>
 Subject: [DDDH-L] Help us find ways to enhance our work environment!

Dear Colleagues,

As we begin a new semester, Provost Herman and I are optimistic about the future of the campus. At the same time, we realize that a university community constantly asked to do more with less must explore new ways to maintain its energy and creativity. I am writing to ask you to help us find ways to enhance our work environment.

Some innovation is already possible. In spite of our financial constraints, we can still establish work schedules within our units that are more rewarding because they are more flexible. Civil service employees already are eligible for flex-time and flex-year policies, and all employees may be considered for percent-time and job-sharing appointments.

Insofar as your unit budget permits, I would also urge you to invest in the professional development of your staff. Please encourage and allow them to attend workshops, seminars, and classes. This is an excellent way to ensure that your unit operates efficiently and effectively, and I believe it will also be a morale-booster.

The Provost and I are studying the feasibility of formalizing practices such as remote work site alternatives and compressed work weeks. We also hope to make it possible for employees to be released from work with some additional hours between now and Memorial Day.

I invite you to suggest to me other ways in which we can reward our employees at a minimal cost to us. We must continue to let them know how much we need and appreciate them.

Thank you for your patience with hard times and your commitment to this university, our students, your colleagues, and your employees.

Cantor Will Be Missed

By Daniel Lewart

Chancellor Nancy Cantor's leadership, vision, and commitment to respect for all people made an enormous impact on the University of Illinois in her brief tenure here. She spearheaded many important research and educational initiatives and fostered an environment that welcomed all to the table so that the hard work of education could thrive. While our campus will miss her voice, vision, and courage, we wish her great success as the chancellor and president at Syracuse University.

AAP hopes the new leaders—in the offices of both chancellor and president—will share many of Chancellor Cantor's attributes: strong advocacy for the University of Illinois at the state, national, and international level and a commitment to human dignity, mutual respect, and equality of opportunity. ■

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Illinois Human Resources Web site, <https://hrnet.uihr.uillinois.edu/panda-cf/application/SearchForm.cfm>, brought up 18 AP postings at UIC that have in their job description: "This is an internal search. Applicants must be currently employed at UIC." Extending this policy to include qualified APs whose positions have been terminated seems logical.

What can APs do in this budget climate?

First, participate in IEA's Higher Education Lobbying Day on March 24 (see details below). We need to educate our state legislators and the Governor to the fact that, in order to preserve the University's world-class status, the state must continue to provide adequate funding for the infrastructure necessary to carry out high-level research and teaching. We must also make them aware that students have needs that are met outside of class time. Students will be hurt by cuts to advising, medical care, computing consulting, counseling, and all the other important services that APs provide to students.

Second, contact AAP (<http://www.shout.net/~aap/>, aap@shout.net) to join the movement for collective bargaining rights for UIUC academic professionals! In this atmosphere of continuing budget cuts, getting a collective bargaining contract that will ensure fair terminations, without regard for age or gender, is a more important goal than ever for APs. ■

AFSCME Battles for YOUR Benefits

AAP has learned that negotiations between AFSCME (which represents Civil Service at the U of I and Civil Service employees across the state) and Central Management Services have been going very poorly in one specific area—insurance coverage.

Why is this important to academic professionals? Because U of I grants to us the same insurance coverage and rates that AFSCME negotiates. If their rates go up, so will ours.

Fortunately, AFSCME has a great track record of keeping insurance rates affordable. ■

September in January?

Did you notice something missing from your W-2 forms earlier this year?

In case you'd forgotten about the pay date being moved last September from the 21st of the month to the 16th, the lower totals on your W-2 forms are a friendly reminder that you lost 5 days of pay last year.

How many more days or months will you let go by before you decide to join the only organization that is working to give APs a say in their conditions of employment?

Sign and return the enclosed petition card today! ■



Get on the Bus! Join AAP for Higher Education Lobby Day!

On **Wednesday, March 24**, AAP will participate in the Illinois Education Association's 2004 Higher Education Lobby Day. As one of the largest unions in the state, IEA has a powerful voice in Springfield!

AAP will be working with other higher education locals from all over the state to advocate for a budget that reflects the needs of the University of Illinois and protects staff and programs as well as services to students.

All academic professionals are invited to join us for the trip to Springfield. Transportation is being provided by IEA, but people interested in attending should reserve some vacation time and **RSVP to aap@shout.net**.

If you decide to go and even if you don't, you'll want to attend the March 9 Brown Bag Luncheon on strategies for educating legislators. You are sure to learn a lot about the way state politics affect your job! ■

Taking Our Story to Springfield: Strategies for Educating Legislators about UIUC

**A Brown Bag Luncheon on Tuesday, March 9, at noon
Geneva Room, McKinley Foundation, 5th and Daniel, Champaign**

UIUC and AAP/IEA leaders are working together
to raise awareness about the value this university provides to the state.

Come hear **Rick Schoell**, the campus's top lobbyist, and
Paula Purdue, the lobbyist for the Illinois Education Association, one of the state's most powerful unions.

They will present strategies for APs who want to reach out to state legislators.

The brown bag will be a great opportunity for any AP who wants to participate in the AAP's bus trip
to Springfield on March 24 for Higher Education Lobby Day (see page 3 for details).

Ask AAP

*Does the card drive
include visiting APs?
How about those in
Extension?*

Q: I am an academic professional on a visiting appointment with the University of Illinois Extension in northern Illinois. Can I sign a support card for AAP, or do I have to work on campus and have a permanent appointment?

A: Visiting APs as well as APs working off-campus in Extension can sign a petition card, and both are encouraged to join AAP/IEA.

Extension employees are a part of the Urbana campus staff no matter where their office or mailbox is. There are over 300 Extension APs on campus and around the state, and all of them are eligible to sign a card supporting an election to determine whether AAP can represent APs in collective bargaining. Just as Extension Civil Service clerical workers all over the state are represented by AFSCME and are covered by the same policy and rules as those on campus, so can you be represented by AAP.

Visiting APs are also eligible to join AAP or sign a card supporting AAP. Visitors should be treated just like permanent employees. The only formal differences are the length of the contract, which is limited to 1 or 3 years, and the notice of termination period, which is extended only to permanent staff. All other policies and programs apply equally to all APs. See Appendix III of the *2002–2004 Academic Staff Handbook* (or go to http://www.ahr.uiuc.edu/ahrhandbook/appendix_III/default.htm) for a rundown of all benefits by appointment type.

Until recently, visiting APs were not represented on the Council of Academic Professionals (CAP), which is the only recognized voice—and it is merely advisory—that APs currently have to administration. With leadership from AAP members on CAP, policy was changed so that visiting APs can run for a position on CAP and can vote in the election of CAP representatives. The next election is coming up in the first full week of April. Watch your email for announcements regarding running to serve on CAP and voting in the elections.

AAP realizes that there are informal differences between permanent and visiting APs that involve the hope of gaining permanent status, and the fear of termination or of being labeled a troublemaker if you stand up for yourself. Under the current system, all APs are vulnerable to termination without cause, and permanent staff enjoy better notification rights but otherwise little more security than visitors. AAP is working to get a contract that will eliminate this fear and worry for all APs. ■