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MICHIGAN BUDGET CRISIS

The Governor is reportedly proposing the elimination of new spending in virtually every program except prisons. There are four reasons for the budget problems in Michigan. First is the decline of revenues due to the faltering economy. It is estimated that the state deficit will be close to \$600 million. Second is that while state revenue is declining, two reductions in state taxes are due to go into effect this year and next. Third is a combination of the Headley Amendment limiting state tax revenue increases and a recent state law that guarantees K-12 funding over all state funding. This may squeeze university funding which is not mandated. The fourth reason is the ballooning Department of Corrections budget. Corrections consumed 5% of the state budget in 1984, 17% now, and is expected to grow to as much as 25% of available funds in years to come. This is so despite falling crime rates throughout the 90s.

What can the State of Michigan do to ensure adequate funding of higher education in the face of falling revenues and increasing spending on prisons and other corrections programs? One alternative is to tap into the Tuition Tax Credit, the Merit Scholarship Trust, and the Budget Stabilization Fund. We should tap these sources of funds to add to next year's higher education appropriations bill. Contact your state legislators to encourage them to do this. If not, next year could be a disaster from the standpoint of appropriations to higher education. And, lest you forget, next year is a negotiation year for us.

THANK YOU VICE PRESIDENT BRENEMAN

One of the unsung heroes at Western Michigan University is Jeff Breneman, Vice President for Legislative Affairs. Laboring in the political arena, Jeff is probably better known in the halls of the state capital building than the halls of ivy. Jeff has been pleading our case every day in Lansing for more competitive faculty salaries and the need for more state funds to hire additional faculty to accommodate growth. The issue of funds for faculty has been the administration's number one priority for three straight years, and has been repeatedly mentioned in Western's House and Senate testimony. It is comforting to have a savvy political pro like Vice President Breneman in our corner.

THE LINKAGE BETWEEN STATE APPROPRIATIONS, TUITION, AND FACULTY SALARIES

As WMU Professors Allen Schwenk and Galen Alessi have often observed, the issue of rising college costs is a very complicated question. For instance, it is true that increasing state appropriations and higher tuition creates a greater likelihood of increases in faculty salaries and increased numbers of faculty. But the reverse is not true. Increases in faculty salaries and numbers of faculty lines do not create the need for equally large increases in state appropriations and tuition rates. The administration has discretion in building a budget. For example, between 1993 and 1998, increases in state appropriations and tuition income amounted to a combined 38 million dollars. For the same

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time period, faculty payroll increased by about 6 million dollars. Also, a 4.5% raise in faculty salaries requires a 3-3.5% increase in faculty payroll. As higher salaried faculty retire or resign, and lower paid assistant professors replace them, there is a net savings to the university. Also, faculty who begin their first year of teaching are not eligible for the across-the-board increase.

To pay for next year's salary increase, the university would only have to raise tuition by about 2%, with no increase in state appropriations. Let us be grateful to the administration for its emphasis on improving our overall numbers and our compensation. Let us also be careful to distinguish between correlation and causation.

NOTE: We thank Galen Alessi and Allen Schwenk for their advice in the writing of the above sections of this column.

FACULTY EVALUATION OF ADMINISTRATORS BECOMES A SYSTEM-WIDE PROCESS

An important change in the way we evaluate administrators will begin in the winter of 2002. Previously, faculty initiated evaluation of their dean or chair by contacting the Chapter and asking that an evaluation occur. As you might imagine, this would rarely happen except when faculty were more than a little perturbed with the

administrator. We therefore usually conducted evaluations to establish the presence of widespread dissatisfaction. Next winter semester, all deans will be evaluated. In the winter semester of 2003, all chairs in the College of Arts and Sciences will be evaluated. In the winter semester of 2004, all other chairs will be evaluated. The three-year rotation will then repeat itself *ad infinitum*. Departments may evaluate chairs more frequently at their own discretion.

The president, provost, and other vice presidents will not be evaluated in this rotation. Careful scrutiny of the current *Agreement* reveals that we only have a contractual right to evaluate deans and chairs.

Access to, and distribution of, the results will follow current practice. Quantitative data for deans shall be forwarded to the provost. Quantitative data for chairs shall be forwarded to their respective deans and to the provost. Quantitative data will also be supplied to the appropriate Association Council representatives. All data will be provided to subjects, with narrative comments being typed by Chapter staff to protect anonymity. All data will be available for review in the WMU-AAUP office by participating bargaining unit members. No one may make copies of, or take notes on, narrative comments.

The purpose of the evaluations shall be to identify capable deans and chairs, to improve the performance of administrators, and to enhance the quality of the university.

Only members of the bargaining unit may participate in this evaluation of administrators.

Thanks once again to the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Faculty Evaluation of Administrators, consisting of Barbara Havira, DeWayne Anderson, Jon Neill, Gerry Nowak, and Galen Rike.

From Your Contract Administrator...

Ariel L.H. Anderson

MERIT PAY

Merit pay is on the minds of many these days ...including those of us in the AAUP leadership. You may recall that the current *Agreement* secured 0.5% for merit pay increases in each of the first two years of the contract, while year three (2001-2002) was left open. The *Agreement* contains permissive language for year three; in other words, the administration may allocate funds for merit pay increases in year three, but is not obligated to do so.

On several occasions, the Chapter leadership has asked the administration for information regarding merit pay in year three. Responses have been somewhat equivocal — at times it has sounded like merit monies will be allocated, and at other times the picture has looked rather bleak. At this point in time, the Chapter has yet to receive a decisive response from the administration. Therefore, we are unable to provide a satisfac-

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tory answer to the increasing number of inquiries emanating from the membership regarding whether or not there will be merit pay in the upcoming year. Rest assured that as soon as the Chapter receives solid information from the administration, the news will be promptly disseminated to the membership.

Please recall that the merit pay program in the current contract is under the control of the administration. There is no specific application process, nor are there any published criteria or procedures to assist the faculty in securing merit pay increases. The administration may not require the faculty to provide any specific documentation or application materials. Administrators may use the annual Professional Activity Report (PAR) document to assist in their decision making. PARs are due on October 15th (see Article 42.§13, p. 120 of the *Agreement*.)

Recommendations regarding the allocation of merit pay begin with department chairs, and move "up the line" to deans, with *decisions* being made at the level of the provost. The minimum merit pay award is \$500.00 under the current *Agreement*. Other than that, there is little information the Chapter leadership can provide at this point in time. We'll keep you posted as we learn more.

PROMOTION AND OTHER PAY INCREASES

Please be aware that you should check your pay stubs each fall to ensure that the appropriate pay increases are added to your base rate of pay. The administration is supposed to annually provide faculty with written information regarding their rate of pay. However, many faculty have reported that they are not consistently receiving written notification, and therefore are uncertain as to their precise salary. Errors have occurred; for example, some faculty

have noticed that increments have not appeared as they should following notification of promotion. Western has been most cooperative in rectifying such situations when brought to its attention.

The Chapter leadership advises the membership to keep close tabs on rate of pay as reflected in pay stubs, and to promptly contact the payroll office when errors are detected. If you require assistance, do not hesitate to contact the Chapter office.

The spring/summer sessions are moving swiftly along. The Chapter office continues to provide a full range of services throughout this period. Please let us know if there is any way we can be of assistance.

Retirement Seminar Winter 2002

The Winter 2002 Retirement Seminar will begin in January. The seminar will be offered on Thursday evenings for eight weeks. There is a limited amount of space available. Please contact the AAUP office at 345-0151 to reserve your place.

From Your Grievance Officer...

Elaine Phillips

GRIEVANCE UPDATE

It appears that the administration and the AAUP have reached an agreement on a Chapter grievance regarding Article 6, Right to Data. According to the contract, the administration is to notify the Chapter "... no later than the 25th day of each month ... of all new unit faculty members, all withdrawals from the unit, and all changes of status of unit personnel" (Article 6.§5). There have been some notable problems with this, resulting in our filing the grievance.

The AAUP's position has been that we understand that sometimes mistakes or delays will occur, but, in order to adequately serve our members, notification needs to routinely take place within the specified timeframe. We have, in the past, been in the position of having to contact the administration to get information that we feel should routinely be provided.

We have recently had two situations in which we found out by chance that faculty members had been appointed. In one case, the appointment occurred prior to the end of the fall semester. We found out through the department the following April. In a second case, we found out in April of 2001, that an ongoing faculty appointment had occurred in the spring session of 1999.

The administration notes that there may be occasional delays, especially in the case of appointments and changes that occur outside of the normal calendar cycle. Periodic delays are to be expected in any notification system. They state that they, too, want to avoid notification delays. In keeping with the positive, prob-

lem-solving relationship the AAUP and the current administration subscribe to, the administration is exploring ways to expedite communications regarding changes in the status of unit personnel. We appreciate the administration's receptiveness to our concerns.

TENURE AND PROMOTION APPEALS

By the time you receive this issue of the *Advocate*, the provost will have forwarded his final decisions to all bargaining unit members who appealed his tenure or promotion recommendations. If you had an appeal hearing with the provost and have not yet received a response, please contact the provost's office or the AAUP. We would be glad to help you follow-up on this.

The administration is exploring ways to expedite communications regarding changes in the status of unit personnel.

THANK YOU

Thank you for the cards, notes, phone cards, emails, positive thoughts, and prayers after my accident. I am healing and am back at work. I am touched by your thoughtfulness.

SAVE THIS DATE!!

**TUESDAY
AUGUST 28th**

**13th Annual
Faculty BBQ**

**Additional
information will be
sent in July.**



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED