



February 4, 2025

To all members of the AAUP-UD Bargaining Unit, here is a review of our recent activities and spring priorities.

Politics and us

National AAUP announced in a meeting on Jan 31 that they plan to join [state attorneys general fighting the federal funding freeze](#) (temporarily paused). See also [National AAUP and AFT resources and workshops of interest](#).

Please see the new [Civic Bulletin](#) at the end of this newsletter for a rundown of Delaware state legislation of interest.

Bargaining preparations for the 2026 contract

In spring 2025, [dues-paying AAUP-UD](#) members will be asked to complete a questionnaire on issues of salary, benefits, workload, shared governance, and working conditions. Once survey results are in, Steering Committee members and Department Representatives will meet frequently to discuss faculty priorities for the next round of contract negotiations, set to begin in Fall 2025. If you have a specific concern not covered in the questionnaire, please contact [your department reps](#) or us through [our contact form](#). You can also email me at braham@aaupud.org.

UD Finance

In preparation for bargaining, we have commissioned an assessment of the University's finances from an external expert in university finance and governance. We have been following several troubling trends, including

- Underfunding of academic and student support (library, student financial and academic services, maintenance and housekeeping, student life/RSOs, department budgets)
- Disproportionate growth in management/finance/MIS/legal salary outlays with cuts to areas that serve the academic mission
- Budget allocations put a majority of units in deficit, contrary to demonstrable earnings
- Excessive redirection of operating resources (including tuition and fees) to endowment and capital projects

We will present our findings twice in February:

1. A public presentation to the Faculty Senate Budget Committee, open to all
2. A second presentation open only to Bargaining Unit faculty (all full-time temporary, continuing, and tenure track faculty, whether dues-paying or not)

Health Plan

The Benefits and Cost Containment Committee has heard a proposal for moving the administration of the healthcare plan from the State to UD. We have requested that the salient features of the move and its implications be presented to our Steering Committee for consideration of whether or not to endorse it. Under the [CBA](#), no reduction in benefits may occur. The move being considered would not change the current carriers (Highmark and Aetna) or the current coverage plans.

Adjunct pay

The AAUP-UD has no say in adjunct pay rates, as adjunct faculty are not members of the bargaining unit, but we have heard from many adjunct faculty who are upset about recent pay cuts. Both the Faculty Senate and AAUP-UD discussed the matter with Provost Laura Carlson, who is working to resolve the problem.

Call for Department Representatives

Units with vacant Department Representative positions will be asked to elect representatives to serve as liaisons between the Steering Committee and their respective faculties. Reps can attend and participate in all Steering Committee meetings but do not vote. This is an important job, as we will be planning this spring for new contract bargaining to begin in fall 2025. Departments may have up to two reps at a time. Contact me at braham@aaupud.org with any questions.

Membership

All full-time temporary, continuing track, and tenure-track faculty at the University of Delaware are covered by the employment contract negotiated by the AAUP-UD. However, only AAUP-UD members participate in the consideration of contract issues. Stand with us to protect your rights and working conditions. Dues for 2025 will be \$20.93 per paycheck (an increase of \$0.88), still the lowest among our peers. [You can join now](#) and not be charged dues until September 2025.

Please accept our best wishes for your success and well-being in the coming year.

Sincerely,



Persephone Braham, President

AAUP-UD Civic Bulletin #1 (February 1, 2025)

Dael Norwood

As workers at a large public research university, faculty at the University of Delaware are deeply affected by the policies, legislation, and oversight pursued by state and local governments. This occasional series seeks to inform AAUP-UD members about relevant developments.

~Dael Norwood, History Dept. & AAUP-UD Steering Committee

Legislation of Note

The Delaware General Assembly opened for its 153rd session on January 14, 2025. The session runs to June 30th.

HB 34 - in committee

This legislation “amends the Newark Charter by authorizing the City of Newark to levy and collect a per student, per semester tax on Colleges and Universities that host in person classes which are located within the boundaries of the City of Newark.”

It [follows on a 2024 effort by the City of Newark to impose a levy](#) on UD. The City claimed its budget shortfalls were caused, in part, by [UD’s refusal to contribute fairly to public infrastructure](#). First proposed last session, the measure died in committee – [though the state did provide Newark with a one-time \\$2 million grant](#).

Newark-area Rep. Romer introduced a new version on January 9th; it now awaits a hearing in the House Administration Committee. (The bill also prohibits making payments to the City with credit cards, [a standard UD practice](#) that for [over a decade](#) has cost Newark hundreds of thousands of dollars in processing fees, annually).

- “Editorial: Newark’s People Deserves Transparency from University in Wake of Proposed per-Student Tax,” *The Review*, March 18, 2024, <https://udreview.com/editorial-newarks-people-deserves-transparency-from-university-in-wake-of-proposed-per-student-tax/>.
- Kelly Powers, “So Are UD Students Facing New Taxes? Catching up on Newark’s Efforts to Boost Revenue,” *News Journal*, July 19, 2024, <https://www.delawareonline.com/story/news/education/2024/07/17/ud-tax-fixed-payments-400k-in-fees-into-newarks-hunt-to-up-revenue/74409597007/>.

HB 6 - in committee

Introduced by Newark-area Rep. Osienski, this bill expands the powers of the State Auditor’s office, allowing the direct issue of subpoenas. It appears to be a direct response to [UD administrators’ refusal](#) last year to comply with the auditor’s request for documentation related to “dual employment” (e.g. a report on individuals holding two taxpayer-funded jobs). The bill passed the House with overwhelming support, and now heads to committee in the Senate.

- Karl Baker, “UD Snubs State Auditor, Rekindling Question of Whether It’s Public or Private,” *Spotlight Delaware*, September 19, 2024, <http://spotlightdelaware.org/2024/09/19/ud-snubs-state-auditor-rekindling-question-of-whether-its-public-or-private/>
- Nick Stonesifer, “Bill Seeks to Give Subpoena Power to State Auditor,” *Spotlight Delaware*, January 27, 2025, <http://spotlightdelaware.org/2025/01/27/delaware-auditor-subpoena-bill/>.

HB 38 - in committee

Introduced by Rep. K. Williams, chair of the powerful Joint Finance Committee as well as the House Education Committee, this legislation requires any “institution of higher education” receiving state funding to provide records on “elected or appointed” state officials employed by the institution. This bill appears (along with [HB 6](#)) to be a response to [UD administrators’ refusal](#) to comply with the state auditor’s requests – but does so while carefully not defining “institutions of higher education”

as state institutions. Fines for non-compliance start at \$10,000. The bill is under consideration by the House Education Committee.

HB 9 - in committee

Sponsored by Rep. K. Williams this bill requires state officials and their supervisors to disclose “dual employment” to the Public Integrity Commission. In its original draft, this bill appears (along with [HB 6](#)) to be a response to [UD administrators’ 2024 refusal](#) to comply with requests from the state auditor. However, on January 30, 2025, Rep. Williams [filed an amendment that appears to exempt “institutions of higher education” from these reporting requirements](#), by defining them as non-public, neither “state agencies” nor “political subdivisions.” Assigned to the House Administration Committee, the bill awaits a hearing.

SB 50 - passed both houses

Among other provisions, this “mini-bond bill,” reallocates funds originally designated for the deferred maintenance of UD laboratories instead to “campus improvements,” including \$4 million for [“the design and upgrade of the softball field.”](#) It received final approval from the legislature on January 30, 2025, and now awaits the governor’s signature.

Major funding bills: [HB 100](#), [HB 101](#), and [SB 30](#)

The statewide general fund appropriation, one-time appropriations, and bond and capital improvements bills, respectively – all of which have a bearing on UD’s finances. These are all currently in early draft form, with changes anticipated following hearings at the [Joint Finance Committee, or JFC](#).

Policy and Personnel

On Tuesday, January 21, 2025, Delaware inaugurated a new governor, Matt Meyer. The Meyer administration has sought to differentiate itself from the prior administration through its policy priorities, and by naming new personnel to key cabinet posts.

[Sarah Mueller, “Democrats Gov. Matt Meyer, Lt. Gov. Kyle Evans Gay Sworn into Office,” *WHYY*, January 21, 2025](#)

- “Newly sworn in, Matt Meyer promised to focus on public education, housing and rising inequality as governor.”

[Julia Merola, “Meyer Taps Top Federal Leader Marten to Lead Delaware Education,” *Spotlight Delaware*, January 16, 2025](#)

- [Confirmed on January 29th](#), Marten will oversee the state’s Higher Education office. (Marten previously served as deputy secretary for the U.S. Department of Education in the Biden administration).

Resources and events hosted by AAUP and AFT

1. AAUP meeting: Political attacks on higher education [RSVP to the February 7 meeting here](#).
2. AFT "[Defending Higher Education in 2025](#)" [resource page](#), includes guidance and talking points on accreditation; immigration; and diversity, equity and inclusion efforts.
3. Digital Safety Workshops webinar series for higher education workers:

- Digital Safety Workshop: Prepare
March 10, 3 p.m. EDT [REGISTER HERE](#)
- Digital Safety Workshop: Respond
March 17, noon EDT [REGISTER HERE](#)
- Digital Safety Workshop: Allyship
Mar 24, 3 p.m. EDT. [REGISTER HERE](#)