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FIXING COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY THROUGH DIALOGUE AND PETITION

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Special Faculty Appointment

Department of History

Colorado State University is broken. It might not seem that way on the surface, as an ambitious building program enacted over the years of the Tony Frank administration has created the physical infrastructure needed to house, feed, and educate record numbers of students pouring in from Colorado, nearby states, and internationally. Colorado State is larger, more diverse, and stronger than in the past, a dynamic powerhouse helping to fuel economic growth and rising educational standards in a key region of the United States. Nevertheless, in spite of progress, Colorado State is internally fractured and poorly equipped to face future challenges. The plight of non-tenure track faculty (NTTF) working for decades on low salaries without significant raises is a

symptom of a larger malaise that, left unchecked, threatens to undermine or undo improvements. This is why I and other faculty decided to launch a salary petition for NTTF at Colorado State - <https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/fair-pay-for-faculty-at-CSU>. Once the salary petition went online it began gathering signatures at a pace that surprised us; fifty signatures within the first hour, another fifty, two hours later, over one thousand within a few days. The sense of CSU as a community seemed in evidence in the many supportive statements posted online.

Since their origins in the Middle Ages, universities have been defined as corporations, in a legal sense but also crucially in the sense of communities of scholars and students sharing common interests. The idea of community lies at the heart of modern university life, and is celebrated in large rituals and ceremonies such as graduations, sporting events, and convocations, and in innumerable smaller ways from university clubs and associations to course instructors putting extra effort into constructing and scoring assignments in the (hopefully not vain) wish that doing so will lead to improvements and greater long term success among our students. While universities may no longer stand in loco parentis, we idealize ourselves as a large, extended family, a crucial concept underpinning our institutional self-image and CSU's online advertising campaigns. Families, however, do not function well when some members share a sense of rawness stemming from the belief that they are being exploited in order to benefit other members of the same family. It is our hope that our

salary petition will contribute something to bringing the CSU “family” together into a new dialogue in order to rectify the feeling of unfairness.

Non-tenure track faculty share many common tribulations, but are not the only members of our increasingly dysfunctional university family to feel aggrieved. In some sense the economic injustices experienced by NTTF of low salaries, no raises, and high levels of indebtedness stemming from student loans necessary for obtaining professional degrees are the complaints of the contemporary American middle class writ small. There is, however, an important gender dimension as women are overrepresented among NTTF, especially within certain divisions of the university, such as the College of Liberal Arts. The poor wages of NTTF are also a symptom and one of the contributing causes of low salaries among tenure track faculty in many university departments. We invited support from tenure track faculty, and many of them have responded by signing the petition and offering assistance.

In large systems such as universities, once one group of employees starts mobilizing to address grievances, the sense of outrage among other aggrieved populations can cascade. Administrative workers, tenure track faculty, custodians, part time workers, students, all have grievances that at first glance appear separate, but in reality are connected. NTTF are canaries in a coalmine. NTTF, who number over 750 on CSU campus, are large enough to effectively pressure the university administration, but can also serve as a catalyst to stimulate the kind of progressive changes that can bring our university together in new ways that respect gender and workplace equity, avoiding the calamity of widespread campus discord.

Our petition is a starting point (please see immediately below). I and other faculty have asked Tony Frank to meet with us in order to discuss issues brought up by the petition. We hope to be able to solve the salary dispute and general concerns about equity before the arrival of Joyce McConnell as CSU president in July. If it proves impossible to resolve our salary grievances in this shortened time frame, we are prepared to press on with further organizational efforts during the summer and in the coming fall semester.



FAIR PAY FOR FACULTY AT COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

(at <https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/fair-pay-for-faculty-at-CSU>)

IN RECOGNITION OF THE FACT THAT the base salary for Non-Tenure Track Faculty at Colorado State University is 30% below the median household income in Fort Collins;

AND THAT in February 2019 the University of Colorado, Boulder raised the minimum instructor salary to \$52,000 for Instructors and \$60,000 for Senior Instructors;

AND THAT the Modern Language Association has recommended a minimum base salary of \$10,900 per 3 credit course;

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED demand that Colorado State University implement a guaranteed minimum salary of at least \$52,000 per year for all full-time faculty working at CSU, a minimum salary of \$60,000 per year for full-time Assistant Professor/Senior Instructor, and a minimum salary of \$66,000 per year for full-time faculty promoted to Associate Professor/Master Instructor. We demand that this be implemented within all colleges at CSU, beginning in fall semester, 2019.

Salaries across the entire CSU system should be increased to match their regional cost of living.

EXPLANATORY NOTE FOR PETITION

Non-Tenure Track Faculty are paid 30% below the cost of living in Fort Collins, and can be subject to variable teaching schedules that lower pay even further. There are examples of NTTF, some of whom have been working here for decades, living under difficult and even dangerous conditions across CSU campus. The problems are concentrated most heavily in the College of Liberal Arts. All we ask for is a secure middle-class standard of living.

Many departments have worked hard to implement the new career ladder proposed for NTTF faculty. This is to be applauded. However, the salary provisions confirm that Tony Frank's administration continues to view NTTF faculty as a low-wage labor force supporting the rest of the university's activities. Let us be clear: continued low salaries for NTTF endanger the quality of undergraduate and graduate teaching and depress the salaries of all faculty. We have a better vision of the future: one where all faculty, including NTTF, are treated fairly.

President Tony Frank is on his way out. On July 1 Dr. Joyce McConnell will become CSU's fifteenth president. We wish her the best and are hopeful that her administration will act promptly to rectify past injustices by raising the salaries of NTTF faculty. The university has funds available to do this quickly without raising student tuition rates. We must take action to communicate our concerns now before summer arrives and faculty and students disperse.

Our futures and the quality of teaching at CSU are at stake.

On behalf of Justice for NTTF Faculty at CSU.

Dan Stephen

INSTRUCTIONAL SPENDING AT COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

Steven Shulman

**Professor of Economics
Center for the Study of Academic Labor**

CSU is heavily dependent upon non-tenure track instructors to staff its classes. In 2017, 50.4% of instructional staff was off the tenure track, not including graduate student instructors. (Unless otherwise noted, the figures in this article were produced from IPEDS, the federal data depository on higher education.)

According to CSU's Office of Institutional Research, 63% of undergraduate student credit hours were taught by non-tenure track faculty members as of 2013-14. It is likely that the percentage would be even higher today, but IR stopped producing this statistic.

Although our undergraduate programs could not run without these instructors, CSU pays them poorly. At the base per section rate, a full-time instructor with a 100% teaching appointment would earn about \$40,000 over nine months. However, only about one-third of instructors off the tenure track work full-time.

Why does CSU pay its non-tenure track instructors so little and employ so few full-time? The answer is that education is a low priority for the CSU administration. The evidence for this claim comes from IPEDS data on instructional spending.

The table below shows two metrics of instructional spending. Among all 49 public doctoral land grant universities, CSU is tied for last place in terms of instructional spending per dollar of tuition revenue. It is in the bottom quintile in terms of instructional spending per student. These rankings clearly show that the CSU administration places a low priority on funding our educational mission.

Resident undergraduate tuition and fees have increased by 74% since 2010 while instructional spending per student rose by just 15%. Rather than put the additional tuition revenue into education, CSU spends it on subsidies to athletics -- now over \$25 million per year -- and other non-educational ventures.

The low pay for CSU's non-tenure track instructors is a symptom of the administration's refusal to increase instructional spending beyond adjustments for enrollment growth and inflation. This unspoken but significant policy harms all of us in the academic community, first and foremost non-tenure track instructors and their students.

PUBLIC LAND GRAND DOCTORAL UNIVERSITIES, 2017	INSTRUCTIONAL SPENDING PER STUDENT	INSTRUCTIONAL SPENDING PER TUITION DOLLAR
Southern University and A & M College	\$4,400	\$0.97
South Dakota State University	\$6,102	\$1.03
Utah State University	\$6,170	\$1.51
Montana State University	\$6,420	\$0.78
Mississippi State University	\$7,110	\$1.05
University of Rhode Island	\$7,121	\$0.65
Oklahoma State University-Main Campus	\$7,245	\$0.89
North Dakota State University-Main Campus	\$7,689	\$1.01
<i>Colorado State University-Fort Collins</i>	<i>\$7,699</i>	<i>\$0.65</i>
Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University	\$7,737	\$1.96
New Mexico State University-Main Campus	\$7,895	\$2.33
University of Idaho	\$8,042	\$1.31
Iowa State University	\$8,308	\$0.94
University of Arkansas	\$8,323	\$1.10
Oregon State University	\$8,371	\$0.95
University of Georgia	\$9,061	\$0.81
Louisiana State University	\$9,485	\$0.94
University of Nebraska-Lincoln	\$9,629	\$1.23
Kansas State University	\$9,717	\$1.07
University of Missouri-Columbia	\$9,768	\$1.07
West Virginia University	\$10,054	\$0.81
Washington State University	\$10,111	\$1.20
University of Arizona	\$10,627	\$0.77
University of Kentucky	\$10,702	\$0.99

Auburn University	\$10,708	\$0.78
University of Maryland Eastern Shore	\$10,839	\$2.95
University of New Hampshire-Main Campus	\$10,907	\$0.85
University of Nevada-Reno	\$11,507	\$2.04
University of Minnesota-Twin Cities	\$11,763	\$1.16
University of Maryland-College Park	\$11,944	\$1.05
The University of Tennessee-Knoxville	\$12,071	\$1.20
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	\$12,083	\$0.91
University of Wyoming	\$12,175	\$3.06
North Carolina State University at Raleigh	\$13,015	\$1.63
University of Wisconsin-Madison	\$13,161	\$1.19
University of Florida	\$13,263	\$1.82
Texas A & M University-College Station	\$13,265	\$1.49
University of Massachusetts-Amherst	\$13,486	\$1.25
University of California-Riverside	\$13,594	\$1.12
Michigan State University	\$13,721	\$0.89
University of Vermont	\$13,896	\$0.67
Rutgers University-New Brunswick	\$15,106	\$1.29
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	\$15,123	\$0.99
Ohio State University-Main Campus	\$16,656	\$1.21
University of Hawaii at Manoa	\$16,729	\$1.97
Purdue University-Main Campus	\$17,584	\$1.16
University of California-Berkeley	\$19,311	\$0.99
University of Connecticut	\$20,280	\$1.58
University of California-Davis	\$23,834	\$1.62

AAUP COLORADO CONFERENCE NEWS

- **AAUP Colorado Annual Meeting:** The Colorado Conference annual meeting is scheduled this year for May 25 (Saturday) at Denver University, 9:30am-3:15pm in Room 1150 of the SIE Building on the DU campus. The Conference is pleased to host as its guest speaker, **Dr. Christopher Newfield**, professor of American Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Newfield, creator of the Remaking the American University Forum with Michael Meranze [<https://utotherescue.blogspot.com/>], is a leading analyst/critic of the trajectory of U.S. public higher education since the 1980s and an eloquent champion of the idea that American universities should operate on the principle of advancing the public good rather than their current heading privileging private beneficiaries. He is a prominent advocate of Elizabeth Warren’s controversial free undergraduate tuition proposal that has been embraced in some form by various democratic presidential contenders. Newfield’s critically acclaimed books include, *The Great Mistake: How We Wrecked Public Universities and How We Can Fix Them* (Johns Hopkins Press, 2016) and *Unmaking the University: the Forty-Year War on the Middle Class* (Harvard University Press, 2008).
- **AAUP Summer Institute, July 25-28, Roosevelt University, Chicago, Illinois.** TT and NTTF faculty interested in attending the AAUP’s Summer Institute for faculty organizers and activists should contact Steve Mumme by June 15 (stephen.mumme@colostate.edu).

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Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/CSUAAUP?fref=ts>

Website: <https://aaupcsu.org>

AAUP State Conference: <http://aaupcolorado.org>

**To join AAUP and our CSU chapter, sign up at the national AAUP site:
<http://aaup.org>.**