



CSU Newsletter

April 2022

Monthly Membership Meeting

Wednesday, April 13th, 4-5pm

(2nd Wednesday of the month)

Avogadro's Number, 605 S. Mason Street

Come meet your colleagues and organize for a better CSU. We encourage all tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty members to attend, regardless of whether you are a member of our national organization. If you are interested in getting involved but cannot attend this meeting, please email us at aaupcsu@gmail.com.

0% Raise for CSU's Faculty?

By Anders Fremstad

In its April meeting, the CSU Faculty Council learned that faculty should not expect to receive merit raises this year. Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs Sue James stated, "it does not appear we will have a salary exercise for administrative professionals or faculty." Of course, faculty have already gone through the annual task of documenting their contributions to teaching, research, and service over the last year – that exercise simply will not be used to calculate pay increases.

With the cost of living rising rapidly, flat wages would result in a reduction in our

standard of living. If wages are frozen this year, our real wage cut at CSU would be significantly larger than the [national average](#). The administration claims to understand that Fort Collins is increasingly unaffordable for many of its employees, but it does not seem to understand its contribution to this problem, and its proposed solutions fall far short. For example, Human Resources recently launched a [fancy new website](#) that promises employees access to 60 below market rate apartments in Fall 2023, when hundreds of faculty members struggle to make rent because they do not earn a living wage.

A 0% raise could also make it more difficult for CSU to address glaring pay inequities across campus. The AAUP's [new online tool](#) shows that women faculty members at CSU earn just 83.5% as much as men, and that fully 26.7% of our full-time faculty have Non-Tenure-Track appointments. These inequities cannot be resolved without substantial raises at the bottom of the wage distribution. The administration claims that withholding merit raises will reserve funds for equity salary increases, but without collective bargaining rights (see the next articles!), the administration can make these decisions completely unilaterally.

Why I Support the Collective Bargaining Bill

By Gretchen O'Dell

The current state of affairs: NTTF at CSU-Fort Collins are exhausted, overwhelmed, and undervalued. Our local AAUP chapter recently conducted a survey of NTTF to learn about their concerns. I read every word, and many of the responses made me cry. We want our institution to succeed in its educational mission; we want to teach and mentor the next generation of leaders; we care deeply about our students; but we are *not* thriving. When we cannot take care of our own faculty, we are foundering as an institution. Our president is fond of saying "Rams take care of Rams," but NTTF feel like they are left out in the cold. Our salaries are significantly lower than those of K-12 teachers in our local school district.

Personally, I consider myself part of the NTTF labor elite because I have a 3-year contract and some job stability. That said, until 2 years ago I was making at most 47k/year for full time employment. I have a PhD and 10 years of experience. Now I make a bit more, still not much - and I'm one of the "lucky" ones. That is not enough to live on in Fort Collins, where we have a high cost of living.

In their testimonials, NTTF spoke of not being able to afford a car; delaying starting a family; working multiple jobs, frequently at 2-3 institutions; struggling to pay off student debt; being unable to save for retirement; and of the shame and pain of being a single parent who is unable to provide for their children through their labor at CSU. Salary is our primary issue. A close second is the unpredictability of our employment; many

of us don't know from semester to semester how many classes we'll be given to teach. This makes it very difficult to plan ahead. An unexpected dental bill or car breakdown will send us deeper into the hole with no way to recover. We don't feel like we have any control over our destinies.

The administration sometimes talks about wanting to support NTTF, but we see very little improvement.

This is why we need a union and collective bargaining rights. That would give us a say in our working conditions, and the administration would actually have to listen and bargain with us. We play an *extremely important* role in our university, yet many of us are ready to give up and seek employment elsewhere. Please support those of us who work in higher education: support this bill so we can continue doing the job we *love* to do, and that our students *need* us to do!

Help Pass This Bill

The Collective Bargaining Counties and Higher Education Bill will likely be introduced this week. Faculty voices are having an impact at the capitol, but we cannot let up the momentum! This is a once in a lifetime opportunity and a large hurdle for this bill.

The AAUP is looking for volunteers to share their story and reasons why collective bargaining will be a good thing for higher ed. You can volunteer [at this link](#). Please also consider submitting a Letter to the Editor using [our tool and template](#). We also encourage you to [send a letter to your representative](#).

CSU Administration Opposes Collective Bargaining Bill

By AAUP-CSU Executive Committee

This spring, faculty at public universities in Colorado have a historic opportunity to win a right held by workers in the private sector: the right to form a union. The Collective Bargaining Counties and Higher Education bill is scheduled to be introduced to the state legislature this week. If passed, the bill would:

1. Allow university, college, and county employees to join and form a union.
2. Provide multiple paths for a majority of workers to gain union recognition.
3. Ensure employers' neutrality and protections for workers who organize.
4. Require employers to negotiate in good faith and to resolve disputes through binding or advisory arbitration.

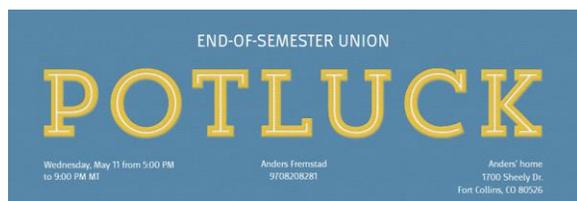
Collective bargaining would enable faculty to negotiate for adequate salaries and benefits, job security, and predictable work schedules. It would also strengthen academic freedom and enhance shared governance by giving faculty more voice in the operation of the university, particularly its adherence to its educational mission. These benefits would be especially important to non-tenure track faculty who are often grossly underpaid, uninformed about their teaching loads until the last minute, and vulnerable to criticisms of classroom discussions around sensitive issues.

Unfortunately, Colorado State University adamantly opposes this bill and is actively

lobbying against it. In a recent letter to state lawmakers -- disingenuously titled a "fact sheet" -- CSU, along with other institutions of higher education in Colorado, criticizes the bill for forbidding dismissals without cause, allowing university-sized bargaining units, and for not prohibiting strikes. The University also asserts that unionization would result in tuition increases. This strategy is on display in [an op-ed published in the *The Daily Sentinel*](#), and co-signed by CSU Chancellor Tony Frank, which aims to divide parents, students and employees via unsubstantiated threats. [Research on the impact of unionization](#) shows that there is no correlation between collective bargaining and student tuition or student debt. In fact, there is evidence that tuition increases are more constrained on unionized campuses, most likely because of faculty advocacy on behalf of their students.

The University's working conditions are students' learning conditions, and passage of the collective bargaining bill could benefit both the CSU's faculty and its students. These goals fall squarely within the Principles of Community espoused by CSU (Inclusion, Integrity, Respect, Service and Social Justice) as well as the [Courageous Strategic Transformation](#), which seeks to "attract, support, and nurture all members (students, faculty, and staff) of the CSU community by cultivating a culture of excellence and inclusivity, and using our collective skills to achieve shared goals." We urge the CSU administration to support the Bargaining Counties and Higher Education bill in its efforts to create a more inclusive, just, and equitable university community.

End-of-Semester Union Potluck



Wednesday, May 11th, 5pm-9pm
1700 Sheely Drive

Join CSU faculty and graduate students for an End-of-Semester Union Potluck. Come to meet colleagues from across the University and get involved in organizing for a more equitable campus. Feel free to extend the invitation to any CSU workers, and please use the [evite](#) for us to track attendance.

Please bring any appetizer, main dish, salad, or dessert to share. We will supply dishes, drinks, and snacks. We will be socializing at 5pm and eating at 6pm. The celebration will be inside and outside (weather permitting). We hope you can make it!

Faculty Council Passes a Resolution Reaffirming Its Commitment to Academic Freedom

By Anders Fremstad

In response to attacks on academic freedom across the country, CSU's Faculty Council unanimously passed a resolution reaffirming its commitment to this founding principle at its April meeting. The resolution states that "the pursuit of truth and knowledge can only occur by fostering open dialogue that engages multiple viewpoints, and addresses controversial, uncomfortable, and complicated theories and ideas." It warns that "the histories of the U.S. and other democracies

show the dangers when academic freedoms are violated and teachers are persecuted... The Faculty Council resolutely rejects any attempts by bodies external to the faculty to dictate academic curricula, processes, discussions, or research on any matter, including matters related to race, gender, and social justice, and will stand firm against encroachment by the Federal or State governments, the CSU Board of Governors, or University donors." The full resolution can be found on [the Faculty Council website](#).

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AAUP National: www.aaup.org