

North Central State Faculty Association A Chapter of the AAUP

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*Officers of the North
Central State Faculty
Association ~
A Chapter of
the AAUP:*

*Beth Franz
President*

*Joe Badamy
Vice-President*

*Ross Justice
Treasurer*

*Pat Herb
Secretary*

*The North Central
State Faculty Assn.
Mission Statement:*

*We, the members of
the North Central
State Faculty Assn.,
have organized in
order to support the
college's values,
vision, and mission
statement. We offer
a strong,
independent,
unifying voice in an
effort to create an
environment of
mutual respect in
which faculty
knowledge and
expertise are valued.*

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Faculty Association Begins Work with the Administration to Ensure Smooth Election

On Friday, February 1st, 3 members of the NCSFA sat down with Interim President Don Plotts in response to his invitation to have an "introductory conversation" to discuss how both sides can work together to ensure what we all hope will be a smoothly run election on March 4th and 5th.

In the course of this conversation, Plotts shared with the three of us many of the ideas that he has since shared with the entire College community in his Open Letter to Colleagues, dated February 1, 2008. The NCSFA appreciates Plotts' reaching out to the Association to start his tenure as Interim President on the right note.

As we all look to the future and envision the tremendous potential that a change in leadership holds for the institution, it is important to consider just how a collective bargaining unit plays into that potential. In this issue of the NCSFA Newsletter, we are happy to share in its entirety a letter that we received from Cheryl Casper, Chair of the Faculty Senate at Kent State University, and former President of the AAUP-KSU Chapter. Casper, as she shares in her letter, also served as assistant vice president, and as a member of the senior administration, she "saw first-hand how easily an administration – even a well-intentioned one – can lose sight of the faculty and student perspective in setting the direction of the institution."

Those of us on the Organizing Committee welcome the opportunity to help Interim President Plotts realize his vision of helping NC State better serve the needs of its current students and the students we have yet to have the opportunity to serve. But we are also committed to the belief that it is in the form of a collective bargaining unit that the faculty on this campus is best positioned to make its important contribution to that effort. We believe that the majority of our colleagues feel the same way. And we look forward to the upcoming election as an important step in the process of assuming our role in the decision-making process at the College.

Kee Hall (room 128A) voting times:

- **March 4th between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.**
- **March 5th between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.**

Additional voting opportunity out at the Kehoe Center for Advanced Learning (conf. room 169):

- **March 4th between 3:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.**

Why I'm voting yes

I have been a faculty member of North Central State College since 1996. I became a full-time faculty member during the Winter Quarter of 1999 for the Criminal Justice Department. My dedication to the college and to our Criminal Justice Program has always been evident. I truly care about our college community and that is why I fully support forming a collective bargaining unit.



We have finally found the proper avenue in which we can be guaranteed a voice in the decision-making processes that occur at North Central State College. We have finally found the proper avenue in which mutual respect, consistency and shared governance can occur. We have finally found the proper avenue that can ensure open and honest communication but most of all, fairness. A collective bargaining unit can only strengthen our ties to our colleagues and to our college community.

This is our opportunity to enhance our professional growth. This is our opportunity to be the voice of change that is desperately needed at North Central State College. We keep hearing the word transition from the administration. They use this word freely to make excuses as to why we don't get answers — because we are in transition. A union is our opportunity to make this “transition” that they are captivated by and keep referring to — actually succeed.

Establishing a formal and legal binding negotiating body here at North Central State College is imperative for our growth! This is why I plan to vote in favor of the collective bargaining unit in the March election.

Let's not miss this golden opportunity.

— **Anne Vinson**

Associate Professor, Criminal Justice

Why I'm voting yes

As I begin my commentary as to why I am voting for the union, I would like to begin with this quote “Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it”- George Santayana.



I began my career at North Central State College in 1995 and heard the complaints from the Faculty Assembly concerning not having a voice in the institution. We would make proclamations and write letters concerning issues and then we would “wait and see” what would happen. When we felt that our efforts were not successful, we began talking about unionization. Many faculty were opposed to this and said that we should “wait and see” how the new administration would work with faculty. Ironically, many of the faculty that wanted to “wait and see” have left the institution. When the faculty no longer had confidence in the process, the Faculty Assembly was disbanded and The Faculty and Staff Congress was born. Again we decided to “wait and see” if this organization would be able to work with the administration to have a voice in matters of the institution. What we found was that we were considered to be “dysfunctional”. Since this time, we have had two “reorganizations”, the Gardner-Shaw Report and a Vote of No Confidence. While the administration will change, those who govern and make policies for our institution will remain the same.

We can no longer afford to “wait and see”! It is time to be heard!

— **Sam Wade**

Assistant Professor, Criminal Justice



Why I'm voting yes

I have been a faculty member at North Central State College since 2001. Before coming here, I was a long-time adjunct for another two-year college in Ohio, where the faculty was unionized. I saw the impact that the faculty at that institution had on curriculum and ultimately on their students. The faculty had a strong voice in what happened academically at their institution.

As a former journalist and as an educator, I believe strongly in the right to have a voice and the right to be heard. Given the administrative turnover in recent years, now more than ever our faculty needs to be heard. Given the chance, the faculty can help to guide the institution to become a better place.

Since I began teaching at North Central State College, I have heard and read various slogans in the college's advertising campaigns. One that I recall was "It's about the students." Sadly, however, the ones who care about the students and their welfare are very often not the ones being heard when important decisions affecting our students are being made.

In the few years that I have been at the college, policies and personnel have changed like Ohio's weather, quickly and without warning. One day something is a policy, but it doesn't apply to everyone, and the next day what was a policy is now just a "guideline." While we can't change the weather, a union can provide much-needed stability and codify policies so that they are binding and not constantly in a state of flux. Once that is done, we can quit worrying about whether we are keeping up with ever-changing policies and concentrate on our true mission: providing the best education possible for our students.

The latest ad campaign that I heard on the radio compares the faculty to coaches who inspire their students to do their best. The ad ends by saying that the North Central State Faculty is at the top of its game. I believe we can be, but only if the rules quit changing.

I have often heard people around here say, "It's not so bad around here." That may be true, but those of us on the Organizing Committee believe that we can make it so much better!

As many of you know, last year I was diagnosed with Stage IIIB breast cancer. My odds of survival, even with treatment, were just 50/50. Fortunately, after a long year of treatment, I beat the cancer, and I also experienced some tremendous personal growth. I have learned that people are most important and worth fighting for.

So, I am voting yes ... for the students!

— **Pat Herb**

Associate Professor, English



Why I'm voting yes

After all, I am fortunate to work in a profession and position that I love, with a group of colleagues that are second to none. I get to teach in a great building, I have my own office and I have the benefit of division supervisors who respect faculty impact on students and who are open to communication. I attend graduation every year and as each class crosses the stage to receive their diplomas, I get to see the results of the efforts of many and, in turn, feel that pride. And this is all good. But I think it can be so much better still. Consider the following, along with me:

- Consider having a faculty handbook that not only includes all faculty policies, including the most recent salary scale, but is actually put together with faculty knowledge and review.
- Consider the idea of valuing input from all faculty, not just a chosen few who may have the ear of administration.
- Consider the idea of consistency in policy so that new faculty salaries don't trump those of faculty who have many years of professional and teaching experience.
- Consider being asked to work on a college-wide committee and then actually seeing the tangible impact of that work instead of a report that gets filed away or, even worse, the committee work being discarded because it was not to someone's liking. (Faculty with any history at NC State know that these kinds of dismissals of faculty input have occurred with the issues of compensation, load, merit pay, and clinical ratios, to name just a few.)
- Consider faculty attempts to have a voice with administration and actually being heard on a consistent basis. I have personally participated in previous attempts to interact with administration (Faculty Assembly, meeting individually with the Administration, divisional representative at a meeting with Board of Trustee officers and currently as Faculty Caucus representative at large). In each of these attempts, I have come away feeling that faculty input is not valued and that the response from Administration is inconsistent at best.
- Consider faculty development days where faculty members are provided an opportunity to work on their own courses in their own offices instead of having the entire day booked with presentations and meetings.
- And finally, consider this: In the current environment nothing is secure. Without a negotiated contract, anything could change at any time for any reason. I am enough of a realist to know that joining a union, even one with a professional focus, will not fix every issue, now or even in the future. But for the opportunity to have consistency and continuity in the development and implementation of faculty policies and to know that faculty will at least be contractually valued as an integral part of the college community, I will cast my vote on March 4th or 5th FOR the union.

Now, did you really have to ask?

— Jean Jones
Associate Professor, Nursing