

## SCCAAUP Hosts National Speakers at Faculty Forum

The Sinclair chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) recently sponsored a forum at which officers of the national organization addressed relevant issues of significant concern to Sinclair faculty. Dr. Gary Rhoades, General Secretary of AAUP, and Dr. Howard Bunsis, Treasurer of AAUP and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the AAUP Collective Bargaining Congress, spoke respectively about the issues of student engagement, “Engaging Full-Time Faculty to Enhance Student Success,” and faculty affordability, “Can Sinclair Afford Full-Time Faculty?”

**Dr. Rhoades** acknowledged that student engagement had always been part of the mission of colleges and universities and had recently become their mantra as well. However, he indicated that student engagement means different things to different people involved in higher education, and they may constitute government education departments, regional accrediting agencies, statewide oversight boards, district boards of trustees, college administrations, college faculty, and other constituencies.

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Dr. Rhoades explained that student engagement is not merely a best practice implemented in the classroom but a professional responsibility discharged in all areas of the college community, especially in the quality and quantity of the faculty. According to a study conducted by the Center on Reinventing Public Education at the University of Washington summarized in an article (“Tenured Faculty at Two-Year Schools Impact Student Transfers”) in *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* (Volume 26, No. 11, [www.diverseeducation.com](http://www.diverseeducation.com)), tenured faculty positively impact student retention and student transfer to four-year institutions for the completion of their college careers.

Dr. Rhoades said that in addition to the quality of the curriculum and the quality of the instruction, the quality of the relationships developed between students and full-time faculty (who often functioned as mentors and role models, academic advisors and

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personal counselors) contributed significantly to student achievement and student satisfaction with their college experience. He recognized that non-tenured adjunct and part-time faculty simply could not afford to make the same kind of investment of time and concern in their students as could full-time, tenure-track faculty, who (Continued on Page 2)

(Continued from Page 1) were able to avail themselves of private offices for student conferences and more effectively enlist the assistance and support of a range of resources provided by the college.

Dr. Rhoades indicated that student engagement describes both the process and the product of the student-faculty relationship, and it was not simply an outcome of opportunity but also a matter of commitment. However, he argued that commitment is made viable and sustainable only by the presence of full-time, tenure-track faculty, whose ranks should be increased commensurate with the increase in the number of students enrolled in the courses and programs offered by the college.

The presentation of **Dr. Howard Bunsis** was as informative and provocative as Dr. Rhoades's presentation was motivational and inspirational.

Dr. Bunsis had examined the audited financial statements of the college and based on his analysis, he was able to offer an emphatic "Yes!" to the question as to whether Sinclair could afford to hire more full-time, tenure-track faculty.

Dr. Bunsis reported that the fiscal health of the college measured in terms of assets, reserves, and liquidity is extraordinary. Unlike almost all of the other twenty-two community colleges in the state of Ohio, Sinclair has no debt. In fact, the college has over one hundred million dollars (\$100 million) in cash, described as expendable net assets or reserves. This amount of liquidity is unprecedented and unequalled by Sinclair's sister institutions. Moreover, Sinclair has experienced double digit enrollment increases over the past four years, and revenues exceeded expenses in 2009 by twelve million dollars (\$12 million).

**There was absolutely no economic justification for the college's failure to hire full-time, tenure-track faculty at a rate that adequately and effectively supported the growth of its student enrollment.**

The loss of federal stimulus dollars will have a negligible impact on the college's excellent financial condition, and even a sizable decrease in the amount of the state appropriation for higher education could be comfortably absorbed by the college's one hundred million-dollar cushion. In fact, a worst case scenario based on income generated by the state appropriation, county levy, student fees, and all other revenue streams still predicts that revenue will increase in the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

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In light of the facts and the figures, Dr. Bunsis argued that there was absolutely no economic justification for the college's failure to hire full-time, tenure-track faculty at a rate that adequately and effectively supported the growth of its student enrollment. However, over the same four-year period under review, the ranks of full-time, tenure-track faculty have declined, and the percentage of

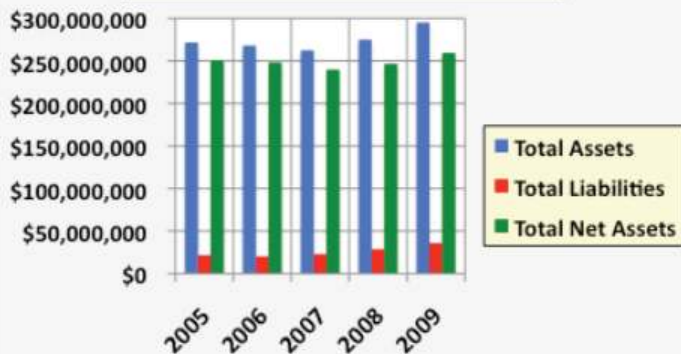
classes and courses taught by non-tenure track adjunct and part-time faculty has increased.

## Statement of Net Assets

Source: SCC Annual Financial Reports 2005 to 2009

|                                  | 2005          | 2006          | 2007          | 2008          | 2009          |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Total Assets                     | \$271,762,944 | \$268,132,281 | \$262,516,201 | \$275,040,240 | \$295,201,734 |
| Total Liabilities                | \$21,511,143  | \$20,005,203  | \$22,660,626  | \$28,451,075  | \$35,755,189  |
| Total Net Assets                 | \$250,251,801 | \$248,127,078 | \$239,855,575 | \$246,589,165 | \$259,446,545 |
| Liabilities as % of Total Assets | 8%            | 7%            | 9%            | 10%           | 12%           |
| Net Assets as % of Total Assets  | 92%           | 93%           | 91%           | 90%           | 88%           |

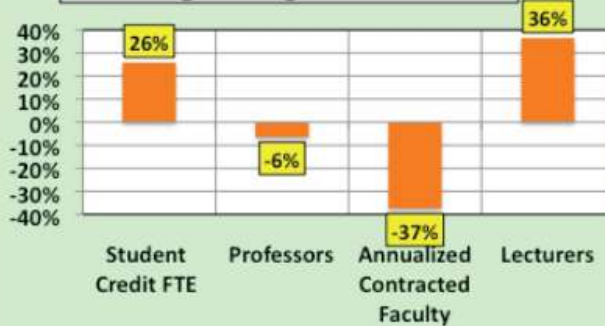
Assets, Liabilities, and Net Assets



## % Changes in Students, Faculty, Lecturers

Source: Annual Compensation; 2010-11 Budget

Percentage Changes: 2006 to 2009



## Priorities: Percent Changes in Expenses

| % Changes:            | 2005 to 06 | 2006 to 07 | 2007 to 08 | 2008 to 09 | 2005 to 2009 |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| Instruction           | 4.0%       | 0.1%       | -0.8%      | 5.0%       | 8.3%         |
| Institutional Support | 7.6%       | 4.4%       | 0.1%       | 10.5%      | 24.1%        |
| Student Services      | 1.8%       | 9.4%       | 3.6%       | 3.8%       | 19.7%        |
| Plant                 | 5.1%       | 2.4%       | 0.2%       | 2.2%       | 10.3%        |
| Auxiliary             | -1.3%      | -3.3%      | 9.0%       | 14.4%      | 18.9%        |
| Student Aid           | -13.9%     | 5.0%       | 10.7%      | 49.7%      | 49.9%        |
| Academic Support      | 2.5%       | 12.9%      | -1.4%      | 9.7%       | 25.1%        |
| Depreciation          | 11.0%      | 15.6%      | 6.4%       | -2.5%      | 33.1%        |
| Public Service        | 2.2%       | -2.9%      | -1.8%      | 2.5%       | -0.2%        |
| Total Expenses        | 3.0%       | 3.0%       | 1.3%       | 8.0%       | 16.0%        |

Unfortunately, Sinclair faculty must assume some responsibility for this deplorable state of affairs because apparently we failed to analyze the audited financial statements of the college for ourselves and instead relied on a self-serving interpretation of them by the administration, whose priorities seem to be very different from those of the faculty. Had the faculty conducted our own inquiry into the fiscal health of the college, we would have discovered that there was absolutely no justification for the so-called compromise or tradeoff we felt obliged to make between increases in full-time faculty compensation and increases in full-time faculty appointments.

Dr. Bunsis explained that at Sinclair there simply is no financial crisis, actual or imminent, and decisions made on the basis of fiscal exigency are disingenuous, if not downright duplicitous. Furthermore, he indicated such decisions do a disservice to students as well as to faculty because the interests of both are sacrificed on the altar of an unnecessary, if not altogether false, austerity. And the mission of the college becomes an exercise in economic expediency instead of a commitment to excellence. Dr. Bunsis challenged the faculty to challenge the administration in this regard.

Benjamin McKeever ■

Dr. Bunsis's complete PowerPoint presentation may be viewed on line at the SCCAUP website:

[www.sccaup.org](http://www.sccaup.org).



## *Reflections on the Summer Institute*

*by Benjamin McKeever, SCLAAUP*

The 31<sup>st</sup> AAUP Summer Institute, co-sponsored by the AAUP's Collective Bargaining Congress and the Assembly of State Conferences, was held at San Diego State University, from July 20 to August 1, 2010. The Institute was a rewarding and enjoyable convocation of longtime activists and new devotees to the cause of "academic freedom for a free society."

I had the pleasure of being a member of the delegation of attendees from our Sinclair chapter of AAUP, and my conference itinerary included workshops entitled "African American Faculty and Academic Freedom," "New (More Diverse) Faculty—Old Principles," "Campus Communication," and "Media Outreach." These seminars provided exposure to the humanitarian principles and egalitarian practices of the AAUP.

As a new member of the association, I was particularly impressed by the vitality and energy of the vision and commitment of the AAUP. It was especially enlightening to learn from the experience of representatives of other AAUP chapters how to interest and engage faculty in the discussion and determination of issues that impact their dignity and integrity, autonomy and responsibility.

It was also reassuring to discover we shared in common with other chapters both the challenge and the benefit of faculty advocacy—the challenge of having our motives misconstrued and misunderstood as well as the benefit of having our efforts effect significant change and positive outcomes.

It was important to hear the stories of representatives of advocacy chapters whose members could not form collective bargaining units, but whose members, nevertheless, were able to improve the terms and conditions of employment for faculty, preserve academic freedom and tenure, and participate effectively in the shared governance of their institutions. Their achievement had been the result of their solidarity and perspicacity as well as their energy and industry.

The AAUP Summer Institute was a unique occasion and opportunity. The hospitality of our hosts was cordial, and the camaraderie shared by participants and attendees was genuine. It was not surprising to hear that the number of registrants exceeded the previous record because of the quality of the experience, which was both motivating and empowering. ■

**The 2011 AAUP Summer Institute will be held from Thursday, July 21, until Sunday, July 24. Although not finalized, it appears very likely that this year's Institute will be conducted at Suffolk University in Boston.**

