

Fairshare FAQs

1. What is Fair Share?

“Fair share” is a term that refers to a system under which employees who are represented by a collective bargaining agent pay a fee to help bear the cost of that representation and all related services provided. Fair share fees are allowed by Ohio law and are paid by faculty at all other Ohio AAUP chapters engaged in collective bargaining, as well as here on the UC campus by SEIU, IUOE, and AFSCME represented employees.

2. What does AAUP do that benefits me? What are Fair Share fees used for?

The fair share fee represents costs to the UC Chapter AAUP and its state and national affiliates that are germane to the Chapter's legal duties to represent you as a member of this collective bargaining unit. These expenses are referred to as "chargeable" and include such costs as:

- Preparations and research for contract negotiations
- Negotiating the contract
- Programming and workshops related to contract education
- Handling work-related problems of employees, including advice and analysis of potential grievance cases
- Representing faculty members in grievance cases and hearings
- Meetings, conferences, and arbitration proceedings concerning work-related issues
- Communication with community organizations, government organizations and the media concerning the Chapter's positions on collective bargaining matters or in defense of collective bargaining rights
- Maintaining an office, staff and the structure necessary to the operation of the Chapter

3. Does the AAUP Chapter represent non-members?

Yes. It is the Chapter's legal duty to assist and represent all faculty in the bargaining unit, regardless of membership status. (Chapter staff do not even ask a faculty member's status when s/he calls or stops by the office asking for assistance.) As an AAUP Chapter, it is also part of our mission to advocate for the rights of all faculty and for the best interests of the entire University.

4. Are Fair Share Fees used to pay for political activities?

No. Fair share fees cannot be used to pay for “non-chargeable” activities. Those activities include:

- Ideological or political activity not germane to work-related issues
- Endorsements of or donations to political candidates
- Advocacy of or donations to international causes
- Advocacy of political causes not germane to work-related issues
- Members-only benefits
- Charitable donations
- The portion of administrative costs, publication costs, affiliation fees, and staff costs not directly related to chargeable activities.

5. Are faculty required to join the AAUP-UC Chapter?

No. “Fair Share” does not require anyone to join any group. (“Closed shop” is a system under which one must join a union in order to have employment in a bargaining unit. Fair share is not a “closed shop” system.)

6. Why does Fair Share matter to all UC faculty?

Maintaining a strong Chapter serves every faculty member’s interests. With fair share in place, the Chapter will have sufficient resources to take any needed legal actions; to take to arbitration any legitimate and unresolved grievances; to further train negotiators and staff; to properly fund the work of the Chapter’s new standing committees (the Contract Compliance & Education Committee and the Budget & Compensation Advisory Committee); provide new programming related to contract education; and to most effectively negotiate the next contract.

7. What has the AAUP-UC Chapter accomplished?

Before we had a contract:

- Shared governance was given lip service, but had no teeth
- Employment terms were altered with little or no faculty input
- Average salaries had UC at the bottom 10% of Ph.D. producing institutions
- Faculty paid 100% of their own health insurance premiums
- No prescription Drug Plan * No Dental plan * No minimum salaries levels
- No provisions for maternity or child-rearing leave
- No Guaranteed Leave for Vacation or Military Service
- No Guaranteed Leave for Professional Development

After we negotiated the first contract:

- An initial salary increase of 18% over two years (after the 1979 strike)
- Binding provisions for academic freedom, tenure, and due process
- The roles, duties, and functions of the Faculty Senate were protected
- Shared governance rights at the department, college, and university levels were protected
- The AAUP negotiated (and has maintained to this day) one of the best health benefit packages in higher education
- A fair and reasonable grievance procedure (which was further improved in the 2007 negotiations)
- Sabbatical leaves and procedures codified (Articles 24, 25, 26)
- Respect for the faculty standing together as a group to shape the future of UC
- Contractual affirmation of non-discrimination (Articles 4 & 5)

Subsequent achievements include:

- The Chapter successfully fought an attempt to cancel all sabbaticals and to non-reappoint 177 junior faculty in 1991
- The Chapter has worked with campus allies to reduce gender inequity and push for domestic partner benefits
- Full parity on domestic partner benefits was achieved in 2007 — and thanks to this precedent, subsequently provided to all other UC employees
- The AAUP has kept co-pays and premiums for health insurance very low in comparison to other Cincinnati employers, and compared to national averages
- Chapter staff and leadership have established and maintained positive working relationships with the Provost's office and other administrators, toward resolving faculty issues as quickly as possible
- On a daily basis, the Chapter staff provides information, assistance, and analysis on contract matters to dozens of faculty members and department chairs:
 - Between 9/07 and 5/08, Chapter staff analyzed and assisted with 65 separate cases involving 82 faculty members (of whom 44% were not Chapter members) across 12 different colleges. Eighty-seven percent of those cases were resolved through advice to the faculty members or informal discussions with the Provost's office or other administrators.

8. Are Fair Share fees or Chapter Membership dues tax deductible?

In some cases, membership dues or fair share fees may be tax deductible. Consult your tax advisor for more information.

9. What's the difference between Chapter membership and Fair Share fee status?

Only members of the UC Chapter AAUP are entitled to vote for Chapter officers, seek a Chapter office, serve on Chapter committees, participate in establishing Chapter priorities for collective bargaining, and vote on important issues at Chapter meetings, including whether to authorize a strike or ratify a collective bargaining agreement. (There are also other benefits at the state and national level. [Click here](#) to see a list of the benefits of belonging to the national AAUP organization.)

Most important — a larger Chapter membership gives faculty a bigger voice at the bargaining table!

10. How much are Fair Share fees? How is the Fair Share rate determined?

Each year, the fair share fee rate is set according to the report of an independent auditing firm. Flynn and Co. has audited and analyzed the expenditures of the UC Chapter AAUP for the 2015 calendar year. The report of Flynn and Co. explaining the allocation of UC Chapter AAUP expenses between chargeable and non-chargeable expenses was sent via campus mail to all members of the bargaining unit who are not AAUP members in October 2016.

Part of the calculation of the Chapter's expenditures includes analysis of its payments to the Ohio Conference of the American Association of University Professors and the National Office of the American Association of University Professors. The independent audits of those organizations were also sent to all bargaining unit members who are not AAUP members in October 2016, explaining how those organizations' expenditure were allocated between chargeable and non-chargeable amounts.

The fair share fee as of October 1, 2016 will be 0.0060 of base salary. This rate represents the proportion of Chapter expenditures in 2015 which were categorized as chargeable.

Dues/fair share fees are monthly.

11. Why does the Fair Share rate change each year? When does the rate change?

Each year's audit analyzes the Chapter's activities (and those of the state and national level AAUP) for the previous year. Because activities vary from year to year, so does the fair share rate.

12. Are there any circumstances under which a faculty member is exempt from paying the Fair Share fee?

A faculty member who has a genuinely held religious objection may file an application for status as a “religious objector.” If this status is approved, then the equivalent of the Fair Share fee is donated to a non-religious charity. If you think you may qualify, email Eric Palmer (Eric.Palmer@uc.edu) for more information.

13. Is there an appeal procedure? What can be appealed?

The Fair Share fee procedures provide a system for the orderly determination of the Fair Share Fee amount. The Fair Share Appeal Procedures provide a process by which non-members may object to expenditures which they contend should not be charged to non-members (i.e., are improperly categorized as “chargeable”). The procedures provide for a prompt consideration of appeals. They were enclosed in the packets mailed to all non-members on October, 2016 (see Appendix B”). If you have any questions about the Fair Share or the appeal procedures, feel free to direct correspondence to the Chapter’s Executive Director, Eric Palmer at Eric.Palmer@uc.edu or 450 Dabney Hall, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH 45221-0176.

14. Why join the Chapter now?

UC's future depends on recruiting and retaining excellent faculty. Faculty voices must be heard in decision-making processes. Shared governance must be respected. Salaries and professional development support for all UC faculty must be significantly increased.

We need your membership now because a larger membership means a stronger faculty voice at the table.

President Zimpher agreed in 2007 to the AAUP's request to start work now on solving UC's dismal salary situation through the AAUP-UC Joint Committee. That work has been ongoing since February 2008. Working together through the AAUP, UC faculty can make a difference and secure the brightest possible future for UC faculty and students.

14. What is the difference in cost between dues and fair share fees?

