President’s Message
Michael Harkins
President, Illinois AAUP

Last April 2017, Columbia College Chicago hosted our Spring AAUP Conference. The keynote speaker, Brian Turner, Chair of the Assembly of State Conferences, outlined the role of the ASC and the importance of state conferences. Brian stressed the role state conferences play in maintaining and strengthening academic freedom, shared governance and tenure in a very active manner. Rima Kaptian of Kaplan Law Offices presented a session outlining the role faculty handbooks play in protecting academic freedom and due process. Diana Vallera of Columbia College led a panel discussion focusing on resistance within academia to protect faculty rights. These sessions highlighted the continued need for our members to protect our profession through actively participating in local AAUP chapters, state conferences, and with the national office. Engaged chapters are critical to the principles of AAUP.

Over the past two years board members Leo Welch and Linda Brockhart have followed the State of Illinois budget crisis and its impact on higher education. In future issues they will report on the impact of this crisis on faculty, students and higher education institutions. The State Conference received numerous phone calls, emails, and letters from our colleagues who vividly explained the impact and damage this state crisis caused in Illinois higher education. In early 2018, a series of workshops will be presented by the State Conference to help faculty as a result of this crisis. Alan Illif, Conference Treasurer and board member, will post time and locations of the workshops on our website. The topics for the workshop will include faculty workload, faculty evaluations, Title IX changes, free speech on campus, Pathways in Higher Education and protecting faculty rights. The State Conference is committed to supporting faculty with meaningful professional development workshops.

Our Spring 2018 Illinois AAUP Conference will be held on Saturday, April 21, 2018 at the Robert M. Healey Conference Center in Westmont, Illinois. The Center is located at 500 Oakmont Lane in Westmont. The Conference theme for Spring 2018 is “Protecting our Faculty Rights: Academic Freedom, Shared Governance and Tenure.” Faculty planning to attend should register (for free) with the Conference Secretary Diana Vallera (diana@studioera2.com), no later than April 16, 2018.

Coffee and rolls will be available at 8 am. The Conference starts at 9 am. The Illinois Conference AAUP website will post the details of the topics and presenters early in 2018. Questions can be directed to the Conference officers at the Illinois Conference AAUP website.

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The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) shall establish a uniform online admission process which will be used for all public higher education institutions. It is not clear whether this admission process is for just the 12 public universities or also for the 48 public community colleges. If a public university rejects an application, the student will be offered admission to another public university. If all public universities redirect the applicant, the applicant will be referred to a community college.

• Automatic Admission

Any high school student with a 3.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) or better on a 4.0 scale shall guarantee admission to a public university. Students with less than a 3.0 GPA will be deferred to a community college.

• Strategic Centers of Excellence

The IBHE shall conduct a survey of all public universities that evaluates the departmental quality of each academic department. The IBHE then will rank each academic program in relation to similar programs at other campuses. For example, the English Departments in the colleges and universities will be ranked from 1 to 10. Any departments not ranked in the top eight could be eliminated by the IBHE if it found that the department is not viable.

• Program Expansion and New Programs

The IBHE shall determine whether an expansion or development of a new program meets the needs of Illinois. Before a program is expanded or developed, the university would have to demonstrate that the program would cost less than an existing program elsewhere in the State of Illinois. This component of the Act will also require the university to demonstrate that the program will be financially viable.

• Student Financial Aid Study

The IBHE shall conduct a study of the opportunity for merit-based financial aid to be completed by January 1, 2019. This merit-based financial support will come within the existing budget of the respective public institutions of higher education with no new money from the state. The General Assembly, however, could determine other ways to pay for a merit-based financial aid program. There is no mention of need-based student financial aid.

• Multi-Year Budgeting Study

The IBHE shall study the concept of multi-year budgeting, as opposed to the current one-year budgeting. Multi-year budgeting would allow for more efficient planning and bring stability and security to the public institutions of higher education. The results of the study shall also be provided to the General Assembly no later than January 1, 2019.

Summary Critique
This proposed legislation appears to focus on Illinois public universities with little reference to Illinois public community colleges or to the Illinois Community College Board and their reports and recommendations to the General Assembly. When or how do the public community colleges get involved with their recommendations to the General Assembly? Admissions
This proposed legislation would direct students with a “B” average to the universities, and the “leftovers” would be directed to community colleges. There are numerous reasons that a student may choose to start at a university or a community college and a “B” average is just one factor. This admission policy is too simplistic.

THE DEATH SPIRAL OF ILLINOIS PUBLIC COLLEGES

By Leo Welch, Legislative Officer, IL AAUP

Two Republican lawmakers in Illinois have introduced bills (HB 4103 and SB 2234) that they claim will save Illinois higher education from itself. They are Rep. Dan Brady, Bloomington, and Sen. Chapin Rose, Mahomet. Their bills will amend the Board of Higher Education Act. Although the stated intent of this Act will “protect quality; reduce duplication, redundancy, and inefficiency; protect ranked programs (and possibly eliminate others); and ensure that Illinois is prioritizing tax dollars to protect its higher education and eliminate its weaknesses,” the reality for most of the act is just the opposite. The other stated intent of the Act is to ensure that Illinois maintains a highly educated, skilled workforce.

Brady and Rose cite the decline in enrollment of most of the Illinois public universities and public community colleges and promote their proposed bills as a way to reverse the flow of Illinois students to other states. The lawmakers ignore the fact that Illinois ranks last in all states in per student expenditures.

The proposed legislation involves six amendments to the Board of Higher Education Act briefly summarized as follows:

• Uniform Admissions

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) shall establish a uniform online admission process which will be used for all public higher education institutions. It is not clear whether this admission process is for just the 12 public universities or also for the 48 public community colleges as well. If a public university rejects an application, the student will be offered admission to another public university. If all public universities redirect the applicant, the applicant will be referred to a community college.

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Committee A Report

New IBHE Head

Legislative Report

U of Chicago Graduate Students Unionize

Purdue Buys Kaplan

The War on Science
The following resolution, introduced by the Illinois AAUP conference, was passed unanimously by the members at the National AAUP meeting on June 17, 2017.

The 103rd Annual Meeting of the American University of Professor Sheriffs expresses its deep concern about the removal of censure from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for this egregious action. Illinois Committee A acknowledges the articulate and intrepid support against censure removal by John K. Wilson, editor of Illinois Academe and an alumnus of the University of Illinois. This is the statement from the Illinois AAUP Committee A that reflects a commitment to academic freedom that is supposedly endorsed by the AAUP:

Illinois Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure strongly opposes the lifting of censure against the University of Illinois. The Illinois Committee A was the first to condemn this assault on academic freedom, and denounced the arbitrary and capricious firing of Steven Salaita, a tenured associate professor, for using his Twitter feed to denounce the indiscriminate mass-killing of non-combatants in Gaza.

We call for a public appeal on the part of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for this appalling termination of a signed contract. We do not believe a merit system has been ethically maintained, in violation of academic freedom from the University of Illinois can be taken seriously. When Professor Salaita and other job seekers were offered contracts, their package included the iconic AAUP 1940 Statement on Principles of Academic Freedom and Tenure and the Statement on Academic Tenure. Without more substantive changes now, confirms the University of Illinois has learned very little about adhering to AAUP principles and procedures.

We do not believe the Board of Trustees' approval of faculty hires, before a semester begins, is a significant reform. The latter would not have helped Dr. Salaita, who early on resigned from a tenured position at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. He should have a very short interval between a contract offer and a governing board's approval. Perhaps, two to three weeks at most.

Illinois Committee A demands the full restoration of the American Indian Studies Program now? The AAUP must not remain silent. A university must not, with impunity, destroy an academic department because of a controversial, idealistic professor. There are no core faculty, only affiliate faculty. The interim director is not a Native-American area specialist but a Latino, African-American, and baseball scholar. The website tersely states a director is in place but says nothing about this.

It was the CCAA in 2007 and not the AAUP censure in 2015 that compelled some reform at the U of I. Although there are still rogue, student mascots showing up at athletic events, the CCAA threatened to withhold any post-season venue to the IUU campus due to the hostility from Illinois. Chief Illiniwek was formally retired. Yet the continuing war on Native-American culture and studies, from the demeaning chief to the evisceration of the American-Indian Studies Program demands censure.

Settlements are not enough. Tenured positions remain elusive. Professor Salaita in a June 5, 2017 e-mail, stated he is leaving the American University of Beirut and has not secured an academic appointment. Health care and retirement packages are not continuous; reputations remain unfairly damaged. It is a temporary fix; a bridge to nowhere. Nor is there any serious reform at the University of Illinois. Illinois Committee A believes the removal of censure is an existential threat to academic freedom and tenure not only at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, but also the entire academy.

Nominations Invited for 2018 Election of the AAUP Illinois Conference

To AAUP Members:
The Illinois Academic Freedom Nominating Committee seeks nominations for candidates for election to the AAUP's Officers and Executive Committee. Nominations are due now.

A. Nominations are due to the nominating chairperson for the Illinois Conference, Leo Welch, at Leo.welch@swic.edu or lk-welch@att.net, by midnight March 12, 2018.

B. The conference recommends that you make your nominations by March 12, 2018.

C. The Illinois Conference AAUP, 14 Treetop Lane, OFallon, IL 62269, 618-632-0079.

D. The nominations shall include the name, institution, and e-mail address of the individual being nominated.

E. The Illinois Conference Nominating Committee seeks a diverse group of candidates nominated to the Illinois Conference.

F. All nominations shall be received by the Illinois Conference Nominating Committee by midnight March 12, 2018.

G. A position that is open for election to two-year terms is:

1. President
2. Vice president
3. Executive committee member

H. The Illinois Conference will e-mail the recipient a notice of their nomination, including a copy of the nominating petition.

I. The Illinois Conference will forward the petition to the nominating chairperson for the National AAUP Conference.

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Alabama Student Loan Bill of Rights Enacted After Override of Gov. Rauner’s Veto

On Nov. 7, the Illinois General Assembly voted overwhelmingly to override Gov. Bruce Rauner’s veto and enact a bill of rights for student borrowers (SB 1351). The Illinois Student Loan Bill of Rights was passed by the efficiency of the Illinois Attorney General’s office, led by the efficiency attorney General Lisa Madigan and sponsored by Sen. Daniel Biss and Rep. Will Guzzardi after Madigan’s investigation and lawsuit against Navient (one of the country’s largest student loan servicing companies) found serious abuses and failures. The bill of rights will try to prevent borrowers from being misled or ignored by the companies that service their loans. The bill makes sure all payments and information are received by borrowers when loans can be forgiven because of disabilities or problems with the college they attended, and explain to borrowers all of their repayment options.

Guzzardi declared, "we took decisive action to override the Governor’s wrong-headed veto and protect student bor- rowers. This year is the fiftieth anniversary of Keyishian v Board of Regents (1967). We reject the notion of a ‘call of orthodoxy over the’ University of Illinois. Illinois Committee A believes the removal of censure is an existential threat to academic freedom and tenure not only at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, but also the entire academy.

Al Bowman Appointed Executive Director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education

Al Bowman, president emeritus of Illinois State University (2003-13), has been appointed as the new executive director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). Tom Cross, IBHE Chair, said: “The Board is pleased to announce Mr. Bowman as the first Chair of the faculty at ISU.”

Bowman plans to address the Illinois college enrollment crisis. According to the IBHE, “The Board is cur- rently engaged in a strategic process updating the Illinois Public Agenda for College and Career Success, and Dr. Bowman is being asked to lead the stakeholder engagement process. The budget impasse began with Gover- nor Bruce Rauner, who demanded approval of his “Turnaround Agenda” that included denying workers the right to choose a union. The Illinois Board of Higher Education is planning to blame in Illinois, the problem started with Gov. Rauner, and he should have end- ed the damage to higher education long ago.

Illinois Student Loan Bill of Rights Enacted After Override of Gov. Rauner’s Veto
The Death Spiral of Illinois Public Colleges

The utilization of online and uniform admission procedures has some merit. It remains to be seen if the IBHE can develop a document that provides appropriate information for all of the various programs that exist in 12 universities and 48 community colleges.

Strategic Centers of Excellence

The legislation would give the IBHE the authority to approve or disapprove any new programs established by the IBHE. There is no mention of community colleges in this proposal. I assume community colleges will be a later target. John Jackson, a visiting political science professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is not required to offer

Prizes have been awarded to bureaucrats?

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Q: A recent survey of students found that 28% of Democrats and 60% of Republicans agree with the idea that they should not have to walk past student protesters on campus. Do you think the right to protest is endangered on campus, or what do you think changed protests and the campus response to them? RF: When dozen of college administrators led their legislators, and Kent and Jackson State, to establish campus police department, they were effectively assert- ing the right to control the effective means of en- gaging campus activism. In many ways, we live in the world that this campaign brought. The Nixon administration and the local police force. In a moment in which large college campuses have well-endowed campus security offices, in a moment in which local police forces are equipped with military style weapons, and within an ideological environ- ment that has never been so understood at nui- sances and criminals, the situation can easily become mili- taryized. There's already a militarization of police within the public, in terms of the common belief that how folks from color of skin and immigrant neighbor- hoods are regarded as enemies within. That is of a piece with how student activists—as well as people of color in general—are regarded on college campuses.

Q: Critics sometimes worry that division and conflict on college campuses today is worse than ever. Do you think that they forget just how violent and angry some of the 1960s protests were (and how violent and repressive many of the reactions to protest were), or do you believe that campuses today are actually deeply divided with con- flicts and that's a bad thing? RF: I don't think that people have forgotten the vio- lence and anger of the 1960s. What has not been con- Q: In the 1960s, a big issue for administrators was whether to call in the police. Now, col- leges have massive police departments, and can spend half a million on policing for one event. Is this a militarization of campus, and how has it changed protests and the campus response to them? RF: When dozens of college administrators led their legislators, and Kent and Jackson State, to establish campus police department, they were effectively asserting the right to control the effective means of engaging campus activism. In many ways, we live in the world that this campaign brought. The Nixon administration and the local police force. In a moment in which large college campuses have well-endowed campus security offices, in a moment in which local police forces are equipped with military style weapons, and within an ideological environment that has never been so understood at nuisances and criminals, the situation can easily become militarized. There’s already a militarization of police within the public, in terms of the common belief that how folks from color of skin and immigrant neighborhoods are regarded as enemies within. That is of a piece with how student activists—as well as people of color in general—are regarded on college campuses.

Q: How has the reaction from college administrators to protest changed over time, and what do you think they should do differently in responding to student protests today? RF: It was no surprise that the NRLL Regional Office ruled against the University. At that point the University could have let the case die, and looked to the future. Instead, it appealed the decision, hoping that Trump’s new appoint- ments to the NLRB will invalidate the claim that graduate students work. But ironic that the former home of President Obama, under whose administration the NRLL affirmed that graduate student workers are workers, is banking on being rescued by Trump. The University wants to stop the vote. Failing that, it wants the bal- lots to be impounded before being counted, so that support for unionization among stu- dents will not be documented. Throughout this process, the university administration has kept the graduate student workers from unionizing, not by advancing persuasive arguments against their unionization, but by exploiting its monopoly on the means of mass communica- tion, and by a series of legal and political maneuvers. If we were genuinely committed to the values it professes, the administra- tion would present its case in a forum where both sides could be heard, and would then let student employees make up their own minds. Instead, it decided the appeal, and it means that Trump’s new appoint- ments to the NLRB will invalidate the claim that graduate students work. But ironic that the former home of President Obama, under whose administration the NRLL affirmed that graduate student workers are workers, is banking on being rescued by Trump. The University wants to stop the vote. Failing that, it wants the bal- lots to be impounded before being counted, so that support for unionization among stu- dents will not be documented. Throughout this process, the university administration has kept the graduate student workers from unionizing, not by advancing persuasive arguments against their unionization, but by exploiting its monopoly on the means of mass communica- tion, and by a series of legal and political maneuvers. If we were genuinely committed to the values it professes, the administra- tion would present its case in a forum where both sides could be heard, and would then let student employees make up their own minds. Instead, it decided the appeal, and
When former University of Illinois Athletic Director Ron Guenther was earning a relatively modest $340,000 a year in 2003, no one really paid much attention. Nor were any red flags raised five years later, his salary ballooned to $600,000 a year.

After all, the public was regularly assured, UI athletics "does not use taxpayer dollars for (its) salary program." So why would taxpayers worry about Guenther’s salary? Maybe because of what’s happened since he retired.

Today, just six years after his retirement, former UI, Urbana Athletic Director Ron Guenther is collecting an almost unbelievable $473,094 annual pension. And Illinois taxpayers are paying every penny.

Guenther is not alone. A recent investigation shows that retired coaches and administrators from the athletic department at the UI’s Urbana campus cost Illinois taxpayers more than $2.6 million per year in pensions. Add in a guaranteed three percent annual cost of living increase, and that total is almost certain to rise every year.

All from a department whose salaries we were consistently told cost the taxpayers nothing.

There are plenty of familiar names on the list of retired athletic department employees currently drawing big pensions. After Guenther, the next highest pension belongs to legendary former UI of men’s head basketball coach Lou Henson. Despite earning a relatively modest salary throughout his Illinois coaching career, Henson’s pension is currently $347,058 per year, the 17th highest for all state university employees. That’s more than he ever made per year in salary as the head coach.

Other taxpayer-funded athletic pensions (all rounded to the nearest thousand) include former UI head baseball coach Richard “Ich” Jones ($173,000), former UI assistant basketball coaches Jimmy Collins ($200,000), Mark Coomes ($129,000), and Richard “Dick” Nagy ($109,000). And remember the woman who was going to put the UI women’s basketball team on the national map, the long-time departed women’s head basketball coach Theresa Grentz? You should, because we’re paying her more than $116,000 per year.

So, how did this happen? Like all benefit-eligible U of I employees, Guenther and others in the UI athletic department are enrolled in the State Universities Retirement System, or SURS. All SURS members are required to pay 8% of their salaries into the system. That 8% contribution, plus interest, accrues in each employee’s account.

When Guenther retired in 2011, his account contained a total of $614,647 from his contributions plus interest. By 2015 he had collected more in total pension from SURS than he had accumulated in his account.

That means from 2015 on, for the rest of his life, every pension dollar he collects now comes straight out of the pockets of Illinois taxpayers.

More than anything, it’s the huge salary increases that Guenther received at the tail end of his career that created his outsized pension. An employee’s SURS pension is based on several factors: years employed, age at retirement, and the average of the highest four consecutive years of salaries. Every time a coach or an athletic department employee’s salary goes up, their potential pension goes up too.

So, in effect, every time Guenther was handed a raise, the Illinois taxpayers were handed a bill.

Keep that in mind every time the U of I Board of Trustees approves a huge raise or bonus for another U of I coach. While a total of more than $2.6 million in taxpayer-funded pensions are being paid to retired U of I athletic department employees (see table below), the actual annual total is undoubtedly much higher. That’s because SURS does not record information about the retiree’s former unit or department, so it’s impossible to search the SURS database to identify former athletic department employees. No doubt there are more retired athletic department members than just the eighteen below whose pensions add up to the $2.6 million total.

It’s a narrative that has been particularly bad time for Illinois’ state universities, which saw significant losses in state funding due to the state’s two year inability to pass a budget, and even with a new state budget face an uncertain future with respect to state support. Seeing the amount of state money being used to pay Guenther’s and other retired coaches’ huge pensions, while at the same time seeing the amount of state money being used to support the U of I shrinks, is sure to rankle the school’s faculty and staff, not to mention tuition-paying parents and students.

And perhaps even the Illinois taxpayers, the people who are ultimately left holding the bill.

“No Taxpayer Money” for Coaches?

“Is it not taxpayers’ money?” Guenther is likely to calmdown.”

That was the first reader comment posted on an online Chicago Tribune story.

The issue that triggered that reaction was the six-year, $18 million contract for newly hired University of Illinois, Urbana head men’s basketball coach Brad Underwood. It’s part of a familiar ritual that happens whenever the UI hires a new high-profile coach.

“This doesn’t come out of tuition. It doesn’t come out of state funding. It’s strictly out of athletics funds,” said one UI Trustee in a newspaper story after a new coaching hire.

“Coaching contracts are covered by athletic department income, not tuition or state funds,” noted another Trustee.

“The state of Illinois does not fund coaches’ salaries,” said an official UI spokesperson.

Intercollegiate Athletics is self supported and does not use state funds, taxpayer dollars, or university funds for our salary program,” said an athletic department spokesperson.

“It’s a narrative that’s been repeated for years, over and over, from pretty much every corner.

Except it’s not true. Not exactly.

While taxpayer money doesn’t technically go to pay the coaches’ actual “salary” lines, taxpayer money does pay for the “salary packages” for most every UI coach, trainer, and full-time athletic department staff member. That’s because UI athletic department employees are UI employees, so they receive the same “standard university benefits” as all other UI employees.

And all UI employees – health, dental, etc. – are paid for by the state of Illinois. In other words, the taxpayers.

The cost isn’t exactly trivial. In 2016-17, the taxpayers’ bill for athletic department benefits was just under $6 million, according to the UI’s Associate Chancellor for Public Affairs. And the cost of those benefits is an annual expense. Combined with the $2.6 million pension cost for retired coaches and other retired athletic department employees (as explained in Part One of this series), the total cost to Illinois taxpayers for UI athletic department compensation packages was $8.6 million in 2016.

“While I think it does it undercuts the argument that tax dollars have nothing to do with athletics,” said State Senator Scott Bennett. “They certainly do.”

By picking up the cost of employee benefits for the UI athletic department, the taxpayers help to free up money for the athletic department, money it can then use to pay for other things — such as the salaries of its coaches. Those huge salaries — football coach Lovie Smith and men’s basketball coach Brad Underwood are the highest paid public employees in the state — may look very different to the public when it knows that part of the justification for those salaries, that “the state of Illinois does not fund coaches’ salaries” isn’t exactly the case.

One major factor driving up the taxpayer cost is also the growth in the number of coaches and athletic staff. It’s a trend seen nationwide, especially in the biggest programs.

“There’s so many people in an athletic department (today), it’s incredible. I mean, literally incredible,” said Rick Felander, a sports journalist who has been covering college sports for more than forty years. “There are no limits. There’s no cap.”

Like many of its peers, the UI athletic department has grown dramatically. The total number of athletic department staff, according to the university’s academic personnel books, has risen from eighty-eight in 1997, to one hundred and ninety-six in 2017. That’s a whopping one hundred and twenty three percent increase in athletic staff.

As long as TV revenue for broadcast rights continues to grow it could actually end up costing the taxpayers. Of course, the athletic department doesn’t have to hire more staff. The number of sports offered by the UI hasn’t changed for decades. But to keep up with its competitors, UI athletics will have to keep growing — and keep spending.

Growing means more and better facilities, more services, and ultimately, more people. More people cost more money.

For the taxpayers.

Even if we’re told otherwise.

The Athletic Fee That Isn’t There

In April of 1997, the University of Illinois, Urbana athletic department was in big trouble.

It found itself in a $1.4 million hole, and budget projections showed that the department would continue to run that deficit each year well into the future. “What’s alarming,” said the Chancellor’s liaison to athletics at the time, “is that even under the best-case scenario, we end up with
The Head Fake: Financing UI Athletics

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

a deficit.”

The Board of Trustees decided that immediate action was needed. After much discussion, they chose a solution: a mandatory student athletic fee for the department, primarily to help fund the football stadium renovation of the football stadium five years prior. It would be the first such fee in University of Illinois, Urbana history.

“What alternatives do we have? This is our only one,” then-President Tom Lamont, quoted in a Champaign News Gazette story, submitted to you that we have none. And it is a responsibility in which students must share.”

But the students disagreed. In a student referendum held a little over a week before the Board was set to approve the fee, students voted against the new athletic fee by a large margin—88% to 12%. The then-Student Body President remarked that she wouldn’t recall another issue that lost by such a wide margin.

Eight days later, at their regular monthly meeting, amid protests by students who packed the meeting room, the U of I Board of Trustees instituted a mandatory $34 per semester per student fee to help pay off the debt for remodeling the football stadium. Twenty years later, that fee is still there. Illinois students are still paying it.

The problem that the fee was originally meant to solve—the stadium’s sweet spot had disappeared. Yet the fee has never been revisited by the student committee that evaluates student fees or the student government, or publicly by the university administration or the Board of Trustees. Most students aren’t even aware that they’re paying the fee, let alone what it’s for, or how it got there in the first place.

And how could they? The athletic fee doesn’t even appear by name on their university bills.

It’s virtually disappeared, buried and hidden. Except it’s still there.

The mysterious student athletic fee is just one of the finicky fees that permeate the financial due diligence investigation into the way the University of Illinois, Urbana funds its athletic department.

Financial Conditions Change, But Fee Does Not

The 1997 athletic fee was instituted based on projections that the UI athletic department was on an unavoidable path of constant debt. But in the ensuing years, some unexpected developments changed all that, and the fortunes of the athletic department improved dramatically.

In 2006, the UI athletic conference, the Big Ten, created the first television network just for an individual conference, to help fund the renovations of the football stadium. It has proven to be a cash cow, flooding the conference coffers with unexpected financial windfall.

The original student fee was created to see if the $34 per semester fee would yield the necessary $1.4 million-a-year total, which would, a newspaper article read, “dramatically reduce” the cost from the Division’s “intercollegiate Athletic budget … thus erasing its deficit.”

But a funny thing happened to the UI on the way to a deficit: it produced one.

The student body grew, significantly. And the total amount of money collected from the $34 per semester fee grew significantly too. Today’s $1.4 million-a-year athletic department expense for the fiscal year 2017 is $34.4 million. That fee was originally created to erase a $1.4 million debt generating over $32 million in revenue, more than double the original amount. It’s turned out to be an unexpected financial windfall.

The original student fee was designed to see if the $34 per semester fee would have seen this as the perfect time to reduce it, just as they had asked. But instead, the university took the fee, and quietly, shifted it to pay for something else.

In 2006, the UI athletic department had undertaken another football stadium renovation, this one far bigger, and far more expensive than the previous one. The money for this renovation would be used to build, according to the bond issue documents, “48 18-seat luxury suites, approximately 202 (premium) indoor club seats and 1136 (regular) indoor club seats.”

And the 1997 student fee, the one created to pay off the 1992 football stadium renovation, was now going to help pay for this new renovation.

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The Head Fake: Financing UI Athletics

continuing from page 6

fellow students for the fee, arming them with a list of talking points and nicely-printed material. But that revenue doesn’t go to the university; it all goes to athletics. Athletics then uses the additional revenue to hire more staff, pay coaches more money, and build and remodel facilities. While this may seem like it generates even more revenue, all of which again goes to athletics and round and round it goes. Many people argue that these improvements help the teams win more games, which in turn, they say, will produce more money for the university by way of increased television revenue. But that’s a myth that was long ago debunked by researchers. “The studies we have on it do not sustain a clear relationship between athletic success and donations (to the institutions),” said Andrew Zimbalist, a professor of sports economics at Boston University. But there are also benefits of the provisions that do provide something for the students. Everyone, students and non-students alike, shares in the enjoyment of new scoreboards, more concession stands, and in the case of the basketball stadium, new seats throughout. But in order to take advantage of those benefits, which every student is paying for, a student has to buy a ticket to a game. In other words, students have to spend more money to get any benefit from the money they are already giving to the university.

That creates an additional hurdle for MAP grant recipients. “If they can’t pay for their own tuition, or at least they’re eligible for MAP,” said State Senator Scott Bennett, “they’re unlikely to actually have any money to go to athletic events.”

So how much MAP money are we talking about here? Calculating that is a little tricky and requires making a few assumptions. As economist Zimbalist said in his 2015 Washington Post story, it isn’t as simple as saying, “when I bought my ticket to see the Maryland game, (my money) went to coaches’ salary, but when you bought a ticket, it paid the tutors.”

To determine how much MAP money is going toward the stadium renovations, Zimbalist recommends splitting all the expenses on the athletic facilities to the percentage of the student’s total tuition and fee costs are going to athletic fees, that’s the percentage of every MAP dollar that goes toward those fees.

Complicating the calculations further is the fact that in-state tuition is different depending on the student’s major. But, skipping over the nitty-gritty math details (the more mathematically inclined will find them below*), using the numbers from 2016-17, the total amount of MAP funds that went to support athletics that year was approximately $300,000.

Of course, you could do the same sort of calculations and detail how much MAP money is going to every other fee, and then critique those too. But there is a big difference between every other student fee and the athletic fees: the athletic fees go for things that aren’t primarily, if at all, for students’ use.”

“We’re pushing for MAP grants, we’re fighting for the university to keep that part of their budget, once you get there, you’re still going to have debt that has to go to make sure the doctors in town and other people can sit in the luxury boxes,” said State Senator Scott Bennett. “I think that (leaves) a bad taste in everybody’s mouth.”

AAUP Conference Proposals

In the past year, free speech on campuses has become a focus of contentious debate and increased media scrutiny. Campus communities—including administrators, faculty, and student groups—have been discussing the state of free speech yet lack a clear consensus about its limits. The AAUP invites proposals for presentations at the AAUP conference on higher education in Arlington, Virginia, June 14-16, 2018, that explore the various dimensions of the concept of free speech in the context of higher education. Presentations on other topics of interest to a diverse, multidisciplinary higher education audience are welcome. We encourage proposals that raise questions, encourage engagement of audience participants in discussion, and foster dialogue.

You may propose either a complete session or an individual presentation. Individual presentations, if accepted, will be grouped into sessions with other individual presentations. Complete session proposals will be encouraged and are preferred. Proposals will be grouped into sessions with other individual presentations and preference participants in discussion, and foster dialogue.

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) will hold a request for proposals for AAUP Conference Proposals, due to be accepted through January 14, 2018 using the form at aaup.org/CFP-2018. Proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis until January 14, 2018, or until the conference receives the maximum number of proposals. Proposals will be reviewed by panels of AAUP members who will meet in Arlington, Virginia, June 12-13, 2018, and make recommendations for the conference program.

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AAUP Denounces Decision to End DACA Program

In response to President Donald Trump’s decision to eliminate the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, and after reviewing information provided by the Workforce Development and Research and Education Council, the AAUP issued the following statement:

The American Association of University Professors denounces the inaction of the US government to further legislate migration and the continued discriminatory policies that the administration has supported from the start.

Many of our members come from families that immigrated to the United States; the forebears to come for the US for the better life for their families, especially their children. But the Trump administration, feeding off the fears and insecurity of many Americans, has used the issue of undocumented youth on the border to create fear among those who would otherwise be mathematically inclined will find them below*). Using the numbers from 2016-17, the total amount of MAP funds that went to support athletics that year was approximately $300,000.

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The War on Science
By Leo Welch

The March for Science in Washington DC, and in more than 600 cities around the world, was held this year on April 22, Earth Day. Although the organizers proclaimed the event to support science in reality, the march was primarily led by President Donald Trump and his anti-science positions. Trump has referred to climate change as a “hoax.” He has supported funding cuts to the National Science Foundation, National Park Service, and National Science Foundation. His attacks lasted from 1975 to 1988 creating adverse publicity and reducing public support for scientific research. Fortunately, he retired from his Senate position in 1986 but similar types of “awards” live on with other organizations that condemn government spending of taxpayer money on scientific research.

Anti-science is also still alive and well today in Dayton, Tennessee. Dayton is the location of the 1925 “Monkey Trial” of John Scopes, a science teacher at the local high school. In May 1925, the Tennessee legislature enacted the Butler Act, making it illegal to teach the theory of evolution in schools. The Scopes trial was launched from a lower form of life. To challenge the law, local citizens persuaded Scopes to state that he had taught evolutionary concepts to his high school class.

Scopes was arrested, tried at the Rhea County Courthouse in Dayton in a trial that lasted eleven days, found guilty and fined $100. William Jennings Bryan was one of the prosecutors; Clarence Darrow defended Scopes. The verdict against Scopes was later overturned on a technicality, but the Butler Act remained Tennessee law for 42 years until it was finally overturned in 1967. The trial drew newspaper reporters from around the country and was later the focus of the stage play and the Academy Award winning movie Inherit the Wind.

A few years after the trial, Bryan College, an evangelical Christian school named after Bryan, was formally founded in 1929 and still exists in Dayton today. In 2005 on the 75th anniversary of its founding, the college erected a statue of Bryan and installed it on the lawn of the Rhea County Court House to honor Bryan’s role in the Scopes trial. This summer, 92 years after the trial and 12 years after the installation of the Bryan statue in Dayton, The American Humanists Association received permission to erect a statue of Clarence Darrow on the courthouse lawn. Because I contributed to the funding of the statue, I was invited to the dedication ceremony. When I arrived in Dayton, June Griffin, the Rhea County Tea Party leader and Pastor of the American Bible Protestant Church was quoted in the local paper objecting to the installation of the Darrow statue. According to the Dayton Times Free Press, she invited the Darrow statue supporters to form a militia and have a fire fight with her and her Christian militia at King’s Mountain. Despite the threat of violence but with the presence of State and City Police, the Rhea County Sheriff’s Department and plain clothes security, who took the threats seriously, the Darrow statue dedication ceremony was officially concluded. I left town convinced that anti-science feelings are still present in Dayton, Tennessee, today as they were in 1925.

Basic scientific research does benefit the public good although the benefits of the research may not be obvious immediately. Mohammed Ahmadpoor and Benjamin F. Jones, both from Northwestern University, found a significant correlation between basic scientific research and the marketplace. Their analysis of 4.8 million patents issued by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office from 1976 to 2013 and 32 million journal research articles showed that 80% of the most cited research continues to decline in future value, while 20% of the least cited research continues to increase in future value. The Ahmadpoor and Jones data supports the direct link between scientific research and viable patents and should counter the common opinion of the general public and too many politicians that basic scientific research has no practical effect. The war on science will undoubtedly continue fueled by religious objections and political ideology. Only informed support of science will enable the United States to continue as a world leader in science research rather than a leader in a race to the bottom.

Faculty Statement Opposing the Online University Deal Between Purdue University and Kaplan

The deal between Purdue University and Kaplan:
1. establishes a profit-seeking corporation (“New University”) operated by and for the profit of a private entity (“Kaplan”);
2. provides for 12.5% of the “New University” revenue to go to Kaplan after operating costs and a priority payment are met; in addition, an “efficiency payment” of 20% of any cuts in operating cost incentives the “New University” to place efficiency above principles of academic integrity, student service, shared governance, and freedom of learning and inquiry;
3. channels profit financial means to a private, for-profit entity with no public oversight, draining resources from public colleges and universities devoted to academic excellence and the public good, not the bottom line; and
4. establishes conditions of at-will employment for 3,000 “New University” faculty and employees, with no common governance, no location for face-to-face meetings, and no provision for shared governance, tenure, or oversight from a deliberative body of faculty who are professionally qualified in the relevant area of expertise (“New University” will have its own institutional accreditation and maintain its own faculty and administrative capacity); and
5. ignores that Kaplan-owned entities have been decertified for paying workers some of the lowest wages in the for-profit education industry; that attorneys general in Illinois, Delaware, and North Carolina have launched investigations into Kaplan University; that Kaplan has settled litigation in Massachusetts over allegations it misled students about job placement rates and in Texas over allegations that it employed unqualified instructors.

In addition:
1. the deal violates the long-cherished core principles of shared governance and academic freedom that the AAUP has stood for since 1915;
2. the deal outsources and privatizes public resources, weakening the ability of our public campuses to provide the quality education for which they are internationally recognized and corporatized public utility and the ability of our public campuses to fulfill their public missions of providing Hoosiers with the best possible education; and
3. as a public-benefit corporation operated for the profit of Kaplan, the new entity would undermine essential protections for the freedom of learning and inquiry on which higher education in the US has been promised for the last hundred years, as well as strip Hoosiers from all walks of life access to a higher education guaranteed by norms of professional review by peers;
4. it asks Hoosiers taxpayers to devote tax revenues (through Indiana scholarships such as 21st Century Scholars Program) to the enrichment of a private corporation, a concept directly at odds with the mission of a public university, which is to advance the public good (via the education of citizens), not to turn a profit for a small band of private shareholders; and
5. prioritizes profit over academic program quality, which will damage Purdue University’s hard-earned reputation for academic excellence.

We faculty at Indiana public universities hereby oppose the purchase by Purdue of Kaplan University.

Call for Papers, Journal of Academic Freedom

For its next volume, scheduled for publication in fall 2018, the AAUP’s Journal of Academic Freedom seeks original, scholarly articles exploring current mobilizations of the term free speech and their connections to existing practices and concepts of constitutionally protected speech and academic freedom. Electronic submissions of no more than 150 words should be sent to jaf@aaup.org by January 31, 2018 and must include an abstract of about 150 words.

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If you care enough about the future of higher education, we hope you’ll now take the next step and encourage your colleagues to join the AAUP at www.aaup.org.

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