

aaupwsblog

# Open Letter to President Hopkins and the Board of Trustees



Sunday, September 11, 2016

To President David Hopkins and the WSU Board of Trustees:

The AAUP-WSU wants to notify the upper administration that **we strongly oppose the firing of any bargaining unit faculty that support the core mission of our University: teaching our students.** Fiscal mismanagement by the central administration has produced our current budget deficits. In particular, it has poured funds into entities and auxiliaries (e.g., Wright State Applied Research Corporation, Intercollegiate Athletics, Double Bowler, *ad infinitum*) which neither generate enough revenue to pay for themselves nor support the core mission of our University. Consulting expenses are at an all-time high—over \$2 million in the

most recent year reported, FY 2015! These misplaced priorities have continued in the budget cuts (still only vaguely delineated) made this summer, in which academic units suffered greater cuts than administrative ones. (See [Cracking the Nut, Part 2](#).) Notably, the administration completely ignored the priorities enunciated by AAUP-WSU regarding where cuts should be made (see our [April 13 letter to the Board of Trustees](#)).

In a recent blog by the AAUP-WSU (see [Cracking the Nut, Part 3](#)), we have shown members of the campus community that the administrative headcount ratio compared to all employees in the University is 50.9%, which is second only to Ohio State University among Ohio's doctoral-level public universities.

The State Legislature is now requiring an Administrative Productivity Measure, and for this they specify four ratios: 1) Course Completion Ratio, which divides the Student Course Completed FTE by the Administrative Employee Headcount; 2) the Degree Completion Ratio, which divides the Student Degree Completion by the Administrative Employee Headcount; 3) Administrative Headcount Ratio (reported above for WSU) and 4) Administrative Expenditure ratio, which is administrative salary expenditure divided by Education and General Expenditure. In the productivity measures, Wright State had the third lowest course completion ratio, the lowest degree completion ratio and the second highest administrative expenditures ratio. **From this data, only Ohio State has more administrative bloat than Wright State does, but at least they have positive net revenues nearly every year.**

ADMINISTRATIVE PRODUCTIVITY MEASURE (APM)

Institution	A Administrative Salary Expenditure	B Administrative Employee Headcount	C All Employee Headcount	D Educational and General Expenditure	E Student Course Completed FTE	F Student Degree Completions	Productivity		Efficiency	
							E/B	F/B	B/C	A/D
							Overall			
Akron	\$58,189,883	946	2,383	\$335,560,378	18,165	5,347	19.20	5.65	39.7%	17.3%
Bowling Green	\$58,901,566	1,001	2,080	\$279,094,285	13,356	4,118	13.34	4.11	48.1%	21.1%
Cincinnati	\$163,678,260	2,727	5,867	\$679,827,909	26,224	9,758	9.62	3.58	46.5%	24.1%
Cleveland State	\$49,351,850	768	1,540	\$224,953,687	11,210	3,965	14.60	5.16	49.8%	21.9%
Central State	\$8,720,507	157	347	\$36,998,226	869	282	5.53	1.80	45.2%	23.6%
Kent State	\$109,057,716	1,860	3,970	\$495,776,649	25,756	8,306	13.84	4.46	46.9%	22.0%
Miami	\$76,576,483	1,366	3,604	\$384,522,001	14,366	5,149	10.52	3.77	37.9%	19.9%
Ohio State	\$535,575,333	8,416	15,486	\$1,605,105,384	41,913	15,621	4.98	1.86	54.3%	33.4%
Ohio	\$103,734,620	1,714	3,669	\$516,934,601	23,863	8,903	13.92	5.20	46.7%	20.1%
Shawnee State	\$8,527,957	156	359	\$47,195,744	3,131	742	20.11	4.77	43.4%	18.1%
Toledo	\$72,206,632	993	2,998	\$391,352,163	13,805	4,705	13.91	4.74	33.1%	18.5%
Wright State	\$76,701,496	1,215	2,385	\$276,066,431	11,403	3,708	9.39	3.05	50.9%	27.8%
Youngstown State	\$33,375,713	574	1,107	\$136,481,413	8,267	2,198	14.40	3.83	51.9%	24.5%

NEOMED is excluded from the analysis due to the effect(s) of their consortium-based relationships with other Ohio public institutions of higher education on the data elements utilized in the calculation.

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Faculty who teach and staff who support this teaching are certainly used to having our productivity and efficiency measured on a yearly basis, and we have proven our worth year after year. This is the first time that the administration's productivity and efficiency in Higher Education has been measured in Ohio, and from this analysis it is clear that a **key place to cut personnel to improve Wright State's productivity and efficiency is in the upper administration.** The State is requiring that Universities reply to this report with actions that will improve their productivity and efficiency. **Why, at this time, are the academic units that support our teaching mission being told that they must undergo drastic cuts, which will impact our ability to teach and bring in revenue for the University?**

Let's examine the accomplishments of the central administration in the past two years. It has brought a federal investigation into H1-B visa misuse on our campus that also implicated some members of the Board of Trustees, forcing their resignation. Various top administrators have departed or been suspended. Notably, the former Provost sits at home collecting a very substantial salary, and we still don't know whether the reasons for his suspension are only *apparent* misdeeds, or deeds actually subject to prosecution, or something in between. Three years ago, the central administration began WSU's unprecedented three-years-and-counting run of genuine deficit spending. This has necessitated precipitous reductions in WSU's reserves. But, rather than acting to cut immediately entities that neither

generate enough revenue to pay for themselves nor support the core mission of our University, the central administration *continued its profligate spending on these very same entities!* Our intercollegiate athletics program has never come even remotely close to paying for itself, or very rarely even staying within its generous budget, but this last year, in the midst of a serious budget crisis, the central administration decided to fire the basketball coach, whose contract had recently been extended and with whom a substantial settlement then had to be reached, and to hire another one at a considerably higher cost.

According to the table above, WSU's Administrative Expenditure Ratio is second worst in the state. But despite this clear evidence of administrative bloat, the central administration failed in performing one of its most basic duties: to report standard university data to the Carnegie Foundation during this time, resulting in a drop in our [Carnegie Classification](#) from R2 down to R3. For the first time in memory, the central administration also failed to report faculty salary and benefits data from the main campus to the AAUP Compensation Survey, despite repeated requests for this data. Likewise, Wright State was very late in filing financial data with the Board of Regents in this past year. The upper administration continues to pay huge consulting fees to help it figure out what it should do to respond to the numerous crises it has created. **All of this taken together begs the question, exactly why are we paying such huge salaries to the top administrators?** The only sensible thing the central administration has done in the past year is pull out of the Presidential debate when it became obvious that it could not raise enough money to cover the cost. But even that decision was made only after the university had incurred millions of dollars of costs for a debate that is now being held elsewhere.

An unending series of scathing media stories ranging from the sexual assault scandal involving the tennis team, to misuse of money to external consultants (who are supposedly not lobbyists!), to the aforementioned H1-B visa fiasco have made it very clear to everyone that the central administration has either caused or not done enough to prevent serious and ongoing damage to the reputation of our university.

Given your chronically misplaced priorities and wanton negligence, it is beyond the pale to ask WSU students to suffer for your errors by reducing the full-time faculty and otherwise cutting academic units who deliver their education. You need to do the right thing and absorb the bulk of the cuts yourself. You need to trim administrative bloat and to cut entities that have generated costs rather than revenues and reinvest in the core mission of this university.

**If you are either unable or unwilling to act in this way, then you should resign.**

Marty Kich

President, AAUP-WSU

On Behalf of the Executive Committee of AAUP-WSU



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I am a Professor of English at Wright State University, where I have been a faculty member for almost 25 years. I serve as the president of the WSU chapter of AAUP, which now includes two bargaining units, as the vice-president of the Ohio Conference of AAUP, and as a member of the executive committee of AAUP's Collective Bargaining Congress. As co-chair of the Ohio Conference's Communication Committee, I began to do much more overtly political writing during the campaign to repeal Ohio's Senate Bill 5, which would have eliminated the right of faculty to be unionized. [View all posts by martinkich](#)



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