



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### NYS AAUP Establishes 2024 NYS Budget Priorities *“NY Higher Ed in Crisis”* Albany, NY—February 2024

- 1. Higher Education is in crisis in New York State.** Over the past 30 years, the amount of funding allotted to higher education has diminished in comparison to other state needs, and in comparison to education in general. Spending on higher education now is a mere 6% of the state budget when it used to be around 12%. This has devastating effects on students and professors. This is especially the case in non-unionized private colleges and universities in NY state. Many have closed and yet others are on the verge of closing. (Ten have closed within the past decade, and more are in danger of closing.) In nearly all, faculty salaries have stagnated in comparison to the cost of living. This has caused many talented faculty to leave the profession, an appalling trend that we see amongst high school teachers as well. New York State simply must do a better job of retaining its best teachers in higher education. Students suffer when courses are taught by overworked adjunct faculty or when class sizes get too large for individualized attention. Moreover, it is unjust for accredited higher education institutions that receive state funding to pay poverty wages to adjunct faculty.
- 2. State funding for both public and private universities and colleges should go towards education.** The NYS AAUP notes that statewide, universities devote less money towards academics than in the past. Academic programs are being cut. Faculty members, even tenured ones, are being laid off. The result is an unjust increase in the use of part-time or adjunct labor. This deprioritizes and undermines our faculty, our students, and learning itself. Therefore, our primary statement of legislative goals emphasizes that funding from NY state should specifically go towards academics – towards faculty and students.
- 3. Fully funded Bundy Aid.** For private institutions, which confer close to 60% of all bachelor’s and graduate degrees in NYS, increase Direct Institutional “Bundy” Aid. Currently funded at \$35 million, just 18% of the statutory level, Bundy Aid helps keep college affordable for the nearly 500,000 students studying at NYS private, non-profit colleges and universities.
- 3. Support mental health for everyone on college and university campuses: students, faculty and staff.** Students increasingly need mental health services on university campus. We also acknowledge that many faculty and staff do not have mental health care service provided to them – nor, indeed, any health care at all. This becomes increasingly the case as more courses are taught by part-time and adjunct faculty who often are provided few benefits.
- 4. Continue funding for diverse faculty.** It is not only important to recruit diverse faculty but also to retain them with good pay and benefits. Requiring diversity plans for private institutions receiving Bundy Aid is a good first step, but this aid has not been increased in decades. Currently, any Bundy funds invested in faculty diversity will cause institutions to divert these funds away from student aid.
- 5. Fully fund TAP (Tuition Assistance Program) and EOP/HEOP (Educational Opportunity Program/Higher Education Opportunity Program).** TAP, New York’s signature financial aid program, is structured to progressively serve New York’s lowest-income families across public and private higher education.

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*About the AAUP:*

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP), with over 50,000 members and 500 local chapters, champions academic freedom; advances shared governance; and organizes to promote economic security for all academic professionals. Since 1915, the AAUP has shaped American higher education by developing standards and procedures that uphold quality education.

The New York State Conference promotes the activities and values of the AAUP on the state and campus level. It has a Chapter Service Program to assist local chapters in the areas of recruitment, tenure, academic freedom, governance, leadership training, lobbying, legal referrals, and the economic welfare of the profession.