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AAUP Officers Win Elections That Focused on Their Union Emphasis

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Top officials of the American Association of University Professors have fended off an election challenge from a slate of candidates who had accused them of being too focused on union organizing.

In an election that represented just the [latest in a series of skirmishes](#) over the AAUP's direction, the incumbent slate prevailed in all four races for the association's top offices, according to [voting results](#) released on Thursday.

The four challengers for the AAUP's top offices called themselves the Unity Slate, a reflection of their argument that the incumbents had sown division between the association's union and nonunion chapters, and had stressed unionization at the expense of the AAUP's historical mission of promoting principles such as academic freedom.

The incumbent slate called itself Organizing for Change, the same banner its members ran under in 2012, when they easily won office on pledges to shift the association's focus to organizing at the college level. They had issued statements arguing that if there was division within the AAUP, its source was "persistent and groundless fear-mongering about a phony collective-bargaining takeover."

Rudy H. Fichtenbaum, who won re-election as the AAUP's president, called the election results "an endorsement of the direction we have been taking." He had argued during his campaign that the real choice before the AAUP's members was whether

their association would continue to build a national network of activist chapters or retreat into a group focused on running a Washington office that weighs in on a few controversies each year.

Jane L. Buck, a former AAUP president who had challenged Mr. Fichtenbaum in seeking to return to that office, argued that the defeat of her slate did not erase the concerns it had raised. "We'll keep bringing the issues forward," said Ms. Buck, an at-large member of the AAUP's national council.

The race for the AAUP's presidency turned out to be fairly close. Mr. Fichtenbaum, a professor of economics at Wright State University, won just under 52 percent of the vote in defeating Ms. Buck, a retired professor of psychology at Delaware State University who was the AAUP's president from 2000 to 2006.

Others on the four-member slate of incumbents had an easier time of it. In the race for first vice president, Henry F. (Hank) Reichman, a professor emeritus of history at California State University-East Bay and chairman of the AAUP's Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure, received just over 60 percent of the vote in defeating Brian Turner, a professor of political science at Randolph-Macon College and acting chairman of the AAUP's Assembly of State Conferences.

In the race for second vice president, Susan Michalczyk, an adjunct faculty member at Boston College and chairwoman of the board of the AAUP Foundation, won about 58 percent of the vote in defeating Cary Nelson, a professor of English at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign who was the AAUP's president from 2006 until being term-limited out of office, in 2012.

The most decisive win of the bunch came in the race for secretary-treasurer. The incumbent, Michele Ganon, a professor of accounting at Western Connecticut State University, won 67 percent of the vote in defeating Saranna Thornton, a professor of economics at Hampden-Sydney College and chair of the AAUP's committee on the economic status of the profession.