

# Julie Schmid

## Executive Director, American Association of University Professors



Before joining the AAUP staff in October 2013, Schmid was chief of staff of AFT-Wisconsin, which represents higher education faculty as well as K–12 teachers and public employees throughout the state. She has worked for faculty unions around the country, including as coordinator for the Portland State University AAUP chapter and as an activist with COGS-UE Local 896, a union for graduate student employees at the University of Iowa, where Schmid earned her PhD. She served as a senior program officer in the AAUP’s Department of Organizing and Services from 2002 to 2008.

“I am excited to serve as the AAUP’s executive director because this is where the fight is. US higher education is in crisis,” Schmid says. “We are four decades into a radical defunding of state institutions of higher education. Faculty salaries are stagnant, while students are asked to pay more and more for their education. The overuse and exploitation of contingent faculty and graduate student employees continues. Academic freedom is under attack, and faculty senates have seen their voices diminished—sometimes because of administrative overreach and sometimes because the faculty has not exercised the power it has. And collective bargaining—which in many instances has proven to be an important means for bettering the working conditions of faculty members and academic professionals and for maintaining academic quality—is now under attack.

The AAUP is the conscience of the profession. For nearly a century, the AAUP has defined professional standards for higher education and vigorously defended those standards when they have come under attack. And for nearly half that time, the AAUP has epitomized faculty unionism by organizing strong collective bargaining chapters and by enshrining AAUP principles and policies in collective bargaining agreements. As someone who has spent most of my career in the field organizing academic workers, I know how important the AAUP is because I hear how important the AAUP’s policy documents are any time I am on a campus.”