

## FACULTY LETTER TO JOHN CASTEEN ON THE LIVING WAGE

April 11, 2006

John Casteen  
Office of the President  
Madison Hall  
University of Virginia

Dear John,

We urge you to put the weight of upper administration behind the lately revived movement to institute a fair wage policy for full-time workers at the University. We make this appeal in the name of two causes that you hold as dear as we do: the cause of higher education in general, and the cause of this University in particular.

That a university's reason for being is the education of its students is not a maxim you need to hear from us, for whom teaching and learning are life's blood. We do need to convey, however, our distress at the disconnect between what we teach in our classrooms and the policies whereby the workers are compensated who maintain, not only those classrooms, but the entire physical plant. Because students are as apt to learn from what we do (or fail to do) as from what we say (or keep silent about), they must imbibe from current wage policy a dispiriting extracurricular lesson: namely, that the trenchant or subtle things they hear from us in class about ethics or politics or beauty or law or progress have little real meaning beyond the classroom door. At the bottom line, at the physical basis of higher education as a complex human institution, any student with eyes must conclude that a strikingly different set of rules apply from those that their professors have upheld for them to consider.

On Grounds a couple of weeks ago a set of undergraduates who, to our great admiration, have mobilized a renewal of the Living Wage campaign attended a meeting with you and other administrators. After this meeting they reported back to their supporters – in apparent shock, and not with malice – that at one point someone in the room had dismissed their argument on the ground that University policy in such a matter as staff compensation had nothing to do with “social justice.” This report from the students would be less dismaying if it struck us as less plausible; unfortunately, there is little to contradict it in the University's recent history of reluctant, belatedly reactive movement on wages for classified staff.

Whatever was told to the students last week, the fact remains that social justice is very much the business of a university. You affirmed as much last fall in the memorandum you sent urging all faculty to speak out in their classes against race hatred and intimidation as abominations incompatible with our mission. In the spirit of that memorandum -- with a lively sense, that is, of the pedagogically efficacious relation between preachment and practice -- we urge you now to decry the injustice embedded in a wage structure that consigns to economic hardship the most vulnerable members of the university community; and then to use your unique position to see that something is done to remove that injustice.

Such articulation and such action are incumbent, we hold, on any university sufficiently enlightened to grasp that personnel policies form an ingredient of the total education it delivers. Such articulation and such action are especially incumbent on this of all universities. While the

University of Virginia neither can nor should disguise its implication in a long history of racial oppression and class inequity, it retains an obligation – which, as teachers, we know can by the same token be a precious opportunity -- to build an awareness of that history wherever possible into the University's patterns of instruction. Doing so indeed forms the intellectually respectable condition on which we may continue, as we certainly should do, to invoke the vision of our remarkable founder. The "peculiar institution" of human bondage that Thomas Jefferson hated, and the beloved institution of liberal education that he brought into being, converge again in 21st-century terms on the fair-wage challenge, which lies before us once more because it has not yet been addressed with the courage it demands.

If you can see this juncture in our institutional history as a time to demonstrate such courage, please do so. You will enjoy, and should freely call upon, the determined backing of the undersigned, and of many more colleagues to whom, from sheer pressure of time, we have not yet circulated this letter.

Faculty from the following academic units have signed the letter:

American Studies  
Asian and Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures  
Anthropology  
Architecture  
Art  
Biology  
Chemical Engineering  
Chemistry  
Classics  
Comparative Literature  
Computer Science  
Drama  
Electrical and Computer Engineering  
English Language and Literature  
Environmental Studies  
French  
German  
History  
School of Law  
Linguistics  
Materials Science and Engineering  
Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering  
Media Studies  
Medical School  
Miller Center of Public Affairs  
Music  
Philosophy  
Physics  
Politics  
Psychology  
Religious Studies  
Office of the VP for Research and Graduate Studies  
Office of Dean of Students for Residential Life

Science, Technology and Society  
Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese  
Sociology  
Statistics  
Studies in Women and Gender  
Systems and Information Engineering  
Teaching Resource Center  
Woodson Institute

To the Office of the President, University of Virginia

Signatories of the April 11 Faculty letter on the Living Wage

Matthew Affron, Art  
Abdullah M. S. Osaimi, Medical School  
Steve Arata, English  
Jim Arnold, French  
Cindy Aron, History  
John Arras, Philosophy  
Dorothe Bach, Teaching Resource Center  
Peter Baker, English  
Brian Balogh, History  
Raul Baragiola, Materials Science and Engineering  
Lawrie Balfour, Politics  
Eve Bargmann, Medical School  
Marva Barnett, French/TRC  
Richard Barnett, History  
Paul Barolsky, Art  
Craig Barton, Architecture  
Ira Bashkow, Anthropology  
J. Taylor Beard, Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering  
William Bennett, Art  
Lenard Berlanstein, History  
Vincent Blasi, Law  
Daniel Bluestone, Architecture  
Rae Blumberg, Sociology  
Aniko Bodroghkozy, Media Studies  
Julian Bond, History  
Alison Booth, English  
Herbert (Tico) Braun, History  
Peter Brooks, Law  
Sue Brown, Medical School  
Talbot Brewer, Philosophy  
Anna Brickhouse, English  
Cammy Brothers, Architecture  
Kate Burke, Drama  
Enrico F. Cesaretti, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese  
Bob Chapel, Drama  
Griff Chaussée, AMELC  
John Chirgwin, Medical School

Sylvia Chong, English/American Studies  
Tanya Cobb, Architecture  
Michael Coglean, Medical School  
Rich Collins, Architecture, Emeritus  
Alon Confino, History  
Ellen Contini-Morava, Anthropology  
Sarah Corse, Sociology  
Don Wirwan, Chemical Engineering  
David Kovacs, Classics  
Fred Damon, Anthropology  
Eve Danzinger, Anthropology  
Dean Dass, Art  
Angela Davis, Associate Dean of Students/Director, Residence Life  
Joseph Davis, Sociology  
Donal Day, Physics  
Nancy Deutsch, Education  
Lise Dobrin, Anthropology  
Fred Diehl, Biology, Emeritus  
A. Bruce Dotson, Architecture  
Johanna Drucker, Media Studies  
Hoyt Duggan, English  
Daniel Ehnbohm, Art  
Kimberly Emery, Law School  
Robert Emery, Psychology  
James Esposito, Education  
Charlotte Eubanks, AMELC  
Sean Paul Evans, Drama  
Christopher Fannin, Architecture  
Ruth May Ferree, Education  
Margo Figgins, Education  
Gabriel Finder, History  
Robert Fatton, Politics  
Jessica Feldman, English  
Rita Felski, English/Comparative Literature  
Douglas Fordham, Medical School  
Cassandra Fraser, Chemistry  
Scot French, Woodson Institute  
Ellen Fuller, AMELC  
Susan Fraiman, English  
Otto Friesen, Biology  
Alfredo García, Systems and Information Engineering  
Paul Gaston, History, Emeritus  
Nataly Gattegno, Architecture  
Jennifer Geddes, Religious Studies  
Robert Geraci, History  
Greg Gerling, Systems and Information Engineering  
David Germano, Religious Studies  
Brie Gertler, Philosophy  
Risa Goluboff, Law  
Lisa Goehler, Psychology  
Tricia Gooley, Drama

David Columbia, English, Media Studies and Linguistics  
Anne Gregory, Education  
Doug Grissom, Drama  
Jeffrey Grossman, German  
Gerald Haines, History  
Grace Hale, History  
Richard Handler, Anthropology  
Geffrey Hantman, Anthropology  
Claudrena Harold, History  
Frederick Hayden, Medical School  
Gregory Hays, Classics  
LaVahn Ho, Drama  
Cynthia Hoehler-Fatton, Religious Studies  
Bruce Holsinger, Music/English  
Jean Holley, Medical School  
Peter Hook, AMELC  
Bob Hueckstedt, AMELC  
James Hunter, Sociology/Religious Studies  
Deena Hurwitz, Law  
Sandra Iliescu, Architecture  
Marcia Invernizzi, Education  
Vikram Jaswal, Psychology  
Jason Johnson, Architecture  
Robert Johnson, Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering  
William Johnson, Materials Science and Engineering  
Walter Jost, English  
Volker Kaiser, German  
Dean Kedes, Medical School  
Dan Keenan, Statistics  
William Keene, Environmental Studies  
R. S. Khare, Anthropology  
Clare Kinney, English  
James Kinney, English  
David Klein, Politics  
Michael Kubovy, Psychology  
Howard Kutchai, Medical School  
Ann Lane, History  
Adria LaViolette, Anthropology  
Kate Lebow, History  
Melvyn Leffler, History  
Phyllis Leffler, History  
Daniel Lefkowitz, Anthropology  
Richard Lindgren, Physics  
Lauren Lockhart, Medical School  
Breyette Lorntz, Medical School  
Eric Lott, English  
Cecilia MacCallum, Medical School  
Katya Makarova, Sociology  
Wende Marshall, Anthropology  
John Edwin Mason, History  
Charles Marsh, Religious Studies

Jennifer Marks, Medical School  
Gabrielle Marzani-Nissen, Medical School  
Lorna Martens, German  
David Mathewes, Religious Studies  
Jerome McGann, English  
Timothy MacDonald, Chemistry  
Mary McKinley, French  
Susan McKinnon, Anthropology  
Christian McMillen, History  
Peter Metcalf, Anthropology  
Erik Midelfort, History  
Farzaneh Milani, SWAG  
Murray Milner, Jr., Sociology, Emeritus  
George Mentore, Anthropology  
Margaret Mohrmann, Education/Religious Studies  
Nicholas De Monchaux, Architecture  
David Morris, University Professor  
Mohan Nadkarni, Medical School  
Blaine Norum, Physics  
Peter Norton, Science, Technology and Society  
Brian Nosek, Psychology  
Peter Ochs, Religious Studies  
Vanessa Ochs, Religious Studies  
Amy Ogden, French  
Victoria Olwell, English  
Peter Onuf, History  
Brian Owensby, History  
Ricardo Padrón, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese  
Deborah Parker, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese  
Charlotte Patterson, Psychology  
Gustavo Pellón, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese  
Randolph Pope, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese  
John Portman, Religious Studies  
Judith Reagan, Drama/TRC  
Bradly Reed, History  
David Rifkind, Architectural History  
Elizabeth Rooker-Morton, Medical School  
Sophie Rosenfeld, History  
Jeffrey Rossman, History  
Marion Rust, English  
George Rutherglen, Law  
Hanan Sabea, Anthropology  
Lynn Sanders, Politics  
Mohammed Sawaie, AMELC  
Karen Schmidt, Psychology  
Leonard Schoppa, Politics  
Ann Schutte, History  
Richard Schragger, Law  
Herman Schwartz, Politics  
Jorge Secada, Philosophy  
H. L. Seneviratne, Anthropology

David Shreve, Miller Center of Public Affairs  
Nicolas Sihle, Anthropology  
Howard Singerman, Art  
Michael Smith, Politics  
Martha Snell, Education  
Janet Stack, Education  
Bethany Teachman, Psychology  
Elizabeth Thompson, History  
Gregory Townsend, Medical School  
Prudence Thorner, Office of the VP for Research and Graduate Studies  
Carl Trindle, Chemistry  
Betsy Tucker, Drama  
Herbert (Chip) Tucker, English  
John Voss, Medical School  
Dell Upton, Architectural History and Anthropology  
Denise Walsh, Politics/SWAG  
Richard Warner, Drama  
Heather Warren, Religious Studies  
Dee Weikle, Computer Science  
Robert Weikle, Electrical and Computer Engineering  
Geoffrey Weiss, Medical School  
Heather West, Medical School  
Jennifer Wicke, English  
Stephen Wilson, Electrical Engineering  
Timothy Wilson, Psychology  
Michiko Wilson, AMELC  
Richard Wilson, Architecture  
Diane Whaley, School of Education  
Munsey Wheby, Medical School  
Stephen White, Politics  
Brian Wispelwey, Medical School  
Dorothy Wong, Art