

UIUC AAUP Policy Committee
Minutes for October 7, 2021 Zoom Meeting
Web site: <http://www.aaup-ui.org/>

Present: Hadi Esfahani, Harry Hilton, Robin Kar, Richard Laugesen, Walter McMahon, Cary Nelson, David O'Brien, Robert Parker, Dana Rabin, Bruce Rosenstock, Leslie Struble, Carol Symes, Carol Tilley, H. F. Williamson.

The meeting began at about 12:31 p.m. with Parker presiding.

- (1) **Introductions.** Introductions were not needed.
- (2) **Review of the Minutes for September 9, 2021 Meeting of Policy Committee.** The minutes were approved.
- (3) **President's Report.** Parker reviewed the report that he sent to the Committee. He noted that most of the topics will be covered later in the meeting. The exception was his recommendation of the article on "How to Deal with the Dark Side of Social Media" by Michael Berube from Pennsylvania State University who is a former UIUC colleague. It was suggested that he send a copy of the article to Vice Provost Bill Bernhard. His report also included his monthly "highly selective set of links about AAUP concerns in the news."
- (4) **Schedule for Fall Policy Committee Meetings:** Williamson noted that the members were surveyed regarding their preferences for meetings times and days for the rest of the fall, but no better alternative was found so the remaining meetings will start at 12:30 p.m. on the following Thursdays:
Thursday, November 11 (2nd Thursday)
Thursday, December 9 (2nd Thursday); Reading Day is also December 9
Williamson noted that the scheduling of the meetings for the spring semester will be reviewed at the November meeting of the Policy Committee.

Action Items

- (5) **Programming:** Parker led a discussion of the topics we might cover and the methods we might pursue to organize meetings to cover those topics. Two related topics of interest are (a) critical race theory and (b) academic freedom and free speech. It is important that the campus members understand what these are and the nature of the attacks on higher education that have been made related to them. McMahon noted that this fall's Friday Forum series at the University YMCA is covering "Unpacking racism: What Are We Carrying?" It was suggested that we set up a committee or organizing board to set up discussions of key papers on these topics and on topics of interest in the future. Parker noted that one approach would be to set up an informal zoom panel for an opening program. Policy Committee members could invite colleagues to attend to help publicize the work of the Chapter and perhaps recruit new members. Parker will follow up on these suggestions.
- (6) **Review of Policy Issues**
 - (a) **Role of Campus Belonging Resources.** This unit is designed "to focus on behaviors that negatively affect the climate of inclusion and belonging on campus" and to educate and support "individuals impacted by those behaviors." We agreed with the importance of support and non-disciplinary educational efforts of the unit both for those affected by these behaviors and those whose behavior is at fault. The administration appears to have approached this in an intelligent way. Laugesen suggested that we offer the AAUP leaders as a resource to make sure that the procedures do not raise issues involving free speech and academic freedom.

(b) Tenure and Shared Governance in the pandemic. It was noted that on October 5, 2021 the CFA, GEO, and NTFC hosted a panel discussion with instructors teaching on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. A template was prepared for individuals wishing to email campus leaders “to demand proactive COVID policy changes to protect all instructors in Fall 2021.”

(c) Implementing Decisions from Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure (CAFT). Matt Finkin informed the Committee of his concerns about a case in which the administration is not following the recommendation of CAFT regarding the discharge of a tenured professor. It was felt that such differences should be infrequent.

(d) Academic Units Issuing Statements on Matters of Public Policy. Matt Finkin had provided the Committee with a document expressing his concerns about Academic Units making such statements and his belief that a thoughtful response from the AAUP might be helpful. A consensus was not reached about what position the AAUP might take on this matter. Because Nelson favored prohibiting such statements, Parker asked him to draft such a prohibition, so that the committee can make its future discussions, pro or con, more concrete

(7) Promotion and Tenure Workshop. Parker reported that the Workshop will be held on March 31, 2022 and thanked Hilton for his having arranged for the event.

(8) Adjournment. There being no reports, the meeting adjourned at about 1:38 p.m.

As noted above, the next meeting will be at 12:30 p.m. on November 11, 2021