

ANTIDISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION & THE CHILLING OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM

A PANEL DISCUSSION

Sponsored by the UIUC tenure-stream faculty chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP)

Kate Clancy, Featured speaker, Professor of Anthropology, UIUC; Co-President, Campus Faculty Association (CFA)

Robin Kar, Moderator & Respondent, Professor of Law & Philosophy, UIUC; President, UIUC Chapter of the AAUP

Professor Clancy will discuss how newer developments in the Title VI context are creating challenges to academic freedom. Drawing on her expertise in Title IX and sexual harassment in higher education, she will examine how antidiscrimination enforcement tools, which can in some circumstances be deployed to promote inclusive cultures and climates, can and are now being weaponized to suppress and chill academic freedom, especially around politically controversial topics.

Professor Kar chaired the campus committee on faculty sexual misconduct and helped advance improvements in campus culture and climate around Title IX issues—drawing in part on Professor Clancy's important work—and served on the university's Title VI task force. After Professor Clancy's talk, Professors Clancy and Kar will engage in a brief dialogue about outstanding issues and how groups like the AAUP, Senate, CFA, and others can engage the campus administration on these issues. Q&A will follow.

THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2026
2:00–3:00

Civil rights legislation has long promoted antidiscrimination efforts in higher education. Statutes such as Titles II, VI, VII, and IX have played a central role—sometimes enabling claims against individual professors or institutions and often conditioning federal funding on institutional compliance. Recent federal initiatives have expanded the development and enforcement of Title VI policies and procedures. In some cases, these efforts have been used to chill academic freedom and free speech, particularly around controversial or politically sensitive topics.

Zoom registration required. To register, go [here](#).

For more information on the AAUP at UIUC, go [here](#). For more information on the national AAUP, go to aaup.org. Now more than ever, with universities and their faculties under threat across the nation, the AAUP welcomes new members.

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