

# The AAUP From First Principles

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# Founding of the AAUP

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- In 1915, the AAUP was founded by a group of senior professors from major research universities.
- The primary goal was to promote the professionalization of the professoriate.
- Academic freedom became an early focus of the association due to events that occurred around the time of the founding.
- The first year of the AAUP saw the investigation of violations of academic freedom and the formulation of a first statement of principles.



# 1915 *Declaration of Principles*

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“A university is a great and indispensable organ of the higher life of a civilized community, in the work of which the trustees hold an essential and highly honorable place, but in which the faculties hold an independent place, with quite equal responsibilities – and in relation to purely scientific and educational questions, the primary responsibility.”



# Mission of the AAUP

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The mission of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) is to advance academic freedom and shared governance; to define fundamental professional values and standards for higher education; to promote the economic security of faculty, academic professionals, graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and all those engaged in teaching and research in higher education; to help the higher education community organize to make our goals a reality; and to ensure higher education's contribution to the common good.



# Academic Freedom

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- The premier statement on academic freedom and tenure was jointly formulated between the AAUP and the AAC (now AAC&U) in their *1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure*.
- That statement has been endorsed by more than 200 scholarly and educational groups.
- It is often included verbatim in faculty handbooks.



# Academic Freedom ...

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... is the freedom to teach, both in and outside the classroom, to conduct research and to publish the results of those investigations, and to address any matter of institutional policy or action whether or not as a member of an agency of institutional governance. Professors should also have the freedom to address the larger community with regard to any matter of social, political, economic, or other interest, without institutional discipline or restraint, save in response to fundamental violations of professional ethics or statements that suggest disciplinary incompetence.

From: “Protecting an Independent Faculty Voice: Academic Freedom after *Garcetti v. Ceballos*” (2009)



# The Rationale for Academic Freedom

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"The reason why such freedom is [...] socially necessary lies in the fact that there are certain professional functions generally recognized to be indispensable in the life of a civilized community which cannot be performed if the specific manner of their performance is dictated by those who pay for them, and that the profession of the scholar and teacher in higher institutions of learning is one of these." – AAUP Founder Arthur Lovejoy



# Rationale for Academic Freedom

## continued

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"[S]eeking new truths will sometimes mean [...] the undermining of widely or generally accepted beliefs. It is rendered impossible if the work of the investigator is shackled by the requirement that his conclusions shall never seriously deviate either from generally accepted beliefs or from those accepted by the persons, private or official, through whom society provides the means for the maintenance of universities." -- Lovejoy



# Tenure

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- "Tenure" is defined as an indefinite appointment terminable only for cause.
- *1940 Statement*: "After the expiration of a probationary period, teachers or investigators should have permanent or continuous tenure, and their service should be terminated only for adequate cause, except in the case of retirement for age, or under extraordinary circumstances because of financial exigencies."



# Rationale for Tenure

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“The function of tenure is not only to encourage the development of specialized learning and professional expertise by providing a reasonable assurance against the dispiriting risk of summary termination; it is to maximize the freedom of the professional scholar and teacher to benefit society through the innovation and dissemination of perspectives to the conventional wisdom.”

— *former AAUP president William Van Alstyne*



# Academic Due Process

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- As tenure protects academic freedom, academic due process protects tenure.
- The term was coined by the ACLU in 1954, following the excesses of the McCarthy era.
- It provides procedural safeguards for the conduct and review of dismissals, terminations, and non-renewal of faculty members.



# Academic Due Process

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- The primary policy documents on academic due process are the
  - *Statement on Procedural Standards in Faculty Dismissal Proceedings,*
  - *Statement on Procedural Standards in the Renewal or Nonrenewal of Faculty Appointments,*
  - *Recommended Institutional Regulations on Academic Freedom and Tenure.*



# Shared Governance

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- Since its founding, the AAUP has advocated for meaningful participation of the faculty in institutional decision making.
- The authoritative formulation of principles of shared governance were provided in the *Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities*.
- That statement was jointly formulated with the Association of Governing Boards and the American Council on Education.



# Statement on Government

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- The statement recognizes three major components of institutional decision making: the governing board, the administration, and the faculty.
- The statement also recognizes that the governing board has the final authority over all decisions that are made at the university.
- However, the board delegates its authority with respect to the administrative matters to the president and with respect to academic matters to the faculty.



# Statement on Government

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- "The faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life that relate to the educational process."
- In these areas, "[t]he governing board and president should [...] concur with the faculty judgment except in rare instances and for compelling reasons which should be stated in detail."



# Rationale for Shared Governance

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- The main reason for giving the faculty primary responsibility for academic matters is that the faculty is uniquely qualified in these matters -- it is based on expertise.
- “We get the best results in education and research if we leave their management to people who know something about them” (Robert Maynard Hutchins, *Higher Learning in America*, Yale, 1936, p. 21).



# One Faculty Campaign

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From “The Inclusion in Governance of Faculty Members Holding Contingent Appointments”:

Institutional policies should define as “faculty” and include in governance bodies at all levels individuals whose appointments consist primarily of teaching or research activities conducted at a professional level. These include (1) tenured faculty, (2) tenure-track faculty, (3) full- and part-time non-tenure-track teachers and researchers, (4) graduate- student employees and postdoctoral fellows who are primarily teachers or researchers, and (5) librarians who participate substantially in the process of teaching or research.



# National Committees and Staff

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- The work of the AAUP is conducted through its national committees and by the staff in the national office in Washington.
- The staff is organized in departments:
  - Department of Academic Freedom, Tenure, and Governance
  - Legal Department
  - Department of Organizing
  - Department of Chapter and Conference Services
  - Department of External Relations
  - Department of Finance and Administration



# Committee A work and Censured Administrations

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- Committee A is concerned with matters of academic freedom and tenure.
- Committee A issues statements and reports. Recent reports include *Academic Freedom and Electronic Communication* and *On Trigger Warnings*.
- When authorized, Committee A undertakes investigations that may lead to censure.



# Committee on College and University Governance (Committee T)

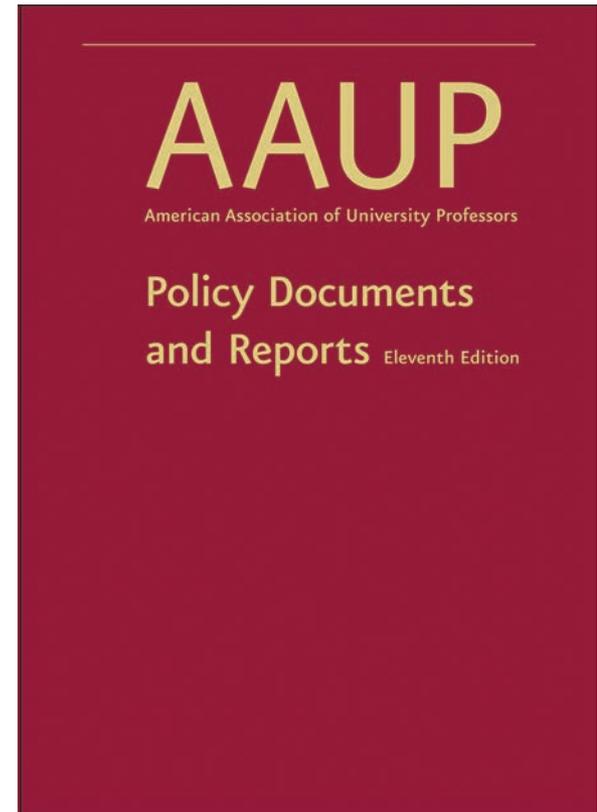
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- Committee T issues statements and reports. Recent reports include *Faculty Communication with Governing Boards: Best Practices* and *Confidentiality and Faculty Representation in Academic Governance*.
- When authorized, Committee T undertakes investigations that may lead to sanction.

# The Redbook

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- Official title: *Policy Documents and Reports*
- Significantly enlarged
- Updated statistical and legal Information
- Larger number of sections that are more thematically organized





# 2015 Redbook

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To recognize the centennial, the Redbook includes brief historical introductions to each section

plus

A new introduction on how to incorporate AAUP principles into faculty handbooks.



# Conclusion

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- Just as we should thank labor unions for the weekend, safer working conditions, the prohibition of child labor, etc, the AAUP has been a singular force in the defense of academic freedom and tenure during the last 100 years.
- The continuing threats to higher education, coming from the increase of non-tenure-track appointments, corporatization, and disappearing public funding, demonstrates the continuing need for a strong AAUP.



# Thank You!

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