

AAUP Report

Spring, 1996

American Association of University Professors
Bloomington Chapter

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

By Jim Patterson, Chapter President

Looking back over Chapter activities during the 1995-96 academic year, it would appear that academic freedom and shared faculty governance remain viable at IUB. The proposed draft of the section on "Freedom of Inquiry" which I prepared as part of the "Institutional Self-Study," now going on in connection with IUB's reaccreditation by the North Central Association, sums up my own views quite well. Excerpts from this draft appear on page 2, column 1.

From the AAUP's standpoint, the adoption of the strong statement in support of academic freedom and tenure which appears in the Strategic Directions Charter, and which was adopted by our trustees, represents the high point of the year. This reaffirmation came largely as a result of AAUP and faculty governance concerns. Likewise, the recently adopted UFC resolution on clinical ranks also grew out of AAUP concerns. In addition, the changes and reforms which were suggested at the excellent "Governance Retreat" last fall, and which are working their way through the system, will go a long way toward bringing our governance structure and processes into alignment with the new realities of the university. The most striking new reality affecting governance is the growth in importance of the school policy committees. This is now where the action is. The structure and operation of the COAS and School of Music committees are briefly described in this issue. (See p.3 Column 2 and p. 4, Column 1) Others will be described in the future.

GROS LOUIS TO SPEAK AT AAUP ANNUAL MEETING AT NOON ON APRIL 24th IN THE IMU FEDERAL ROOM

Bloomington Chancellor Kenneth Gros Louis will be the featured speaker at our Annual Meeting in the IMU Federal Room on Wednesday, April 24th. He will discuss such topics as the Endowment Campaign, the long-range plan, new academic directions, issues facing faculty and staff, and the culture of the campus and more. Please feel free to bring guests. A buffet luncheon will be available at 11:45. We will conclude by 1:30

The 6th Annual AAUP Faculty Forum on "Faculty Autonomy in an Age of Accountability" also served to highlight a series of issues that will continue to threaten academic freedom and faculty autonomy in the coming years. Attempts to redefine the nature of faculty work now verge on becoming a "cottage industry." We must remain alert to these pressures and respond in responsible and constructive ways. These issues will remain on our agenda for several years to come.

The principal negative element in the picture is the uneven participation of faculty in governance issues. Increasingly, IUB is becoming a campus of locals and cosmopolitans, with the burden of governance falling inordinately on the former group. This, more than any other factor, is the most serious threat to shared governance—and ultimately to academic freedom—that we face. Pogo was right.

SUPPORT FOR FREEDOM OF INQUIRY FOR FACULTY AND STUDENTS

(Patterson submission to the Subcommittee on Criterion One of the Institutional-Self Study being conducted in connection with the North Central Association's reaccreditation process. Note the key role accorded the AAUP Chapter in protecting faculty freedom of inquiry)

Indiana University has a long tradition of support for freedom of inquiry by faculty, librarians and students. Indiana University was among the early subscribers to the principles of academic freedom and tenure outlined in the 1940 "Statement of Principles," a landmark document which emerged from a long series of joint conferences between representatives of the American Association of University Professors and the Association of American Colleges. This statement, known to the profession as the "1940 Statement of Academic Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure" appears in the AAUP Policy Documents and Reports, p.3. These principles (freedom in research and publication, freedom in classroom discussion, and freedom from institutional censorship and discipline when speaking or writing as a citizen) have in turn been incorporated into the Indiana University Academic Handbook which governs such matters on the Bloomington campus. (Academic Handbook, pp. 33-34.)

Of course, a policy in support of academic freedom in the absence of economic security is an empty gesture. Accordingly, in order to meet its responsibilities to its students and to society, Indiana University also provides the protection of tenure, again in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the AAUP in its statement of principles and interpretative comments.

These basic principles of academic freedom and tenure were explicitly reaffirmed in our Strategic Directions Charter, which was recently approved by the Board of Trustees at their December 15, 1995 meeting:

Excellence in teaching,
research, scholarship and artis-

tic endeavors requires academic freedom. Faculty must be free to choose the topics and methods of their work. The traditional and successful safeguard of academic freedom is the tenure system. Despite increasing attacks from various quarters, it is essential that the tenure system be maintained.

(Strategic Directions Charter, p. 2)

Recognizing that the freedom to teach and the freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom, students have always been accorded full membership in the academic community at IUB and are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgement and to engage in an independent search for truth. The right of academic freedom for students is spelled out in the Code of Student Ethics at p.1 and pp 4-6.

Elsewhere in this Code of Student Ethics, various safeguards have been set into place to protect the academic freedom of students where it is are most vulnerable, namely in grading and class standing, letters of evaluation and with respect for their personal beliefs expressed in a private manner in connection with course work.

Also, in the "Code of Academic Ethics" which appears at p. 33 ff. in the Academic Handbook, the "teacher" is specifically charged to protect the academic freedom of his or her students and further is admonished to assure that each student and colleague is free to voice opinions openly and to exchange ideas free from interference. (Academic Handbook.)

These are not empty guarantees. They are supported by a well developed and respected grievance structure. In the case of students, matters of academic freedom are further protected by the Student Advocates Office which serves as a student ombudsmen. In the case of faculty and librarians, an active local chapter of the AAUP provides a similar

ombudsman function. Moreover, there have been numerous occasions when the University has defended its faculty and students from external and internal attack. Most recently the University has mounted a vigorous defense against a Congressional attack on the research of the Kinsey Institute for Research on Sex, Gender and Reproduction.

There are also a number of recent examples of the effective protection of faculty autonomy in the selection of analytical approaches and methods of inquiry. Often it seems, overly zealous peers represent greater threats to academic freedom than do outside interests. In each case the resolution of conflicts between ascendent and traditional groups in disciplines undergoing transition in their basic analytical approach to their subject matter such as political science, business administration and several areas of the humanities, has been successful. On the whole, the University has a good record of protecting the academic freedom of its faculty and graduate students.

As in all universities, the trade-offs between civility and free speech have posed tensions in the applications of these policies. For example, the Code of Student Ethics originally sought to restrict "hate speech," and "fighting words," but these restrictions were modified after it became clear that they were in violation of the right of free speech. Now the Code only regulates verbal harassment when associated with physical force, threat, or harm. (See Code of Student Ethics, p. 2)

Official documents and high sounding rhetoric aside, the central guarantee of academic freedom is to be found in an institution's culture and tradition. This university has been blessed with a long series of leaders who were strong proponents of these principles, and who have been willing to take a public stand when they were under attack. Also, many of our faculty have been deeply involved at the national level in drafting key policy documents dealing with academic freedom. Two of our faculty have served as Executive Secretary of

the AAUP, others have served as president; and Chancellor Wells was a key actor in the American Council on Education and the Association of American Colleges when the core principles were adopted. Our record of effective resolution of faculty and student grievances through a respected grievance and appeal structure, along with an active AAUP Chapter which monitors such matters, offers additional protection to our students and faculty.

SCHOOL OF MUSIC COUNCIL

By Jean Sinor, Music

This is a body with 24 voting members and three ex-officio, non voting members presided over by the dean of the school. The secretary of the council and two other members of the Agenda Committee are elected by members of the council.

Four standing committees report to the council: Admission & Recruitment, Artistic Policy, Faculty Issues, and Instructional Policy. There are other committees of the school in the constitution of which the School of Music Council participates: Budgetary Affairs, Academic Fairness, Administrative, Affirmative Action, Doctoral Styles, Equipment, Graduate Financial Aid, Promotion & Tenure, and Undergraduate Financial Aid.

The School of Music Council is the central representative body of the School. It approves curriculum and degrees granted, and assists in long-range and short-range planning for the School. It also initiates recommendations to be implemented by committee and receives recommendations from all committees as deemed appropriate, and takes action on those recommendations. At the first meeting in the fall semester, it receives reports from each standing committee on their activities in the preceding year.

Each spring semester, each area either chooses to be represented by its chairperson or elects a representative to serve for a one-year

term (September through August). Two student representatives chosen by the student advisory committee also serve as voting members of the Council. About two-thirds of the members are deans, directors, or chairs.

COAS POLICY COMMITTEE

By Don Lichtenberg, Physics

The College of Arts and Science Policy Committee has nine College faculty members elected to staggered three-year terms and usually one or two student members. The purpose of the Committee is to advise the dean. It also acts as a Budgetary Affairs Committee for the College, with a member sitting in on all department budget conferences. The Policy Committee usually meets weekly, often with the dean.

According to Professor Michael Morgan (philosophy), current chair, the Committee is quite successful in carrying out its function, primarily because of Dean Morton Lowengrub's positive attitude toward the Committee and its recommendations. A secondary reason for success is that most of the Committee members work hard and take their jobs seriously. Dean Lowengrub asks the Committee for advice on a wide variety of matters and is usually quite receptive to the Committee's recommendations. On occasion, the Committee offers advice even when not asked, and even then Dean Lowengrub acts on its recommendations.

Professor Cathy Olmer (physics), a past member of the Committee, remarked that she found her three years as a member very fruitful and rewarding, much more so than her stints as a member of the Bloomington Faculty Council. She said the reason for the difference is that the Policy Committee has a major influence on the directions taken by the College.

This year, the Committee has made progress in influencing how salary equity issues are handled, in working for computer upgrades

for faculty and staff, and in monitoring reviews of graduate programs. The Committee has been less successful in dealing with issues which involve the University beyond the College. For example, the Committee issued a critical report on an early draft of the Strategic Directions Charter, but it was not clear what, if any, influence the report had on the final document passed by the Board of Trustees.

The Committee usually does its work quietly. Although the minutes of the meetings are distributed to the department chairs, most College faculty members are unaware of the Committee's successes and failures. A relatively small percentage of the faculty actually votes in the yearly elections. Because the success of the Committee seems to depend more on the good will of the dean than on the support of the faculty, it is not clear how much the Committee loses by its low profile.

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