



THE TENNESSEE CONFERENCE

Academic Freedom for a Free Society in Tennessee

Newsletter of the Tennessee State Conference of the AAUP Ed. J.A. McQuail TTU

May 10, 2019

State Conference Meeting of the Tennessee AAUP

On November 3, 2018, the Tennessee State Conference of AAUP met at Tennessee Tech University. Among the points of discussion was the need to more adequately explain tenure to the public in order to garner support if it should become a legislative item in the future. Representatives from the UT-Knoxville chapter shared some of their strategies to deal with this issue. We also discussed a proposal from conference president Troy Smith to participate in a consortium of higher education advocacy groups whose goal would be to prepare for future legislative challenges rather than react as they occur. This met with approval from the assembled members. The consortium, called ATHENA (Associated Tennessee Higher Education Networking Advocates), had its first meeting in January at TEA headquarters in Nashville. In addition to the Tennessee State Conference of AAUP, there were representatives from TEA (Tennessee Education Association), TUFs (Tennessee University Faculty Senates), and UCW (United Campus Workers).

On November 8, the tenure topic was further examined in a state conference-sponsored panel discussion also held at TTU. The Panelists included Bonnie Ownley and Jon Shefner of UT-Knoxville, Máté Wierdl of the University of Memphis, and UCW lead organizer Cassie Watters. Several members of the Cookeville community attended and engaged energetically in the conversation. — Troy D. Smith, Tennessee AAUP

Ballot for conference rep. to the National Convention: Josie McQuail, Tennessee Technological University, is planning on attending the national meeting of the AAUP. The TN state conference of the AAUP will set up an online forum where anonymous voting on McQuail as delegate can take place. <https://surveymonkey.com/r/MLYBFXT> We are in need of a secretary for the state conference as well. — J. McQuail

2019 Summer Institute

The AAUP Summer Institute will be held in Chicago July 25-28. Early registration closes July 1. Two years ago TN AAUP state conference member Pippa Holloway attended the summer institute for the first time. She said that she learned more about academic freedom and shared governance over those four days than she had in her entire career before that. Every year, AAUP brings together hundreds of higher education professionals from around the country for workshops and special programs. Attendees can select from a huge variety of workshops. Two years ago, for example, these included topics ranging from "Reading and Using the Redbook" to "Faculty Support for Student Activism" and "Advocating for Academic Freedom in an Age of Contingency." Attendees have access to organizers, data analysts, seasoned campaigners, and issue experts to build skills as an advocate for AAUP principles, collective bargaining, and higher education.

Pippa was the only attendee from Tennessee. She learned so much that she went back last summer. We'd love to see more colleagues from Tennessee there. Please consider it. AAUP National especially welcomes minority applicants.

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UTK AAUP LEADERS ON THE CENSORSHIP OF “SEX WEEK” BY LEGISLATORS

by Monica Black, Ben Lee and Mary McAlpin reprinted from *Academe Blog* 4/9/2019

Ever since students at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, began organizing an annual event called Sex Week, state lawmakers have been trying to kill it. According to the students who organize it, the aim of [Sex Week](#), which ran from March 31 to April 5 this year, is to “foster a comprehensive and intellectual discussion on sex, sexuality, and relationships.” According to legislators, Sex Week is an immoral attack on Tennessee values and a waste of taxpayer dollars.

State legislators have used a range of tactics to try to shut Sex Week down. Two weeks before the start of the first Sex Week in 2013, they insisted that UTK’s administration pull all funding for the event. When Sex Week pressed on with the support of private donations, they passed resolutions condemning the administrators who had allowed it to go forward. Lawmakers have since moved to end institutional funding for campus speakers altogether. Currently, student organizations are limited to using activity fees gathered from students who actively “opt in” to pay them—a direct response to Sex Week that resulted in a cut in funding for all student organizations. Some legislators have even gone so far as to vilify Sex Week’s student organizers publicly, declaring them “evil” and “disgusting.”

Sex Week organizers and UTK students as a whole have shown tremendous fortitude in the face of these attacks, which have not been limited to lawmakers, but have also included Fox News personalities, op-ed writers, and a prominent evangelist.

This year, legislative pressure moved to a new level, when the state comptroller released a 269-page report detailing the use of student fees for Sex Week. In response, newly-appointed UT-System Interim President (and erstwhile gubernatorial candidate) Randy Boyd and Interim Chancellor Wayne Davis joined legislators in condemning Sex Week, which they said has caused “frustration and embarrassment for lawmakers, alumni, many Tennessee citizens, and for us as administrators at UT.” Ominously, Boyd and Davis also announced their intention to dissolve the Student Programming Allocation Committee. If they have their way, as seems increasingly likely, UT administrators alone, rather than a committee of students, staff, and faculty, will decide what campus programming to fund. Boyd and Davis deny that, in so doing, they have endangered the free expression of ideas at the university.

UT’s Board of Trustees has also aligned its position with that of legislators. In a statement, Board Chair John Compton, a former president of PepsiCo, spoke of the Tennessee General Assembly’s “displeasure” about Sex Week, and endorsed Boyd’s actions “to resolve” what Compton called an “unfortunate distraction.” Like the system and university administration, Compton and the Board have abrogated their responsibility to advocate for UT system universities, their students, and our shared educational mission.

Either state legislators now regret their earlier stand for freedom of expression or—as seems more likely—they never intended it to apply to those whose speech they did not want to hear in the first place. Either way, the University of Tennessee system administration, the Board of Trustees, and Knoxville campus administrators have allowed themselves to be cowed by legislative meddling to the detriment of our educational mission. Meanwhile, UTK students continue to organize Sex Week, insisting that they have the right to speak openly about human sexuality, and to invite speakers to campus who might help them do so.

The UTK chapter of AAUP takes another view. We have responded with a statement challenging the university and system administration’s acts, both on free speech grounds and as a violation of shared governance. How will legislators and UT administrators reconcile their recent decisions with the Campus Free Speech Protection Act? Only two years ago, the legislature was lauded for passing this act, which requires Tennessee’s public institutions of higher learning to “be committed to maintaining a campus as a marketplace of ideas for all students and all faculty in which the free exchange of ideas is not to be suppressed because the ideas put forth are thought by some or even by most members of the institution’s community to be offensive, unwise, immoral, indecent, disagreeable, conservative, liberal, traditional, radical, or wrong-headed.”

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SEX WEEK 2019

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|--|--|---|---|--------|
| Colloquy Student Union Auditorium 3:00 PM / 7:00 PM | Pillow Talk 9:00 PM / 11:00 PM | Religion and Sexuality Panel 10:30 AM / 12:30 PM | Pride and Prejudice: LGBT Mental Health Care in Tennessee 10:00 AM / 12:00 PM | [Censored] Art Show Location TBD / Time TBD | |
| Sex as an Advertising Strategy SR 3015 / 1:00 PM | Sex and Architecture: The Historian's Dilemma 6:00 PM / 8:00 PM | Queer Sex, Art & Activism AMC 27 / 3:00 PM | Q+A with Shoa Coube SR 3015 / 3:00 PM | HIV Testing Location TBD / 10:00 AM-5:00 PM | |
| Working It: The Legality of Sex Work Law School 337 / 3:00 PM | Dr. Stebbins: Banging Out The Basics SR 300 / 1:00 PM | Reclaiming Our Stories: An Abortion Speak-Out KSA 307 6:00 Engagement Foliage 3:30 Start Co-sponsored with WCC | From Criminal to Citizen: Litigating for LGBTQ Rights in India McClung Western Auditorium 5:30 Co-sponsored with McClung & 6:00 Law School | | |
| Queers in Choirs AMC 27 / 5:00 PM | The F Word: Understanding Fat and Body Image SR 300 / 7:00 PM Co-sponsored with WCC | | Drag Show Boulevard Hall 7:00 PM to AMC Go to Auditions / 8:00 PM | | |
| Black Feminist Theory AMC 27 / 7:00 PM | | | | | |

Don't forget to bring us in this poster!
We will be providing priority seating for this drag show if you attend. Please educational needs and have your valuable input!

SEX WEEK UTK

*This event is funded in part through the Student Programming Allocation Committee (SPAC)

AAUP convention in Washington, D.C. June 12 -16

Are you curious about what happens at the annual national AAUP convention? Are you willing to serve as a delegate at the convention? Consider serving as a delegate at the national AAUP convention. You can participate in Lobby day, attend panels (there is a new structure for the AAUP annual meeting and there are sessions and workshops), and serve your AAUP!

The meeting itself will include opportunities to discuss the proposals for restructuring, as well as additional business sessions regarding restructuring planning.

The state conference will help with a portion of the expenses, and there are also scholarships from national AAUP for attending AAUP conferences. For instance you may be eligible for the Mary Burgan fund.

Contact TN conference president Troy Smith at tdsmith@tnitech.edu for questions

Pending Re-Organization of National AAUP — from National AAUP

At their November 2018 meetings, the Council of the AAUP and the AAUP-Collective Bargaining Congress Executive Committee voted overwhelmingly to move forward with changes to our shared organizational structure. Following that vote, these governing bodies directed that detailed revisions to governing documents and other policies that would implement the approved changes be drafted for their review. The Council and the AAUP- CBC Executive Committee met on March 29 and 30, 2019, to consider these detailed draft revisions. They voted overwhelmingly to recommend a package of changes to the June 2019 AAUP annual meeting and AAUP-CBC regular meeting. The changes, should they be approved at the June 2019 annual meeting, will streamline our governance and organizational structure.

As is the case for many of our chapters, the recent Supreme Court decision in the *Janus* case has resulted in a loss of revenue for the national organization. It spurred us to assess how best to continue to support our chapters and the profession as a whole. But while *Janus* provided the impetus for change, we believe that change will ultimately result in a stronger organization. The proposed organizational changes reflect the shared vision of the AAUP and AAUP-CBC leadership that we are one profession united in our defense of the AAUP's core principles of academic freedom, economic security, and shared governance for all those who teach and research in higher education, and in our commitment to higher education as a common good.

The primary proposed changes being considered are:

- Fold the AAUP-CBC into the AAUP. The AAUP Foundation (the charitable organization) would remain as it is. This would do away with duplicative internal processes and allow us to focus more directly on serving our chapters and the profession.
- Replace the AAUP's annual meeting with a biennial delegate meeting. Chapter delegates would vote on the business of the AAUP. This would be less expensive and follow the model of many similar organizations.
- For election of officers and Council members, move from a mail ballot of individual members to a secret ballot of chapter delegates at the biennial meeting. This would be less expensive and follow the model of many similar organizations.
- Fold existing AAUP and AAUP-CBC governing boards into one governing board composed of three officers, five regional members, and three at-large members. This would create a more streamlined governance structure and do away with duplicative, sometimes competing, governance processes.
- Create an at-large chapter for members who are not currently affiliated with a chapter. While our emphasis will remain on forming and empowering chapters on campuses, this structure would provide a "home" chapter for our at-large members and will provide them with a vehicle for representation at the biennial meeting.
- Allow small chapters in a given state to band together to form a section for purposes of representation at the biennial meeting.

The June 2019 annual meeting will need to vote on constitutional amendments in order for these changes to take place. All AAUP members will receive formal notification well ahead of the June annual meeting. The meeting itself will include opportunities to discuss the proposals, as well as additional business sessions regarding restructuring planning. We are also planning a series of webinars and in-person meetings for this spring to hear from members and to answer questions. You can also send any questions to executivedirector@aaup.org. We believe that these changes will result in a smarter, more responsive AAUP, one that embraces the One Faculty model. — National AAUP

Tennessee AAUP Foundation

The Tennessee AAUP Foundation was founded by TN Conference members who wished to help other TN AAUP members who might need "seed" money for legal aid, engaging speakers on issues, etc. The TN Conference has revived the Tennessee Foundation, which is a separate entity from the Tennessee conference of the AAUP. AAUP members willing to serve on the Board of the Foundation are sought. So far Dora Estes, Davis Lee, Delphia Harris, and Josie McQuail are serving on the Board of the TN AAUP Foundation. Donations may be made to the Foundation c/o **Dora Estes, Treasurer of the TN AAUP Foundation, 303 Ponder Rd. Smithville, TN 37166**



AAUP ANNUAL CONFERENCE June 14-17, Crystal City VA
2019 AAUP Annual Conference: Free Speech on Campus—
please consider attending the national AAUP convention as a
delegate and getting more involved in AAUP. Also, you can
help by recruiting your colleagues. In today's climate, it is
even more vital for our state's and our nation's higher educa-
tion faculty to work together to protect the quality of higher
education and the rights of higher education faculty. The
theme of the conference is Free Speech.

YOUR TENNESSEE CONFERENCE OFFICERS :

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Legislative Liaison: vacant

**THE AAUP believes that higher education is a fundamental human
right to which freedom of inquiry and expression are integral.**

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JOIN AAUP

Your AAUP membership gives you exclusive access to the expertise of AAUP staff, members, and leaders. Our lineup of guidebooks, toolkits, and webinars put the resources to defend academic freedom, ensure economic security, and advance faculty governance for all faculty at your fingertips.

When you join the AAUP, make sure you sign up to pay dues to your state conference — we do a lot for you!

<http://www.aaup.org/membership/join>

Many professional development opportunities are available to AAUP members, and through AAUP you can help keep guard the quality of higher ed in TN and protect faculty rights.

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