



Free Speech in Academia: Status — Endangered

Friday, April 7 and Saturday April 8 the Tennessee Conference and the TTU Chapter of the AAUP will host Dr. John K. Wilson, author and activist, to address Free Speech in Academia in the U.S. and in Tennessee. We felt that a forum on Free Speech was necessary in Tennessee in the present climate. The first event will be Fri. April 7 at 3:30 p.m. in Henderson Hall 205 on the Tennessee Technological University campus in Cookeville.; the second on Sat. April 8. at 9:30 a.m., same room.

Assaults on Free Speech have occurred at several universities here in Tennessee, big and small. At Nashville State Community College, the AAUP chapter there has been forbidden by the administration from using NSCC e-mail for AAUP communications of any kind. This followed AAUP activists questioning the president of NSCC and decisions by his administration. The administration is now proposing a policy change in which all mass email communications would need to be viewed by an administrator and approved before they are sent. The Faculty Senate is meeting with the VP to discuss this proposed policy in a couple of weeks.

At TTU, a faculty member's e-mail to faculty in the immediate aftermath of the presidential election, responding to students' fear of intimidation, threats and violence following the presidential campaign which many students felt would only increase after Donald Trump's election, was posted, without her permission, to the Islamophobic website Daily Rollcall. After her e-mail was posted on the hate-site (the Southern Poverty Law Center has designated it as such), TTU AAUP President Dr. Julia Gruber received harassing e-mails and death threats. Pictures of guns were juxtaposed next to references to her on a TTU faculty member's website and next to pictures of her Facebook site. Posters to the other faculty member's website page asked why she had not become an actual citizen of the U.S. instead of only being a legal resident (having a green card). These outrageous reactions are typical of the kind of retaliation that any fear expressed by the election of Donald Trump elicits — ironic, since it only underscores why this fear is, in fact, well-founded (see 11/16 issue of the AAUP newsletter).

At U.T. Knoxville, our "flagship" school, famously the Tennessee Legislature censured the Office of Diversity for suggesting that gender neutral pronouns be used, and for holding a "Sex Week." Yale University started a "Sex Week" in 2002, and its co-founders thought it was needed at UTK. Perhaps it is — since Tennessee ranked in the top 10 states for the serious STD chlamydia in 2014 (this STD can cause serious problems for women including infertility). But instead of congratulating UTK for a creative way of problem-solving or for bringing awareness to the issue of transgender or non-binary gender identification, the Office of Diversity was shut down in retaliation for e-mails and comments on these issues which are apparently so controversial for the Tennessee Legislature that the UTK Office of Diversity had to be silenced.

Governor Haslam did not ratify the bill from the legislature, but he also did not veto it. His comment: "Although I do not like the precedent of redirecting funds within a higher education institution's budget, I find the ultimate outcome of the legislation less objectionable and am therefore letting it become law without my endorsement," reminds us of the unprecedented nature of the legislature's interference.

— J. McQuail

"You can't have a university without having free speech, even though at times it makes us terribly uncomfortable. If students are not going to hear controversial ideas on college campuses, they're not going to hear them in America. I believe it's part of their education. — Donna Shalala

Donna Shalala was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by George Bush. She was president of the University of Miami from 2001-15. She served as the Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Madison from 1988 to 1993 .

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TTU AAUP CHAPTER MEETING FRI. 04/07/17

TENNESSEE AAUP CONFERENCE MEETING 04/08/17

Sat. April 8 is our state of TN AAUP conference meeting, featuring John K. Wilson, who will address free speech issues in TN and the nation. We will hold the state meeting at TTU. Coffee and refreshments 9:30 a.m. Sat. and meeting to start at 10 a.m. CST. The room for the Sat. April 8 meeting will be 205 Henderson Hall, at 9:30 a.m. meeting. RSVP for this event so that we can order food accordingly.

TTU is having its last monthly AAUP chapter meeting of the semester on Fri April 7 and others from the TN state conference of the TTU may attend TTU's AAUP meeting. The traditional social follows the meeting, usually in the early evening. The room for both the Fri. 3:30 TTU AAUP meeting will be Henderson Hall 205, and the social will be at the home of Dr. Julia Gruber. Please e-mail her for address and directions at juliabaker@tntech.edu We will have a guest speaker, John K. Wilson.

Speaker at both events will be **John K. Wilson**, author of seven books, including *Barack Obama: This Improbable Quest*, *Newt Gingrich: Capitol Crimes and Misdemeanors*, *Patriotic Correctness: Academic Freedom and Its Enemies*, and *The Most Dangerous Man in America: Rush Limbaugh's Assault on Reason*. He is the co-editor of *AcademeBlog.org* and the editor of *Illinois Academe*. He has a Ph.D. in education from Illinois State University, and is the co-organizer of the Chicago Book Expo and the Evanston Literary Festival.



(above) The spring AAUP TN Conference meeting at TTU, April 2016

TTU is once again hosting the TN AAUP chapter meeting. In order to ensure we have enough food and that you do not receive a parking ticket, please let us know which days you will attend (Fri. April 7 at 3:30 for the TTU AAUP meeting) whether you will come to the Friday night social (please email juliabaker@tntech.edu for directions) and/or plan to attend the Sat. meeting which starts at 9:30 a.m. In Henderson Hall 205. Also, if you have special dietary needs we need to know!

E-mail Yvonne Simerman at tnaaup@gmail.com

AAUP convention in Washington, D.C. July 13-16

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 (state conference leader Dr. Josie McQuail will read a paper on Free Speech issues at the convention), and serve your AAUP!

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 Josie McQuail at jmcquail@tntech.edu for more info.

Coley's Corner: News from the Legislature, 2016-17 . — Coley McGinnis, TSU, Emeritus Professor, is past president and Legislative Liaison for the TN Conference

A bill that proposed to limit speech on campus, unfortunately for its sponsors (considering what happened to Yiannopoulos) called the "Milo Bill," was sponsored by Rep. Martin Daniel (R-Knoxville) and would have required faculty to allow students to air their views in the classroom, whether those views had anything to do with the subject matter of the course or not. The bill was specifically designed to allow conservative students to air their views since in the eyes of Rep. Martin and his co-sponsor Sen. John Hensley (R-Hohenwald), conservative students are routinely silenced. Faculty know this is nonsense. It's more proof that we must keep a close eye on the legislature. The TN AAUP was actively involved in opposing this bad bill.

In addition, some in the TN state legislature are trying to interfere with worker organizations like AAUP and the Tennessee Education Association (TEA) . Sen. Dolores Gresham (R-Somerville) in particular seems bent on opposing payroll deduction for groups like TEA and AAUP. Gresham's attempt to interfere with labor groups (the legislation was tried a record of 8 times last year) is a blatant attempt to interfere with such organizations. The ACLU's dictum "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty" comes to mind here. Her latest gambit is to levy a 10% tax on local organizations like TEA.

Outsourcing Encore: Governor Signs With JLL

As reported in our Fall newsletter, Governor Haslam was looking to outsource other state services. Universities will be the victim of further outsourcing, depending on what the individual university president prefers. At TTU custodians will now have to apply to JLL in order to retain their jobs. Also, Governor Haslam reportedly has financial ties to JLL. [Do you know where your Institution stands on further outsourcing?](#)

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 is working on reviving the Tennessee Foundation, which will be a separate entity. Once the Foundation receives its tax exempt status, which lapsed due to inactivity, AAUP members willing to serve on the Board of the Foundation will be sought.



THE TENNESSEE CONFERENCE
Academic Freedom for a Free Society in Tennessee

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! Our legislative Liaison Coley McGinnis has made a difference for us this year by getting concessions with the legislature (see p. 3). <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

AAUP ANNUAL CONFERENCE June 14-18, Washington, D. C. 2017 AAUP Annual Conference Theme: The Rights and Freedoms of Students — 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 education faculty to work together to protect the quality of higher education and the rights of higher education faculty. For instance, did you know that President Donald Trump's proposed budget eliminates the National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities, as well as National Public Tele-

YOUR TENNESSEE CONFERENCE OFFICERS :

President: Josie McQuail, TTU jmcquail@tntech.edu

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Vice President for Community Colleges: Diane Eagle Nashville State Tech [<ouezzane3891@yahoo.com>](mailto:ouezzane3891@yahoo.com)

Secretary: Yvonne Simerman, NSCC, [<tnaaup@gmail.com>](mailto:tnaaup@gmail.com)

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Past President; Legislative Liaison: Coley McGinnis, Emeritus, Tennessee State U, coleymac@comcast.net

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

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