

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE
COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND TENURE
(Final; Information)

AF.23.03 2022-2023 Annual Report of the Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure

This report summarized the activities of the Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure (AF) during the 2022-2023 academic year. AF met on September 15, October 13, November 10, December 8, February 9, and April 6. More detailed information is provided in the minutes of those meetings.

I. ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE AGENDA

AF.20.01, Review of the *Bylaws*, Part D.2 – Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure

At the request of the Senate Executive Committee, AF continued examination of its duties and membership in the *Bylaws*, Part D.2. The Eighth Senate Review Commission recommended AF review the *Statutes*, Article IX, Section 6b(3) to determine if a committee has been specified by the Senate for hearings regarding severe sanctions of faculty other than dismissal for cause. AF recommended revision to the *Bylaws* to specify the role of AF to consult with the Chancellor on procedures for cases involving severe sanctions other than dismissal for cause for members of the faculty under the *Statutes*, Section 6. The recommended *Bylaws* revision was sent to the Senate Committee on University Statutes and Senate Procedures on December 8, 2022.

AF.22.04, Analysis of the Senate Committee on General University Policy Guidelines on Departmental Statements

A number of faculty members requested that AF investigate and consider findings dealing with departments making public statements of departmental positions. While AF was discussing this issue, the Senate Committee on General University Policy (GP) prepared a position for the Senate to adopt. The Chair of AF objected that GP's position did not properly attend to Article X.2(a) protecting members of academic staff from influences within the University that tend to reduce academic freedom, and the Senate referred the issue to AF. AF sent an analysis of the GP guidelines to the Senate on December 5, 2022.

AF.22.05, Review of the *Statutes* (USC ST-83)

The Senate Committee on University Statutes and Senate Procedures (SP) asked AF to review USC ST-83, specifically the proposed revisions to the *Statutes*, Article X, Section 5. AF discussed the proposed revisions at its meeting on September 15 and voted unanimously to recommend that the Senate reject USC ST-83 because the revisions would narrow the scope of application of the academic freedom protections identified in Section 5.

AF.23.01, Statement of Procedures for Article X Hearings

AF provided the Senate a report for information describing the procedures adopted at a recent Article X hearing.

AF.23.02, Review of the Draft Campus Requirements for General Education Syllabi

AF reviewed the draft Campus Requirements for General Education Syllabi. AF is concerned that requiring faculty members to adopt contract like language in these syllabuses may spawn an academic freedom dispute in the future, but has no opinion as to the form of that dispute.

II. ITEMS UNDER CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE

AF.20.03, Review of the *Statutes*, Article IX, Section 6 – Severe Sanctions Other Than Dismissal for Cause for Members of the Faculty

The Office of the Provost requested that AF consider the *Statutes*, Article IX, Section 6 which governs the imposition of significant sanctions lesser than dismissal. During the 2019-2020 academic year, AF identified three aspects of Article IX that might bear reconsideration.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND TENURE
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