

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE

COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND TENURE

(Final; Information)

AF.25.04 2024-2025 Annual Report of the Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure

This report summarizes the activities of the Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure (AF) during the 2024-2025 academic year. AF held two meetings during the fall 2024 semester (September 23, November 18) and three meetings during the spring 2025 semester (February 17, March 24, May 12). More detailed information is provided in the minutes of those meetings.

I. ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE AGENDA

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. Following a communication with William Bernhard, Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Interim Associate Chancellor, in Fall 2024, it was determined that there is not a current *Statutes* revision under consideration so AF removed this item from its agenda.

AF.25.01, Amended Proposed Revision to the *Statutes* (USC ST-83 Revised)

The Senate Committee on University Statutes and Senate Procedures (SP) requested that AF review the proposed revision to the *Statutes* from University Senates Conference and provide input. AF reviewed and discussed the proposed *Statutes* revision at successive meetings. It submitted a detailed analysis and response to SP on October 18, 2024, and sent a second response and recommendation to SP on April 17, 2025. The former were presented at the November 11, 2024 Senate meeting, and the latter were considered at the April 28, 2025 Senate meeting.

AF.25.02, Proposed Guidance for Deans, Executive Officers, and Faculty Regarding Faculty Working Outside Illinois

The Senate Committee on General University Policy (GP) requested that AF review the “Proposed Guidance for Deans, Executive Officers, and Faculty Regarding Faculty Working Outside Illinois” document and provide feedback to William Bernhard, Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Interim Associate Chancellor. AF reviewed the document and sent feedback to Bernhard on March 25, 2025.

II. ITEMS UNDER CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE

AF.25.03, First Amendment/Academic Freedom Portal

AF discussed the possibility of opening a dialog with the First Amendment Clinic housed in the College of Law to establish an online portal or other formal mechanism for academic staff to contact experts on freedom of speech and academic freedom when issues arise. This initiative was headed by Lehman and is ongoing.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND TENURE

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