

AAUP

American Association of University Professors

Academic Freedom for a Free Society

September 30, 2011

VIA FACSIMILE (225) 342 - 6473

Dr. Randy Moffett
President, University of Louisiana System
1201 North Third Street
Suite 7-300
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802

Dear President Moffett:

As you know, for over a year our Association has periodically conveyed its concern over successive changes in the policies of the University of Louisiana System's Board of Supervisors regarding the discontinuance of academic programs and the resulting potential termination of tenured faculty appointments.

By letter of March 4, 2011, we informed the Board and your office of the enhancement of the Association's concern upon learning of over a hundred programs in the system slated for discontinuance and policy changes that would allow termination of full-time faculty appointments with as little as one month of notice. In April we wrote to the president of Southeastern Louisiana University about a variety of issues raised in terminating the appointments of the three tenured French professors, and in June we sent you and the presidents of the system's eight institutions a statement from the chair of our Subcommittee on Program Closings on what had happened at Southeastern and what was contemplated with respect to tenured chemistry professors at the University of Louisiana at Monroe.

Over this past summer, we heard from numerous faculty members at other system institutions, and our inquiries regarding developments at these institutions proceeded apace. We have learned that the majority of the eight institutions that went through the required program reviews, including Monroe, did so without having to lay off tenured professors. At another of the institutions, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, two tenured professors were notified of their layoff effective in 2013, but the status of the two is currently under discussion with the anticipation of promptly reaching a mutually acceptable resolution.


Two of the system's institutions, however, have not succeeded in avoiding the termination of tenure commitments, present us with numerous issues, and appear to have no resolution in sight: Southeastern Louisiana and Northwestern State University, where nearly a

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dozen adversely affected professors have sought the Association's assistance. A formal Association investigation has accordingly been authorized. The investigating committee intends to look into examples of avoiding layoffs, but the focus will be on issues of tenure rights, due process, and faculty prerogatives at the two institutions where notices of layoffs are already effective and no prompt remedy is apparent.

The *ad hoc* investigating committee consists of Professor Rebecca J. Williams (English, University of Central Arkansas), chair, Linda L. Carroll (Italian, Tulane University), and Tammy Greer (Psychology, University of Southern Mississippi). The committee is arranging for Louisiana site visits in November. It plans to be in Baton Rouge from November 12 through 15 and would welcome meeting with you, and with other members of the system administration whom we invite you to recommend, on Monday, November 14, or Tuesday, November 15. The committee contemplates discussing its concerns relating to specific cases with administrative officers and faculty members at the particular institutions, and it sees meeting with you and your colleagues in the central administration as an opportunity to gain understanding of your position on the effectiveness and ramifications of program closings as called for in the system's policies in a time of continuing financial constraints. We shall be in touch with you about specific arrangements for meetings as the time approaches.

Sincerely,



Jordan E. Kurland
Associate General Secretary

cc: President Frank Pogue, Grambling State University
President Dan Reneau, Louisiana Tech University
President Philip C. Williams, McNeese State University
President Stephen T. Hulbert, Nicholls State University
President Randall J. Webb, Northwestern State University of Louisiana
President John Crain, Southeastern Louisiana University
President E. Joseph Savoie, University of Louisiana at Lafayette
President Nick J. Bruno, University of Louisiana at Monroe
President Alvin Burstein, Louisiana Conference AAUP
Ad hoc Investigating Committee