



November 28, 2017

Letter Regarding Summary Dismissal of Nebraska Lecturer

"A suspension which is not followed by either reinstatement or the opportunity for a hearing is in effect a summary dismissal in violation of academic due process." —1940 *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* with Interpretive Comments

The AAUP sent a letter to University of Nebraska–Lincoln administrators today regarding the dismissal of a sixth-year doctoral student with a part-time appointment as a lecturer in the English department. She had been suspended in September for protesting the presence on campus of a recruitment table for Turning Point USA, a right wing organization that maintains the Professor Watchlist website. Her protest, which included the chanting of anti-fascist slogans and the use of expletives and obscene gestures, was filmed by the undergraduate student staffing the table and was subsequently posted on websites such as Campus Reform. The administration cited "security reasons" for the suspension and gave the lecturer a letter of reprimand. In November, she was informed that she will remain on suspension until the end of the academic year. The Association's letter states, "In addition to the evident procedural issues, we remain concerned that Ms. Lawton was suspended in response to her speech as a citizen, raising questions whether the action infringed upon her academic freedom. These questions remain unresolved in the absence of affordance to Ms. Lawton of any academic due process."

[Read the most recent letter to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.](#)

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