



Community College of Aurora (Colorado)

The AAUP's Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure presented the following statement to the AAUP Annual Meeting on June 17, 2017.

The report of the investigating committee concerns the dismissal of a part-time instructor of philosophy in the fourth week of the fall 2016 semester. The stated basis of the action was his failure to implement curricular changes designed to improve pass rates in entry-level general education courses. One week before his dismissal, the instructor, who had been a vocal critic of these administratively driven changes, shared with administrative officers a draft letter in which he sharply criticized the new curriculum, informing them that he intended to send the final version to the college's regional accrediting agency.

The investigating committee found that the administration, in declining to afford the instructor a faculty hearing, had dismissed him summarily in disregard of the 1940 *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* and of Regulation 13 ("Part-Time Faculty Appointments") of the derivative *Recommended Institutional Regulations on Academic Freedom and Tenure*. The committee deemed credible the faculty member's allegation that the administration terminated his appointment because he had conveyed his intention of sharing his critique with the regional accreditor, an allegation that remained unrebutted absent a faculty hearing. In the view of the committee, "the administration's stated rationale for dismissal d[id] little to dispel the impression that its action violated basic tenets of academic freedom." Regarding the climate for academic freedom at the college, the committee concluded that the lack of adequate procedural protections for part-time faculty members meant that they enjoyed academic freedom "only as long as they retained the favor of their administrative superiors."

Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure recommends to the 103rd Annual Meeting that the Community College of Aurora be placed on the Association's list of censured administrations.