1956–1969

A Reinvigorated AAUP

In the late 1950s and the 1960s, the AAUP expanded its work into new areas. The Association’s legal program, begun in 1958, had a great success in the late 1960s when the US Supreme Court cited academic freedom concerns in its ruling in Keyishian v. Board of Regents. Committee T on College and University Government, meanwhile, launched the first investigation into infringements of governance standards and played a key role in drafting the joint 1966 Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities. Committee A, responding to the student activism that characterized the era, for the first time formally addressed the rights and freedoms of students. Conferences and chapters began to assert their voices through new organizational structures. All the while, the Association’s membership role, taking the title of massive partner in higher education, were strong and growing. The work of the AAUP during this period was influenced by cultural changes that were particularly relevant in America’s colleges and universities. The Association reached its thirtieth anniversary at a time of ferment, less than a year after the passage of the Civil Rights Act and the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution and only weeks after Free Speech Movement leader Mario Savio told fellow students, in his famous speech at the University of California, Berkeley, “There’s a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious . . . you’ve got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you’ve got to make it stop.”

The AAUP enters the legal arena, filing its first amicus brief in the US Supreme Court on Sweezy v. New Hampshire. The US Supreme Court upholds the right of Paul Sweezy, a university lecturer, to decline to answer questions posed by a state body investigating subversive activities. Justice Felix Frankfurter, in the concurring opinion to Brown v. Board of Education, announces the constitutional doctrine of academic freedom when he cites “four essential freedoms of a university—to determine for itself on academic grounds who may teach, what may be taught, how it shall be taught, and who may be admitted to study.”

The AAUP issues its central policy document on the faculty’s role in governance, the 1966 Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities. The AAUP conducts an investigation into the summary dismissal of a group of their colleagues. The AAUP issues its central policy document on the faculty’s role in governance, the 1966 Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities. The AAUP issues its central policy document on the faculty’s role in governance, the 1966 Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students. The AAUP issues its central policy document on the faculty’s role in governance, the 1966 Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students. Our Nation is deeply committed to safeguarding academic freedom, to maintain a climate that is conducive to the open search for truth in matters of scholarly and scientific research and in the education of students for professional careers. This freedom is therefore a special concern of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. This freedom is therefore a special concern of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. This freedom is therefore a special concern of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. The AAUP issues the Joint 1966 Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities.

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