



February 14, 2022

Academic Freedom and Tenure: University System of Georgia

The staff report concerns the action taken by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, on the recommendation of the system administration and without meaningful faculty involvement, to remove the procedural protections of tenure from the system's post-tenure review policy. Under the revised policy, a system institution can dismiss a tenured professor for failing to remediate deficiencies identified through post-tenure evaluation without affording that professor an adjudicative hearing before an elected faculty body in which the administration demonstrates adequate cause for dismissal. The report notes that tenure as the AAUP defines it does not exist separately from the academic due process that protects it. By removing academic due process from post-tenure review, the report finds, the USG administration and governing board "effectively abolished tenure in Georgia's public colleges and universities" in violation of the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure.

The report emphasizes the magnitude and singularity of this attack on tenure and academic freedom, which affects more than 5,800 tenured faculty members in twenty-five colleges and universities and bestows on the University System of Georgia the dubious distinction of being the only system of public higher education to take such a radical action in nearly fifty years.

Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure accordingly recommends to the Association's governing Council that the University System of Georgia be added to the AAUP's list of censured administrations.