

# CALL FOR PAPERS



## Landscapes of Power and Academic Freedom

The 2023 issue of the *Journal of Academic Freedom* seeks original articles that investigate the links between landscapes of social power and the historical development and contemporary status of academic freedom. For over a century, the AAUP has defended the profession against attacks on academic freedom and has faced many powerful adversaries in the process, yet it has also found and cultivated allies. Preserving academic freedom for a free society entails understanding those who would dismantle or undermine it as well as those who will coalesce in its defense.

Within the United States and internationally, we have witnessed the deleterious effects that authoritarian governments, unchecked corporate interests, reactionary movements, and partisan politics have on academic freedom. Indeed, we could cite a wide range of impacts, from tenure denial, dismissal, and (self-)censorship to imprisonment, political exile, and “brain drain.” What can we learn about academic freedom and its contemporary precarity by exposing the forces of power that mobilize against it?

We invite consideration of how academic freedom serves as a touchstone for democracy and the ways that the death of academic freedom signals the atrophy of more inclusive and democratized landscapes of power. What is the relationship between democratic societies and the flourishing of academia and academic freedom within them? What kind of society would powerful forces working against academia and academic freedom usher forth if they had their way? History and comparative international studies give us some clues about a range of possible futures we can envision for academic freedom. Potential topics and questions that prospective authors might explore for volume 14 include the following:

### **THE RELATIVE AUTONOMY OF THE KNOWLEDGE SECTOR WITHIN WHICH THE ACADEMY IS SITUATED.**

How do academic labor movements, professional associations, and wider social movements and coalitions support academic freedom and resist economic, partisan, and state intrusions that limit this autonomy? How can we acknowledge and strengthen landscapes of power—both within the profession and in the wider society—that bolster and protect academic freedom?

### **COMPARATIVE HISTORIES AND CURRENT EXAMPLES OF ACADEMIC CENSORSHIP.**

How do past and present attempts at thought control, political and religious interference in curricula, and other threats to academic freedom erode civil society and its democratic processes?

### **LIBERAL ARTS PROGRAMS AND COLLEGES AND THE UTILITARIAN ETHOS.**

Are the liberal arts and the transformative critical thinking paradigms they promote being targeted by specific political or economic groups? What are the agendas behind such attacks? Is the ongoing transformation of liberal arts colleges and departments across the United States and elsewhere into “career-ready” degrees and institutions the result of market-driven forces or an ideological effort to straitjacket knowledge production? What is the current and potential impact of challenges to the liberal arts on academic freedom and shared governance? And what is the impact on the larger experiment of democracy?

### **RESISTING STRUCTURES OF DISCIPLINE AND COERCION IN THE ACADEMIC PROFESSION.**

How can educators counteract the routinized behavior imposed by standardized testing in K–12 and higher education and expectations for education as the recitation of established truths? And how can they harness the revolutionary potential of debate and critical thinking and nurture competing narratives, discoveries, or conceptual frameworks to challenge received forms of knowledge?

### **EXTERNAL AGENDAS OR POWERFUL INTERESTS IN CONFLICT WITH ACADEMIC STANDARDS.**

We encourage investigations and analyses that dissect the often-hidden motives and interests of powerful actors. In many instances, these motives may be economic, ideological and partisan, or morally coercive. The attacks on climate scientists, for example, often trace back to powerful economic interests in the fossil-fuel sector but have strong partisan and ideological allies. Contemporary attacks on research and teaching about racism have complex power structures and interests behind them. Are public universities bound by private donor interests and their private corporate or ideological agendas? How does this increasing tendency toward “philanthropy” as a way to support higher education threaten the status of public universities and their foundational mandate to serve democracy and the common good?

**Submissions of 2,000–6,000 words (including any notes and references) are due by March 20, 2023.**

Complete submission guidelines and instructions, our editorial policy, and links to past volumes of the journal are available at <https://www.aaup.org/CFP>.