

**AAUP NATIONAL COUNCIL
DISTRICT V ELECTION
BIOGRAPHY AND CANDIDATE STATEMENT**

James Mark Blackwell

Ph.D. Biblical Studies, University of Sheffield, UK. 2005
Master of Divinity, SBTS. 1991
B.A. English – Writing, George Mason University. 1980

Francis Marion University 2001 – Present

Associate Professor of Philosophy and Religious Studies
Director, International Programs
Vice Chair, Faculty Senate
Faculty Senator, At-Large

AAUP member since 2001

Francis Marion University AAUP Chapter President 2016 – 2018
AAUP FMU Fall and Spring Forum Moderator 2016 – 2018
South Carolina AAUP Conference Vice President appointed to Presidency 2017 – 2018
State Conference Participant 2015 – 2017
National Conference Participant 2016 – 2017
Southeast Regional Conference of Presidents Participant 2017
Shared Governance Presenter – College of Charleston Faculty and AAUP Chapter 2017
New Faculty Orientation Retreat Participant 2017
AAUP National Observer Faculty Grievance Hearing/Revocation of Tenure and Dismissal
Coastal Carolina University, 2017
2018 National Conference Panelist “Perspectives on Free Speech from AAUP Regional Officers”

James Mark Blackwell has been a member of the AAUP since 2001 but became more active in Francis Marion University’s chapter during a Provost search and selection process that took place 2015 – 2016. FMU’s senior administrators had been in office for nearly twenty years, and it was during the search process that Blackwell realized further transitions would take place during his tenure. Historically, FMU has enjoyed strong AAUP participation, but Blackwell observed growing complacency in the chapter that was eroding its staunch shared governance practices. To address this, Blackwell chose to become more involved in the changes that lay ahead to protect, preserve and extend AAUP principles for students and faculty. Since that time, the chapter has elected new leadership and added new members. The chapter also has created and conducted AAUP New Faculty Orientation (a retreat early in the fall semester) and is planning general faculty orientation meetings to explicate AAUP principles and the conduct of our Faculty Handbook.

On the State level, Blackwell is using AAUP materials to create a prototype Campus Structures and Common Practices Survey that will be sent to the Faculty Chairs of higher education institutions in South Carolina. The overarching goal is to establish a database that will 1) provide information on how to better address institutional challenges within our membership, 2) allow us to reach nonmembers and initiate a dialogue, 3) enable our State Conference the ability to share the information nationally, and 4) encourage the Conference to update information regularly for continued study and discussion.

If elected to the National Council, Blackwell plans to pursue the following areas based on the shared contexts and concerns of District V members: 1) further address the roles of and challenges on HBCUs through workshops, projects and initiatives with the AAUP Committee on Historically Black Colleges and Universities, 2) explore Freedom of Speech particularly in light of controversial monuments and memorials on our campuses; and 3) link the annual Southeast Regional Conference of Presidents with other District V Presidents toward sharing information, support, and creating solidarity on issues common to our region.