



April 30, 2021

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dr. Miles K. Davis
President
Linfield University
900 Southeast Baker Street
McMinnville, Oregon 97128

Dear President Davis:

Dr. Daniel J. Pollack-Pelzner, professor of English and Ronni Lacroute Chair in Shakespeare Studies with ten years of service at Linfield University, has advised the American Association of University Professors of a letter dated April 27, 2021, from Dr. Susan Agre-Kippenhan, provost and vice president for academic affairs, notifying him of the immediate termination of his tenured appointment “for cause.” The letter states that Professor Pollack-Pelzner “deliberately violated instructions to preserve attorney-client privilege”; “circulated false statements about the University, its employees, and its Board”; and “refused to comply with University policies and [thus] . . . interfered with the University’s administration of its responsibilities.” We understand that Professor Pollack-Pelzner, a faculty representative to the board of trustees, has publicly criticized the governing board for its handling of alleged sexual misconduct in its ranks and has accused you of having made anti-Semitic remarks, leading to the inference that the action against him may have based on considerations that violated his academic freedom.

Assuming the accuracy of this information, we are writing to inform you that an action to dismiss a tenured professor without the administration's having first demonstrated adequacy of cause in a pre-termination hearing of record before an independent faculty body is in violation of the enclosed AAUP-AAC&U 1940 *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* and the complementary 1958 *Statement on Procedural Standards in Faculty Dismissal Proceedings*. The administration’s summary action against Professor Pollack-Pelzner is therefore a matter of grave concern to this Association under its longstanding responsibilities, which include investigating summary dismissals of faculty members in evident violation of their academic freedom.

Remarkably, the Linfield University faculty handbook incorporates verbatim not only the 1958 *Statement*, but the AAUP’s *Recommended Institutional Regulations on Academic Freedom and Tenure*, Regulation 5, “Dismissal Procedures,” of which sets forth even more detailed standards governing dismissal for cause. The administration’s action against Professor Pollack-Pelzner was evidently taken in flagrant violation, not only of AAUP-recommended standards, but of the institution’s own regulations.

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We urge in strongest terms that you immediately rescind the notice of dismissal issued to Professor Pollack-Pelzner and reinstate him to his academic and other responsibilities, and that any subsequent action be consistent with the cited principles and standards.

We look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gregory F. Scholz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Gregory F. Scholz, Director

Department of Academic Freedom, Tenure, and Governance

Cc: Dr. Susan Agre-Kippenhan, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Professor Ingrid Flanders, Chair, Faculty Senate
Professor Sharon Bailey Glasco, President, Linfield AAUP Chapter
Professor Ramin Farahmandpur, President, Oregon AAUP Conference
Professor David Luebke, Vice President for Academic Freedom and Governance, Oregon
AAUP Conference
Professor Daniel Pollack-Pelzner