



Approved by Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure June 3, 2016

THE COLLEGE OF SAINT ROSE (NEW YORK)

The report of the investigating committee concerns the administration's termination of twenty-three tenured and tenure-track appointments as a result of program reductions and closures, the product of a three-month "academic prioritization process" that did not involve the faculty. The affected faculty members received notice two weeks before Christmas 2015 that their appointments would end at the close of the fall 2016 semester.

The faculty first learned in late August 2015 that retrenchment was to occur and that the Representative Committee of the Faculty (Rep Com), the body charged with coordinating the faculty's participation in retrenchment decisions, would be required to formulate its recommendations on program and position cuts by November 2. The administration did not hold its first meeting with Rep Com, however, until almost a month later, did not readily provide the committee with requested information, and circumscribed the committee's role in the process, leading a special meeting of the faculty in early October to direct Rep Com to withdraw from what the faculty called a "rushed and superficial" process. The administration went forward alone, and when it made its final decisions on closures, reductions, and terminations of appointments, it elected not to consult the faculty before implementing them.

In its report, the investigating committee reached the following conclusions:

- In selecting academic programs for reduction or elimination without faculty participation, the administration disregarded widely accepted standards of academic governance, as set forth in the AAUP's *Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities* and in Regulation 4 of the *Recommended Institutional Regulations on Academic Freedom and Tenure*.
- By giving the faculty only two months in which to make recommendations for eliminating programs and faculty positions, restricting access to information, and otherwise constraining the faculty's participation, the administration placed the faculty in an "untenable position" that justified its withdrawal from the academic prioritization process.
- By unilaterally terminating fourteen tenured appointments, the administration and governing board undermined both tenure and academic freedom. As one faculty member put it, "If they can [so easily] eliminate tenured faculty, then tenure will mean nothing. And if there is no tenure, there is no academic freedom."
- In effecting the terminations in disregard of AAUP-recommended procedures concerning financial exigency and discontinuing programs for educational reasons, the administration and governing board violated the joint 1940 *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* and Regulation 4 of the *Recommended Institutional Regulations*.

Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure accordingly recommends to the 102nd Annual Meeting that the College of Saint Rose be added to the Association's list of censured administrations.