

October 22, 2020

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dr. Gary L. Miller  
President  
University of Akron  
Akron, Ohio 44325

Dear President Miller:

More than two weeks have passed since we wrote to convey the Association's concerns regarding actions taken to terminate the appointments of ninety-six full-time faculty members at the University of Akron in a manner that appears to have departed from normative standards of academic governance (a copy of our October 7 letter is enclosed for your convenience). The letter acknowledged that our information had come primarily from the local AAUP chapter and that you might have additional information that might allay our concerns. But we have heard nothing directly from you.<sup>1</sup>

Our letter also stated that, absent countervailing information or an appropriate resolution, the AAUP's staff would be compelled to recommend adding the University of Akron to the seven cases currently under investigation. The only reaction from your administration of which we are aware (thanks to a report in the online *Akron Beacon Journal*) is your October 8 letter posted on the university's website ("UA Response to Letter Received by National AAUP"). In it you stated that our letter failed to mention that an arbitrator upheld the administration's use of the force majeure provision in the CBA, thus affirming the administration's "actions as necessary to ensure the financial stability of the University in a global pandemic." You also stated not only that the UA administration "strongly affirms the AAUP principles of shared governance, academic freedom, and tenure" but also that "every action taken in this process [was] in keeping with those principles."

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<sup>1</sup> Akron-AAUP wrote to correct one error in our letter. We had written that "the maximum severance salary offered, even for faculty members with many years of service, was a paltry \$12,000." The chapter has, however, informed us that "the RIFed faculty members received no severance and even lost their tuition remission benefit for their dependents, although all RIFed staff retained that benefit."

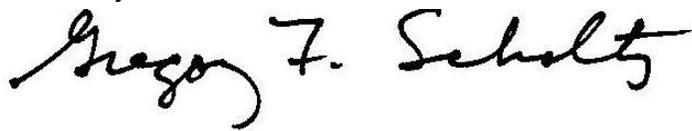
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As the AAUP's executive director has today authorized including the University of Akron among the institutions under investigation, it is now the responsibility of the investigating committee to evaluate the above statement. We will forward to the committee any response from you to our October 7 letter, and we trust that you and your colleagues will be willing to elaborate further on the administration's position in conference calls with the investigators. We would therefore appreciate your providing us with the name and contact information of someone in your office who can assist the committee in arranging interviews with you and other members of the UA administration.

Sincerely,



Gregory F. Scholtz

Director

Department of Academic Freedom, Tenure, and Governance

Enclosure by electronic mail

Cc: Mr. Joseph M. Gingo, Chair, Board of Trustees

Dr. John Wiencek, Executive Vice President and Provost

Dr. Rex Ramsier, Vice Provost and Director of Academic Administrative Services

Professor Linda Salinga, Chair, Faculty Senate

Professor John McNay, President, Ohio AAUP Conference

Professor Pamela Schulze, President, Akron-AAUP

Professor Susan Ramlo, Vice President, Akron-AAUP

Professor Jeanne-Helene Roy, Secretary, Akron-AAUP

Professor Ira Sasowsky, Treasurer, Akron-AAUP