

February 26, 2016

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL AND USPS

Dr. Henry C. (Hank) Foley
Interim Chancellor
University of Missouri
105 Jesse Hall
Columbia, Missouri 65211

Dear Chancellor Foley:

The American Association of University Professors has been advised of Wednesday's action by the Board of Curators of the University of Missouri system to dismiss Dr. Melissa Click, an assistant professor of communication about whose summary suspension we had conveyed the Association's concerns in our letter of February 2. In an announcement issued yesterday, Ms. Pamela Quigg Henrickson, chair of the board of curators, stated that the board had dismissed Professor Click because her "conduct was not compatible with university policies and did not meet expectations for a university faculty member."

According to the announcement, the board's assessment of Professor Click's conduct was based on an investigation by an outside law firm. Ms. Henderson also stated that "[t]he board [had gone] to significant lengths to ensure fairness and due process for Dr. Click." We understand that while the board of curators has offered Professor Click the opportunity to appeal the decision to the board, it has not provided her with a hearing before a faculty body.

As the announcement acknowledges, the process by which Professor Click's appointment was terminated was "not typical." In a statement on the board's action issued yesterday, the University of Missouri Faculty Council on University Policy observed that "under the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University—which the Board has approved—MU faculty members accused of misconduct are entitled to a fair hearing before they may be dismissed." The statement concludes, "By flouting the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University, the Board of Curators has caused needless injury to the University of Missouri."

Beyond its evident lack of conformity with the regulations of the University of Missouri, an action to dismiss a faculty member with indefinite tenure or a probationary faculty member within the term of appointment absent demonstration of cause in an adjudicative hearing before an elected faculty body is an action fundamentally at odds with basic standards of academic due process as set forth in the joint 1940 *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* and the complementary 1958 *Statement on Procedural Standards in Faculty Dismissal Proceedings*.

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As such, this action is a matter of basic concern to our Association under its longstanding responsibilities. We therefore urge in strongest terms that the board of curators immediately rescind the notice of termination issued to Professor Click and that any subsequent action be consistent with the institutional regulations of the University of Missouri and with the AAUP-supported procedural standards cited above.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hans-Joerg Tiede". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Hans-Joerg Tiede

Associate Secretary

Department of Academic Freedom, Tenure, and Governance

cc: Board of Curators of the University of Missouri
Michael A. Middleton, Interim President, University of Missouri System
Professor Ben Trachtenberg, Chair, University of Missouri Faculty Council
Professor Galen Suppes, President, University of Missouri AAUP Chapter
Professor David Robinson, Chair, Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure,
Missouri AAUP Conference
Professor Gregory Comer, President, Missouri AAUP Conference
Professor Melissa Click