



FACULTY SENATE A&M RESOLUTION 20-03

Pathway to Censure Removal

Sponsored by Kevin Cope and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee

Whereas the standing of LSU in the community of learners has been compromised by institutional behavior not in accord with best professional or ethical standards, behavior that has elicited two censures and one adverse supplementary report from the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) as well as a Faculty Senate censure of an LSU System President and an LSU Faculty Senate vote of no confidence in the LSU Board of Supervisors;¹

Whereas the continuation of censures that cast doubt on the vitality of academic freedom at LSU suggests that LSU is having difficulty in accomplishing its mission, “the generation, preservation, dissemination, and application of knowledge and cultivation of the arts.”²

Whereas institutional rankings and thereby institutional success derive, in large measure, from the evaluative perceptions of the leaders, faculty, and students of other institutions;³

Whereas the persistence of these censures, which are readily (and internationally) available on the AAUP and other web sites, continuously alerts the academic community to the dangers and difficulties of the LSU working environment;

Whereas the AAUP commands a high level of respect and attention in a scholarly community that acknowledges the accuracy and value of its judgments;

Whereas the LSU Faculty Senate (i) has explained to the LSU and LSU System administration both the many reasons for the AAUP and Faculty Senate censures and no-confidence vote and (ii) has proposed remedial strategies in the hope of encouraging the LSU leadership to work toward the lifting of these sanctions;⁴

Whereas significant work toward the lifting of the censure, including the sending of an LSU administrator to AAUP headquarters in Washington, had already been accomplished and remains on-the-record at the AAUP, which welcomed these overtures and is hoping for follow-up efforts;

Whereas the AAUP encourages the rehabilitation of censored institutions and has repeatedly sought to reconcile with LSU;⁵

Whereas a good-faith effort to lift the AAUP censures could open a pathway to the improvement of relations between the LSU Faculty and the LSU administration, improvements that might include the lifting of Faculty Senate no-confidence and censure resolutions;

Whereas sincere efforts to remove AAUP censures would set an admirable example for all of Louisiana, where there are more censures against higher education institutions than in any other state, thus showing the leadership and character of our institution;

Whereas the change of leadership at LSU—the presence of a new interim President and the likely hiring of a new President or Chancellor—opens the possibility of a fresh start;

Whereas the lifting of censures and other admonitory sanctions would improve the morale of faculty and serve as an aid in recruitment and retention of the best scholars;

Therefore, be it resolved that the LSU Faculty Senate calls on the interim President and the Board of Supervisors to begin a new round of efforts to remove the AAUP censures against LSU;

Therefore, be it further resolved that the Faculty Senate enjoins the interim President and his staff to establish a small and nimble committee composed of experienced faculty members and skillful administrators charged with entering into negotiations with the AAUP concerning the lifting of censures;

Therefore, be it further resolved that, owing to the gravity of the charges against LSU and owing to the continuing damage that censures inflict, the aforementioned committee should begin its activities immediately and without delay;

Therefore, be it further resolved that the aforementioned committee should take advantage of the expertise of the officers of the LSU AAUP Chapter as well as colleagues who might have been involved with the persons, events, or issues that led to the censures;

And therefore, be it further resolved that the interim President and his staff should, by way of showing good will and byway of opening a rehabilitative dialogue, quickly advise the AAUP of its intention to address the censures.

NOTES

1. Faculty Senate Resolutions 13–07 and 15–15; for documents relating to the AAUP censure, see <https://www.aaup.org/report/academic-freedom-and-tenure-louisiana-state-university-baton-rouge> . For information concerning the supplementary report, see <https://www.aaup.org/media-release/new-report-raises-concerns-about-lsu-firing#.Xk6k7UpMG70> (a summary) and https://www.aaup.org/file/aaupBulletin_LSU_final.pdf (the report).

2. LSU Mission and Vision Statement: <https://www.lsu.edu/about/mission.php>.

3. For example, perceptions of the quality and character of an institution by those at peer institutions count for twenty-two percent of the *US News and World Reports* rankings.

4. See Faculty Senate Resolution 15–05, “Overcoming AAUP Censure: A New Strategy for a New LSU.”

5. Personal communication from AAUP Vice-President and AAUP Committee A Chair Hank Reichmann to Kevin Cope during Kevin Cope’s tenure on the AAUP National Council.