



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF
UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

 Coastal Carolina University Chapter

AAUP is an organization of university faculty that promotes and defends the two fundamental pillars of the academy: **academic freedom** and **shared governance**. Academic freedom means that academics should not face recrimination (including pressure, intimidation, denial of tenure or dismissal) because of the subject matter of their research or instruction. Shared governance means that faculty should have a meaningful voice in decisions involving personnel, selection of administrators, budget, and determination of their university's educational policies, among other topics.

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THE AAUP-CCU UPDATE

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AAUP-CCU examines faculty compensation in light of national averages and rising inflation

On March 21, AAUP-CCU held its regular meeting with CCU President, Dr. Mike Benson. The meeting was held in the Singleton Conference Room. The AAUP-CCU delegation included Dr. Pamela Martin (Professor of Politics), who led a discussion of CCU's faculty compensation and decompression plan, in light of national averages and current inflationary pressures. The discussion focused on a core stipulation of CCU's decompression plan, which states that our faculty should be compensated based on "national averages". Our faculty were discounted at 6 percent for the southeastern region. However, the AAUP-CCU delegation, led by Dr. Martin, argued that the current amount of decompression is hardly proportionate to the rising inflation in our area and nation.

Dr. Martin gave a detailed history of faculty compensation at CCU, which has not been without controversy. At one point, faculty went eight years without a raise. After the implementation of a faculty compensation plan, no more than 30 percent of faculty could be deemed meritorious. As a result, there was no Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for what turned out to be 70 percent of faculty. She argued that, under the current scheme, a 3–7 percent raise that comes only at a six-year review deprives faculty of the thousands of dollars that come when an annual raise is based on percentage adjustment of the preceding base.

The current faculty compensation plan is based on the regional College and University Professional Association (CUPA) average. The CUPA discounts the American southeast at some 6 percent lower than the national average. This can be referred to as the "Southeast CUPA discount."

The AAUP-CCU delegation reiterated its belief that it is important for the University to address this gap. Furthermore, our current faculty pay adjustments and our promotion/tenure and post-tenure review are not commensurate with the current inflationary pressures we are facing as a nation. Given that our common aspiration is to strengthen the University's reach, rigor and reputation, the AAUP is interested in working with the administration in order to create an infrastructure that supports our faculty—both financially and in kind.

President Benson was receptive to the issues raised by AAUP-CCU. He conceded that, while parts of the Southeastern United States do indeed have a lower cost of living, the Myrtle Beach metropolitan area is not one of them. Dr. Benson pointed out that the governor of South Carolina has called for a 3 percent raise for all state employees, which should hopefully alleviate some of the inflationary pressures we are experiencing. He also shared with the group that employer healthcare contributions are projected to rise by 18 percent in the coming months, which is something we need to take into account in financial planning for the institution. The president added that much will depend on income from tuition. Currently applications by students remain relatively high; however, a much more accurate prognosticator of tuition income for the coming academic year is housing deposits received. The contours of this landscape will emerge fully during the summer. The AAUP-CCU plans to revisit this issue with President Benson in the fall.

TENURE

CCU Faculty Senate passes AAUP-CCU resolution on academic freedom by 47 votes to 2

At its regular meeting on March 2, the Coastal Carolina University Faculty Senate passed a resolution in defense of academic freedom, which was proposed by AAUP-CCU. The resolution, titled “Defending Academic Freedom to Teach About Race and Gender Justice and Critical Race Theory”, passed with 47 votes for to 2 against. It focuses on a number of bills making their way through the South Carolina House, which are designed to limit various aspects of curricular content in higher education. Targeted topics include Critical Race Theory (CRT), gender, and LGBTQI-related issues. The resolution calls upon our University leadership to reject attempts by bodies external to the faculty to restrict or dictate university curriculum on any matter. It also vows that CCU faculty will stand firm against any attempts by the South Carolina legislature, or Boards of Trustees, to interfere on curricular matters.

Resolution: Defending Academic Freedom to Teach About Race and Gender Justice and Critical Race Theory

WHEREAS state legislative proposals are being introduced across the United States that seek to limit academic discussions of racism and related issues in American history in schools, colleges and universities; **WHEREAS** bills H. 4325, H. 4799, and H. 4605 currently being considered by the South Carolina House Committee on Education and Public Works are directed at limiting various aspects of curricular content in higher education curriculum — including Critical Race Theory (CRT), gender, and LGBTQI related issues; **WHEREAS** the Coastal Carolina University Faculty Manual (5.2.1) affirms the importance of academic freedom to the proper functioning of universities, and has adopted the two following statements from the American Association of University Professors: “Freedom in the Classroom,” and the [AAUP’s 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure](#); **WHEREAS** faculty have responsibility for the curriculum at their universities, as affirmed by the [AAUP Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities](#) (2.b); **WHEREAS** addressing systemic barriers to realizing a multiracial democracy based on race, gender, or sexual orientation, should be understood as central to the active and engaged pursuit of knowledge in our time; **WHEREAS** over seventy organizations, including the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU), issued the [Joint Statement on Legislative Efforts to Restrict Education about Racism and American History](#) (June 16, 2021), stating their “firm opposition to a spate of legislative proposals being introduced across the country that target academic lessons, presentations, and discussions of racism and related issues in American history in schools, colleges and universities”; **WHEREAS** the aforementioned document declares that, “in higher education, under principles of academic freedom that have been widely endorsed, professors are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject. Educators, not politicians, should make decisions about teaching and learning”; **WHEREAS** the [Coastal Carolina University Mission](#) affirms a commitment to “create a diverse

and dynamic student-centered environment”; **WHEREAS** [Coastal Carolina University is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion](#); **WHEREAS** [Coastal Carolina University’s Strategic Plan](#) established accessibility, inclusion and diversity as one of its six strategic goals; **WHEREAS** the [South Carolina Commission on Higher Education Statement in Support of Academic Integrity and Responsibility](#), which was signed by CCU’s President Michael T. Benson on February 3, 2022, values and honors viewpoint diversity, academic integrity and responsibility for both faculty and students, intellectual honesty, and expects South Carolina’s public institutions of higher education to embrace and protect these principles; **WHEREAS** in a nation that has for centuries struggled with issues of racial inequity and injustice, many students do not have adequate knowledge of BIPOC and LGBTQI history and the policies that contributed to inequities, Coastal Carolina University has a responsibility and opportunity to help build equity and social justice.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate resolutely rejects any attempts by bodies external to the faculty to restrict or dictate university curriculum on any matter, including matters related to racial, gender and social justice, and will stand firm against encroachment on faculty authority by the legislature or Boards of Trustees. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Senate stands with our K-12 colleagues throughout the state and country, who may be affected by this pernicious legislation when they seek to teach the truth in U.S. history and civics education. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Senate calls upon our University leadership to reject any attempts by bodies external to the faculty to restrict or dictate university curriculum on any matter, including matters related to racial, gender and social justice, and will stand firm against encroachment on curricular matters by the legislature or Boards of Trustees. **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Senate affirms the [Joint Statement on Efforts to Restrict Education about Racism](#), authored by the AAUP, PEN America, the American Historical Association, and the Association of American Colleges & Universities, endorsed by over seventy organizations, and issued on June 16, 2021.

NATIONAL UPDATES

AAUP Censures University System of Georgia

The governing Council of the AAUP has voted to censure the University System of Georgia (USG) for the unilateral action of its administration and governing board to remove the protections of tenure and academic freedom from the system's post-tenure review policy. The Council acted on [the recommendation](#) of the Association's Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure.

Last October the USG board of regents adopted changes to the system's post-tenure review policy that make it possible to fire tenured faculty members without affording them a dismissal hearing. The move was condemned by the AAUP for effectively abolishing tenure in Georgia's public colleges and universities in flagrant violation of long established [principles](#) on academic freedom and tenure that have been endorsed by more than 250 scholarly societies and higher education organizations.

The principal purpose of tenure is to safeguard academic freedom, which is necessary for all who teach and conduct research in higher education. When faculty members can lose their positions because of their speech, publications, or research findings, they cannot properly fulfill their core responsibilities to advance and transmit knowledge. In service of the common good, tenure allows faculty members to pursue research and innovation and to draw evidence-based conclusions free from corporate, religious, or political pressure.

The AAUP released a [report](#) in December emphasizing the magnitude and singularity of the USG's attack on tenure and academic freedom, which affects more than 5,800 tenured faculty members in twenty-five colleges and universities and confers on the University System of Georgia the dubious distinction of being the only system of public higher education to take such a radical action in nearly fifty years.

"By its unilateral actions, the USG board of regents has proclaimed to the academic community that it does not view academic freedom as important for public higher education in the state," said Irene Mulvey, president of the AAUP. "As our thorough report makes clear, the removal of protections for academic freedom will have a devastating effect on the quality of education in the USG system, and on recruitment and retention of faculty and students. We call upon the USG regents to rescind the changes to the post-tenure review policy so that essential academic freedom is protected."

AAUP-CCU

AAUP-CCU wants the voice of every department in its leadership ranks

Founded in 1915, the AAUP is an organization of university faculty that promotes and safeguards the two fundamental pillars of the academy: academic freedom and shared governance. With dozens of members across campus, the CCU chapter of AAUP is among the largest in South Carolina. We work closely with CCU's faculty committees and the Faculty Senate, as well as with the Offices of the President and the Provost, in defense of shared governance, academic freedom, and the welfare of our faculty.

AAUP-CCU wants **the voice of every department in our University** to be represented in its leadership ranks. We therefore call for interested faculty of all ranks to contact us if they are interested in representing their department on the AAUP-CCU Executive Committee. In particular, we invite faculty from disciplines historically underrepresented in AAUP, including—but not limited to—the **natural and social sciences, business, and education**. We meet for an hour each month, and with President Mike Benson at least once a semester, to discuss faculty issues and concerns. You can get a sense of the spectrum of our work on our website, <https://aaup-ccu.org/>.

For questions, and to express your interest in representing your department in the work of the AAUP, please contact **Dr. Joseph Fitsanakis** (Department of Intelligence and Security Studies) at jfitsanak@coastal.edu.

AAUP'S ACADEME MAGAZINE

Articles and stories that you should read



[Shared Governance Unionism and the Fight against Austerity in the Age of COVID-19](#). As COVID-19 continues to wreak devastation for millions in what has now been two years of unrelenting crisis, faculty, students, and staff in higher education are also witnessing, in real time, a re-energized academic labor movement across the United States. As was the case during the Great Depression and other eras of crisis, the pandemic has exposed deep-seated social inequalities and spurred a new labor awakening.

[How the AAUP Helped to Save Guilford College](#). With declining enrollments, Guilford College was in financial trouble before the pandemic. It was not the only institution dealing with the double whammy of previous financial woes and COVID-19, which threatened to erode shared governance and tenure protections.