

AAUP

American Association of University Professors

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Academic Freedom for a Free Society

May 12, 2009

Dr. David L. Callender
President
University of Texas Medical Branch
301 University Boulevard
Galveston, Texas 77555

Dr. Francisco Cigarroa
Chancellor
University of Texas System
601 Colorado Street, 4th Floor
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear President Callender and Chancellor Cigarroa:

We regret that the issues of AAUP concern posed by the termination of multiple tenured and other faculty appointments for the stated reason of financial exigency at the University of Texas Medical Branch appear to have remained unresolved. Our Association's general secretary, after reviewing the information available to us on this situation and after conferring with members of the Association's senior staff, has reached the conclusion that these matters raise key issues of academic freedom, tenure, and due process. In situations of this kind, which present developments of basic concern to the academic community, our experience has indicated that it is desirable, in fairness to the administration of the University of Texas System and its Medical Branch, to the affected faculty members, and to the system as a whole, to establish an ad hoc committee, composed of persons who have had no previous involvement with the particular situation, to conduct its own full inquiry without prejudgment of any kind. The general secretary has accordingly authorized the appointment of such a committee to investigate the matters of concern to us.

In accordance with our customary procedures, the ad hoc committee will be selected by the Association from among members of the academic profession of recognized standing. It will visit Austin and Galveston at the mutual convenience of those concerned. In order to ensure that the university will have ample opportunity to present its position, the committee will be specifically charged with consulting in full measure with you and those you may designate, as well as with affected faculty members and other concerned individuals who may have relevant information to provide. The committee will prepare a

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report for the consideration of the Association's Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure, which may authorize its publication in *Academe: Bulletin of the AAUP*. Members of the committee will be instructed not to release on their own account any substantive information to the press. Under Association procedures, prior to any publication a draft text is submitted on a confidential basis to the institution's chief administrative officers and to other concerned parties, with an invitation to them to provide corrections of any factual errors and to offer whatever other comments they deem suitable.

We shall be writing again soon to provide information regarding the names of the members of the committee and potential dates for its visits. We should like at this time to emphasize the Association's receptivity in this case, as in all others, to news of developments that would preclude the necessity for the investigation now authorized.

Sincerely,



Eric Combest

Associate Secretary

cc: Mr. H. Scott Caven, Chair, UT System Board of Regents
Dr. Kenneth I. Shine, Executive Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs, UT System
Mr. Barry D. Burgdorf, Vice Chancellor and General Counsel, UT System
Dr. Garland D. Anderson, Provost, UTMB
Professor David Hudnall, Chair, UTMB Faculty Senate
Mr. George W. Reamy, Faculty Advocate, Texas Faculty Association
Professor Peter Hugill, President, Texas Conference AAUP
AAUP members in the UT System