



NYSC AAUP FALL 2024 (Virtual) CONFERENCE

***“HOT TOPICS IN HIGHER EDUCATION:
Academic Freedom, Protests, Elections”***

Saturday, September 21, 2024

8:30am-3:30pm

BUSINESS MEETING

Friday, September 20th

2:00-5:00pm



Website: [New York State AAUP Conference | American Association of University Professors \(nyscaaup.org\)](https://www.nyscaaup.org)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NYSAAUPC1>

YouTube: [NYSC AAUP - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)

The NYSC AAUP Conference is open only to AAUP members in good standing and their invited guests. Preregistration is required. [LINK: Registration Fall 2024 | New York State AAUP Conference \(nyscaaup.org\)](https://www.nyscaaup.org)

8:30-9:00am

NETWORKING, WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

Mary Rose Kubal, President, NYSC AAUP

Sally Dear-Healey, Executive Director, NYSC AAUP

MORNING PROGRAM (9:00am-12:00pm)

Moderator: Afshan Jafar, Ph.D.

Connecticut College, Chair, AAUP Committee on College and University Governance



Afshan Jafar is May Buckley Sadowski '19 Professor and Chair of Sociology at Connecticut College. She currently chairs the American Association of University Professors' (AAUP's) national Committee on College and University Governance. Afshan Jafar has chaired or co-chaired special investigations into the state of governance and academic freedom at various institutions. Most recently she co-chaired the Special Committee on Political Interference and Academic Freedom in Florida's Public Higher Education System and the Special Committee on Governance, Academic Freedom, and Institutional Racism in the University of North Carolina system. She serves as the President of the AAUP Connecticut State Conference, and of the Connecticut College AAUP chapter. On her own campus Afshan Jafar has served on multiple governance committees including as chair of the Faculty Steering and Conference Committee.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

9:00am-10:30am

Todd Wolfson, Ph.D.

President, AAUP

“AAUP and the Fight for the Future of Higher Education”

The talk will focus on the current cascading crises in higher education and offer a strategy for fighting back to transform the sector for faculty, staff, students and our communities.



Todd Wolfson is associate professor in the Department of Journalism and Media Studies at Rutgers University. He is an anthropologist by training, and he has written and edited three books, *Digital Rebellion: The Birth of the Cyber Left* (2014), *The Great Refusal: Herbert Marcuse and Contemporary Social Movements* (2017) and *The Gig Economy: Workers and the Media in the Age of Convergence* (2021) along with dozens of peer-reviewed articles. Todd is also co-director of the Media, Inequality & Change Center (MIC), a partnership between University of Pennsylvania and Rutgers University. Todd is currently president of the American Association of University Professors and for the last six years he has been in leadership of Rutgers AAUP-AFT, which represents 6000 faculty, grad workers, postdocs and counselors at Rutgers University. Prior to his work as an academic union leader, Todd worked as a community and labor organizer in Philadelphia.

RESOURCES:

- AAUP “Advancing Academic Freedom”: [Advancing Academic Freedom | AAUP](#)
- AAUP Censure List: [Censure List | AAUP](#)
- AAUP Receives Mellon Grant for Academic Freedom Center: [AAUP Receives Mellon Grant for Academic Freedom Center | AAUP](#)
- 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure with 1970 Interpretive Comments: <https://www.aaup.org/file/1940%20Statement.pdf>
- AAUP Statement on Academic Boycotts: <https://www.aaup.org/report/statement-academic-boycotts>

10:30-12:00pm

**Isaac Kamola, Ph.D.
Director, AAUP Center for Academic Freedom**

***“Manufacturing Backlash: Right-Wing Think Tanks and the
Legislative Attack on Higher Education, 2021–2023”***

During the 2021, 2022, and 2023 state legislative sessions more than one hundred and fifty bills were introduced seeking to actively undermine academic freedom and university autonomy. This includes nearly one hundred academic gag orders affecting higher education, such as those restricting the teaching of “critical race theory” (CRT) and other so-called “divisive concepts.” This talk examines the network of right-wing and libertarian think tanks, working closely with Republican politicians, responsible for manufacturing this culture war backlash against educators and academic institutions.



Isaac Kamola is an associate professor of political science at Trinity College, Hartford, CT. He is author of *Free Speech and Koch Money: Manufacturing a Campus Culture War* (with Ralph Wilson, 2021) and *Making the World Global: US Universities and the Production of the Global Imaginary* (2019), along with dozens of journal articles and book chapters. He is currently the director of the Mellon-funded Center for the Defense of Academic Freedom at the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).

12:00-12:30pm

LUNCH

You are welcome to share this time with other attendees,
or join us again at 12:30 for our afternoon program.

AFTERNOON PROGRAM (12:30-3:30pm)

**Moderator: Rebecca Karl, Ph.D.
NYU, President, NYU AAUP Chapter**



Rebecca E Karl teaches History at NYU-NY. Her latest book is entitled *China's Revolutions in the Modern World: A Brief Interpretive History* (Verso 2020). She is President of the NYU chapter of the AAUP, member of the NYU chapter of the Faculty and Staff for Justice in Palestine (FSJP), and co-founder of the Critical China Scholars collective.

INVITED PANELISTS

12:30-1:00pm

**Ellen Schrecker, Ph.D.
Yeshiva University**

“It’s Worse than McCarthyism: The Current Attack on Higher Education”

Until recently, we viewed McCarthyism as the most serious violation of academic freedom since the birth of the modern university in the late 19th century. But what’s happening today is worse, much worse. During the 1950s, US colleges and universities fired and blacklisted over one hundred faculty members for political reasons, but never questioned them about their teaching and research. Today, MAGA politicians and pundits are attacking our classrooms, syllabi, libraries, and research labs --if they’re not destroying entire institutions as Florida’s governor has done to New College. What makes the current campaign against higher education so deleterious is that, as the result of decades of neoliberal restructuring and austerity, its business-oriented administrations won’t, or perhaps can’t, fight back and its faculties, 75% of whom are non-tenure track appointees, lack the academic freedom that would allow them to resist. Let’s think about what we can do to change that situation.



Ellen Schrecker is an American historian known for her research on McCarthyism, political repression, and American higher education. Her latest book, edited with Valerie C. Johnson and Jennifer Ruth, is *The Right to Learn: Resisting the Right-Wing War on Academic Freedom* (2024). Among her most important works are *The Lost Promise: American Universities in the 1960s* (2021); *Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (1998); and *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities* (1986). She has also published several other books and edited collections as well as articles in both scholarly and general interest publications. A retired Professor of History at Yeshiva University, she is active in the AAUP, having edited its magazine, *Academe*, for several years and is now a member of its Committee A on Academic Freedom, Tenure, and Governance.

1:00-1:30pm

Michael Thaddeus, Ph.D.

Columbia University

“The Crisis at Columbia: A Faculty Perspective”

The student demonstrations at Columbia over the past year, culminating in the occupation of Hamilton Hall, received enormous attention and helped to catalyze many similar actions elsewhere. Yet the reality of what happened was not always accurately reported, and the voices of faculty and students were, all too often, drowned out by those of pundits, politicians, and plutocrats. I will discuss the experiences and concerns of Columbia faculty during the crisis, situating it within the broader assault on American universities now under way, and highlighting the affronts to two of the AAUP's core principles: academic freedom and shared governance.



Michael Thaddeus was brought up in New York City and studied at Harvard College and the University of Oxford. He is now Professor of Mathematics at Columbia University, where he has taught since 1998. His research specialty is algebraic geometry. He has become increasingly outspoken on matters of academic policy; he is best known for starting the U.S. News ranking scandal in 2022. He recently joined the executive board of Columbia's AAUP chapter as its vice-president.

1:30-2:00pm

**Alan Singer, Ph.D.
Hofstra University**

“Defending Faculty Role as Public Intellectuals in Contentious Times”

The ability of university faculty and staff to function on campuses, in the media, as academic experts, and as members of political organizations is being challenged by state officials, university administrators and trustees, and by major donors. The most systematic assault has been in Florida where the governor attempted to block university faculty from providing expert testimony on voting rights violations arguing that their freedom of speech was restricted because they were public employees. While this position was later rescinded, the state still maintains that what public university professors state in classrooms constitutes “government’s speech” and can be monitored and restricted. Florida has also made moves to fire DEI staff and decertify university unions.

Beyond Florida, in response to the war in Gaza, we have witnessed Congressional hearings where rightwing representatives have made wild accusations about campus antisemitism against colleges and college administrators and trustee and donor pressure to silence campus protests by students and faculty. All of this may intensify during the 2024 Presidential campaign. Attendees will discuss how faculty can defend public freedom of speech and academic freedom at the university.



Alan Singer is a social studies educator and historian in the Department of Teaching, Learning and Technology at Hofstra University, Long Island, New York. He is a former New York City high school teacher and regularly blogs on *Daily Kos* and other sites on educational and political issues. Dr. Singer is a graduate of the City College of New York and has a Ph.D. in American history from Rutgers University. He is the author of *Education Flashpoints* (Routledge, 2014), *Teaching to Learn, Learning to Teach: A Handbook for Secondary School Teachers, 2nd edition* (Routledge, 2013), *Social Studies For Secondary Schools, 5th Edition* (Routledge, 2024), *Teaching Global History, 2nd Edition* (Routledge, 2020), *Teaching Climate History* (Routledge 2022), *New York and Slavery, Time to Teach the Truth* (SUNY, 2008), *New York's Grand Emancipation Jubilee* (SUNY, 2018), and *Class-Conscious Coal Miners* (SUNY, 2024). He is a DEI curriculum consultant with ESBOCES and with the Bridging Cultures Group.

2:00-2:30pm

**Tom Beaudoin, Ph.D.
Fordham University**

“Acrimony and Advocacy: A Brief Report from the Fordham University Chapter”

This presentation will consider questions and implications for Fordham's AAUP chapter that have been raised by student protests in May that resulted in the New York City Police Department being called onto campus.



Tom Beaudoin started teaching theology at Boston College in 2001, then taught for several years at Santa Clara University, and since 2008 has been at Fordham in New York City, where he is currently Professor of Religion and president of the Fordham AAUP Chapter. His research focuses on how religious heritage places and practices fare in secularizing cultures. He has been an AAUP member since 2006. (Photo: Pantheon Tour)

2:30-3:15pm – Panel Q & A and Open Forum

3:15pm-3:30pm

CLOSING REMARKS

Mary Rose Kubal, President, NYSC AAUP

Sally Dear-Healey, Executive Director, NYSC AAUP

FRIDAY BUSINESS MEETING

Friday, September 20th

2:00pm-5:00pm

The business meeting is open only to AAUP members in good standing. Preregistration is required. A Zoom invite and agenda will be sent to vetted registered attendees prior to the meeting.

[LINK: Registration Fall 2024 | New York State AAUP Conference \(nyscaaup.org\)](https://nyscaaup.org)

2:00-2:30pm – Check-in and Socializing

2:30-4:30pm – Business Meeting

4:30-5:00pm – Reports & Open Forum