

NEW YORK

# Academe

VOLUME 49 NUMBER 1 · WINTER 2025 · THE NEW YORK STATE CONFERENCE · AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS



## From the President's Desk

by Mary Rose Kubal

I wish all of you a happy new year. With some trepidation about what lies ahead in 2026, I look forward

to joining you to organize for a better future for higher education in New York.

While it is tempting to give in to fear of what is to come and resentment for what we have lost this past year, my hope is that we can adopt an abundance mentality and focus on building a higher education system that better serves our students and our larger communities, better defends our freedom to teach and to learn, and provides the job security and healthy working conditions faculty and staff need to make this happen.

National AAUP has already begun this process, strengthening ties with the AFT, building relationships with other unions and organizations such as the ACLU, and filing successful lawsuits to defend our students, our colleagues, our institutions, and our collective values.

The strategic plan we adopted at our state conference fall business meeting intentionally lists organizing as the first of our three goals for the coming five years. Those present felt our other goals, as crucial as they are, depend on our capacity to organize and build solidarity on and across our campuses. (You can find that plan on our website, [nyscaaup.org](https://nyscaaup.org), under the library tab.)

Perhaps more importantly, we need to build solidarity with groups and organizations outside our campuses. As PSC President James Davis emphasized in his talk at our fall conference, while the PSC is working to bring members into the union, it is also working to push the union out into the larger community. Threats to speech, the targeting of immigrants and activists, and the withdrawal of resources crucial to research and public health have been a blow to our colleges and universities, but they don't stop at the campus edge. We must build ties with

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## Students, Faculty and Staff Rally To Protest Trump Attacks On Higher Education

On November 7, students, faculty, and staff at over 100 universities across the country protested through teach-ins, rallies, walkouts, and marches. They rejected President Donald Trump's efforts to control academia and committed to shaping a better future for higher education, especially as the 2026 midterm elections approach.

### Loyalty Oath Rejected

Much of the action, led by Students Rise Up, Sunrise Movement, the American Association of University Professors, and others, targeted Trump's Compact for Excellence in Higher Education. Essentially a loyalty oath, it would force universities to adopt Trump's priorities for favorable treatment, including federal funding.

Universities signing the compact can't consider race or sex in hiring and admissions, must freeze tuition for five years,

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**NYSC AAUP Website:** <https://nyscaaup.org>  
 <https://www.facebook.com/NYSAAUPC1>  
**YouTube:** NYSC AAUP – YouTube

# Students, Faculty and Staff Rally to Protest Trump Attacks on Higher Ed

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limit international students, require standardized tests, eliminate departments that target conservative ideas, and publish anonymous compliance reports.

Initially distributed to nine elite universities, all but two rejected the compact. Now it's open to any college willing to sign up.

“At a time when higher education faces political attacks, universities that refused Trump’s deal demonstrated courage and integrity,” said AFT President Randi Weingarten. “They stood with students, educators, and the principles of academic freedom and institutional integrity, rather than yield to partisan pressure.”

## Protesters in Philadelphia

Hundreds of activists protested outside billionaire Marc Rowan’s office in New York City, urging universities to reject the compact and condemn its demands. Rowan, CEO of Apollo Global Management, authored the compact. Banners read “Tell Billionaire Marc Rowan Hands Off Higher Ed” and “Higher Ed Is a Public Good,” supporting a better way forward.

James Davis, president of the Professional Staff Congress at CUNY, said, “The Trump agenda for higher ed is dangerous.” He claimed they want to control hiring and core academic functions, using federal funding as blackmail.

Protests were widespread, including actions at Atlanta—where Morehouse College and Clark Atlanta University united—and at the University of Kansas and the University of Connecticut. At Brown University, people signed a banner against the compact by dipping their hands in paint. In Pennsylvania, activists targeted U.S. Sen. Dave McCormick over affordability and research. In Philadelphia, the AFT was represented by multiple university faculty groups, including the Temple Association of University Professionals, United Academics of Philadelphia, the Faculty and Staff Federation of Community College of Philadelphia, and the University of Pennsylvania AAUP chapter.

Activists demanded affordable college, ending student debt, protecting immigrant and international students, implementing inclusive, gender-affirming policies, and supporting scientific research.

Activists can sign the AFT’s [Petition Against the Compact](#) and follow our campaign for higher education – [Saving Lives, Building Futures, Powering the Economy](#) – to defend colleges from attacks and promote a bold vision of higher education as a public good.

**THE PETITION CAN BE FOUND AT:**

<https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/trump-higher-ed-compact-2025/>



## Mutual Academic Defense Compacts: A Viable Strategy for New York State?

Our fall NYSC AAUP conference on October 21 focused on solidarity and organizing to protect higher education from attacks by the Trump administration aimed at campuses. The short-term goal was to arrange for the November 7 Day of Action, but the longer-term strategy of organizing Mutual Academic Defense Compacts was raised. This began in spring with faculty governance bodies, such as the Rutgers University Senate, and is gaining momentum after Trump’s recent introduction of the “Compact for Excellence

in Higher Education,” which the AAUP and AFT rejected as a “Loyalty Oath”.

To support this discussion at our state conference, Shawn Gilmore’s article in the Fall 2025 issue of *Academe*, “Mutual Defense Across Higher Education in the Second Trump Era: Do we hang together or hang separately,” provides a helpful overview.

Stand Together for Higher Education links to models from Rutgers, U Mass Amherst, and SUNY. The SUNY document highlights the April 26 resolution by the SUNY University Faculty Senate,

urging Chancellor King to collaborate on two academic defense compacts: a ‘University of the State of New York Alliance’ with CUNY, AAC&U signatories, and the Commission on Independent Colleges, and a ‘Public Good U Alliance.’ It also calls on the SUNY Board and State officials to secure funding for a ‘University of the State of New York Defense Fund’ to support legal action for students, faculty, and staff targeted by federal authorities, defend higher education integrity, and recover federal funding losses.

# We Rise Up To Save Higher Education

**H**igher education faces significant challenges. The Trump administration has frozen funding for science, from cancer research to reproductive care, hindered student financial aid programs, removed diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives from colleges and universities, strangled affirmative action efforts aimed at expanding college access, and is demanding that some institutions sign a “compact” to adopt Trump’s ideology in exchange for federal funding.

On November 7, students, faculty, and staff mobilized at more than 100 universities and colleges nationwide and declared, “no more.” Through teach-ins, rallies, walkouts, and marches, university communities rejected President Donald Trump’s attempt to control higher education and committed to creating a better future, especially as the country approaches the 2026 midterm elections.

Much of the action, led by Students Rise Up, the Sunrise Movement, the American Association of University Professors, and others, centered on Trump’s so-called Compact for Excellence in Higher Education. Essentially a loyalty oath, the compact would force universities to adopt Trump’s priorities in exchange for favorable treatment, including access to federal funding.

Specifically, universities that sign the compact would be banned from considering race or sex in hiring and admissions, would have to freeze tuition for five years, limit international student enrollment, require standardized tests for applicants, eliminate departments that “punish, belittle and even spark violence against conservative ideas,” and publish anonymous reports from students and staff on complying with the compact.

Initially distributed to nine elite universities, all but two rejected the pact. Now, it is available to any college or university that wishes to join.

“At a time when higher education is under relentless political attack, the universities that refused to sign onto Trump’s Faustian bargain showed real courage and

integrity,” said AFT President Randi Weingarten. “They chose to stand with students, educators, and the principles of academic freedom, institutional integrity and the very soul of higher education, instead of bowing to partisan pressure.”

Hundreds of activists protested outside billionaire Marc Rowan’s office in New York City, urging other universities to reject the compact and condemning its demands. Rowan, the author of the compact, is CEO of Apollo Global Management, an asset management company. Banners at the protest included “Tell Billionaire Marc Rowan Hands Off Higher Ed” and, in a nod to paving a better way forward, “Higher Ed Is a Public Good.”

“The Trump agenda for higher ed is a dangerous one,” said James Davis, president of the Professional Staff Congress, which represents faculty and staff at the City University of New York. “They want to control hiring. They want to control all the core academic functions of the university, and they’re using federal funding as blackmail to do that.”

Protests were widespread, including actions in Atlanta – where Morehouse College and Clark Atlanta University united – and at the University of Kansas and the University of Connecticut. At Brown University, people dipped their hands in paint to sign a banner against the compact. In Pennsylvania, activists across the state targeted U.S. Sen. Dave McCormick with messages about affordability and life-saving research. In Philadelphia alone, the AFT was represented by the Temple Association of University Professionals, United Academics of Philadelphia, the Association of Pennsylvania State College and University Faculties, the Faculty and Staff Federation of the Community College of Philadelphia, and the University of Pennsylvania AAUP chapter

Among other issues, activists also demanded affordable college, an end to student debt, protection for immigrant and international students, inclusive, gender-affirming policies, and support for scientific research.

# AAUP Coalition Sues To Block Prohibitive Visa Policy

The AAUP joined a coalition of labor unions, health care providers, schools, and religious organizations in filing suit to stop President Trump's latest anti-immigration power grab: a sweeping executive order that imposes an unlawful new \$100,000 fee on each new H-1B application. The proclamation, issued on September 19, 2025, and effective just thirty-six hours later, has already caused chaos for employers, workers, and federal agencies.

The H-1B visa program was established by Congress to create an essential pathway for the United States to attract highly skilled professionals from around the world to meet urgent needs in the economy and public services, thereby boosting American innovation. Under the program, U.S. employers can hire qualified foreign nationals—including doctors, nurses, engineers, teachers, and researchers—after a thorough review process.

When the government makes it too expensive or impossible for these professionals to come to America, or for current H-1B workers to switch to a more permanent status, universities and entire communities suffer—patients wait longer for care, students have fewer teachers, and local economies miss out on the innovation and jobs these experts generate.

The suit contests the order as unconstitutional and unlawful under the Administrative Procedure Act and requests the court to immediately halt the order and restore predictability for employers and workers.

Alongside the AAUP, the plaintiffs include Global Nurse Force; Global Village Academy Collaborative; Society of the Divine Word; the Fathers of St. Charles; Church on the Hill; International Union; United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW International); UAW Local 4811; Committee of Interns and Residents, SEIU (CIR); a citizen of the United Kingdom residing in the Appalachia region; and a citizen of India residing in the Northern District of California.

Plaintiffs are represented by Democracy Forward, Justice Action Center, South Asian American Justice Collaborative (SAA-JCO), Kuck Baxter LLC, Joseph & Hall, P.C., and IMMpact Litigation.

## THE COMPLAINT DETAILS HOW THE SUDDEN \$100,000 DEMAND:

- **Defies Congress:** The H-1B program has a carefully designed fee and oversight system established by law. The president cannot rewrite it overnight or impose new taxes by proclamation.
- **Invites chaos and favoritism:** The order provides a vague “national interest” loophole with no clear standards for fee exemptions, leading to arbitrary, pay-to-play decisions.
- **Hurts communities nationwide:** Rural hospitals may struggle to retain essential doctors and nurses; colleges say the illegal fee exceeds many salaries; and nonprofit organizations and research institutions can't manage the large costs. All will suffer if they cannot use H-1B workers.
- **Undermines the economy:** Economists agree that H-1B workers create US jobs and help develop new industries. Forcing talent away causes companies to move operations—and good jobs—overseas.



**TO READ THE TEXT OF THE COMPLAINT:**  
[https://democracyforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/1-Filed-Complaint\\_H-1B-Global-Nurse-Force-et-al-v.-Trump-et-al.pdf](https://democracyforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/1-Filed-Complaint_H-1B-Global-Nurse-Force-et-al-v.-Trump-et-al.pdf)



# Civil Rights Law Weaponized to Chill Speech

A new report published on November 5 by the AAUP and the Middle East Studies Association finds that the weaponization of civil rights law has been central to attacks on campus speech over the past two years.

The report, *“Discriminating Against Dissent: The Weaponization of Civil Rights Law to Repress Campus Speech on Palestine,”* is the first comprehensive empirical study of government investigations and private lawsuits against US colleges and universities under Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

The findings in the report highlight how the Civil Rights Act of 1964—which was enacted in response to years of peaceful civil disobedience against racial injustice—is being cynically misused to suppress political dissent and speech advocating for Palestinian human rights. Meanwhile, the Trump administration seems to have completely stopped investigations based on complaints of racial harassment.

While reprehensible acts of antisemitism have occurred on campuses over the last two years, “Discriminating Against Dissent” shows that most government investigations of antisemitism are prompted by complaints received from outside of university and college campuses, including from people and organizations who have no relationship with the schools under investigation. Of the 102 complaints filed with the Office of Civil Rights that the report analyzes, all but one focus on speech critical of Israel. Eighty percent describe speech critical of Israel or Zionism—with no reference to Jews or Judaism—as antisemitism, and 50 percent consist solely of such criticism.

The report highlights a surge in investigations since October 7, 2023, with more opened in the last two months of 2023 (25) than in all previous years combined (24). Investigations set record numbers in 2024 (39) and are on track to do so again in 2025 (with 38 as of September 30).

The rise in antisemitism investigations has been mainly caused by a few pro-Israel and right-wing groups; these organizations were involved in 78 percent of complaints that led to investigations.

Federal antisemitism investigations in the final year of the Biden administration pressured over twenty schools to accept agreements that included sweeping policy changes, such as sharing extensive data on internal antisemitism complaints—including the names of both accusers and the accused.

The report also examines the twenty-eight Title VI antisemitism lawsuits filed so far by pro-Israel groups against universities in federal courts. Although no case has yet resulted in a final judgment for plaintiffs, some have led to settlements that enforce even more stringent policy changes than government investigations.

Finally, the report examines the work of the Trump administration’s multi-agency Task Force to Combat Antisemitism, including its deceptive use of antisemitism allegations to cut federal funding to universities and the coercive agreements it has secured from Columbia and Brown Universities. It highlights the first appellate decision in a Title VI case alleging anti-Israel discrimination, in which the First Circuit rejected efforts “to stifle anti-Zionist speech by labeling it inherently antisemitic.”



**THE FULL REPORT CAN BE FOUND AT:**

[https://www.aaup.org/sites/default/files/2025-11/Discriminating-Against-Dissent\\_0.pdf](https://www.aaup.org/sites/default/files/2025-11/Discriminating-Against-Dissent_0.pdf)

# In Defense of an Independent and Representative Faculty Voice



In a recent report titled *In Defense of an Independent and Representative Faculty Voice: The Case of Faculty Senates*, the AAUP's Committee on College and University Governance responds to growing legislative and political attacks on faculty governing bodies at state institutions, including legislation recently passed in Indiana, Ohio, Utah, and especially Texas.

Drawing from the Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities, jointly created by the AAUP, the American Council on Education, and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, the report states that effective shared governance requires an institution's faculty to have a strong, unique, and representative collective voice to protect academic freedom, curricular integrity, and institutional excellence. That voice is most often expressed through faculty senates, although the name of the specific deliberative body may differ among institutions.

However, recent legislation signals a concerning trend toward weakening the authority of faculty senates at state institutions, reducing their roles to mostly advisory or consultative functions and lessening their involvement in key institutional decisions and responsibilities for personnel and curriculum matters. In the troubling case of Texas's SB 37, state legislators have also diminished faculty's fundamental rights to participate in designing and implementing their own senates, to elect their representatives, and to choose their leaders. Federal actions, such as the Department of Justice's inquiry into George Mason University's faculty senate, are part of these politicized efforts to undermine faculty

independence. As the report states, "The attacks on an independent and representative faculty voice substitute propaganda for education, ideology for inquiry, and authoritarianism and corporate management for a system of governance that values expertise and representation over politics or the depth of donor's pockets."

The report highlights the AAUP's support for increased senate representation for faculty members on contingent appointments, pointing out that "the exclusion of significant segments of the faculty from governance weakens the ability of all faculty members to unite and resist attacks on the governance system and, ultimately, the academic freedom of all." The report also emphasizes the complementary and mutually reinforcing roles of collective bargaining units and faculty senates: "Faculty senates and unions working together can mount a strong defense of an independent and representative faculty voice—especially in these times when attacks on those voices are coming from multiple fronts."

The report ends with a warning: "The curtailment of the faculty's authority in governing higher education institutions today will not only inevitably undermine the faculty's professional freedoms, but, more important, will also spoil the fruits of those freedoms—an independent, intellectually rigorous, and incorruptible education for future generations."



**THE FULL REPORT CAN BE FOUND AT:**

<https://www.aaup.org/reports-publications/aaup-policies-reports/topical-reports/defense-independent-and-representative>

# FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:

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organized labor, immigrant, public health, and free speech advocates, and with everyday people, if we are to protect these values and resources on our campuses and in our communities.

At our fall conference, we heard about the work of the New York Metro Coalition, which organized around the April National Day of Action and held another successful action for the 11/7 Day of Action. The November action targeted billionaire Marc Rowan, a University of Pennsylvania trustee and one of the individuals behind the Trump administration's so-far unsuccessful attempt to coerce high-profile universities into joining a "compact" for higher education that would cede control over core areas of university governance to the federal government. The NY Metro Coalition has more recently been involved in supporting The New School faculty and staff in opposing the unilateral and severe austerity measures announced by their administration in early December.

From the opposite end of the state, we heard from a group of faculty in Western NY, specifically in the Rochester area, who are organizing around crucial issues of shared governance. They held a successful in-person meeting at the Rochester Institute of Technology last April and a second in-person workshop at the University of Rochester in late October. I attended the October meeting, which was inspirational, educational, and a productive networking event.

It is precisely these relationships and networks that we need to build—not only to defend but also to transform higher education. The pervasive scarcity mentality leaves us isolated, working as individual scholars or in individual labs, competing for scarce resources; our institutions also compete for students and funding; and students are forced to compete for limited scholarships and financial aid, and even for the limited time of overstretched faculty and staff.

Selling education as a commodity at a time when anti-intellectual voices (many of which have ironically capitalized on the knowledge created and taught at our institutions) are

successfully undermining our educational missions and values is no longer viable.

So we do more than fight back. We draw on our abundant resources—our expertise, our skills, our knowledge, our relationships. Yes, we fight, not just against attacks on higher education but for a better, more humane, and more solidary academy.

On a practical level, how do we do this? As individuals, as AAUP chapters, and as a state conference, we first need to commit to action. This doesn't have to be revolutionary. Just take some concrete steps, even baby steps. Get a friend to join the AAUP, attend a chapter meeting, and propose an agenda for this semester—the national AAUP had great suggestions for actions chapters can take around their 11/7 National Day of Action. If your chapter is dormant, call a meeting and elect officers. If you are a chapter leader, attend one of our monthly Zoom calls this spring (the schedule will be emailed and posted on our website in January).

If you need help organizing on your campus, contact the state conference at [nyscaup@gmail.com](mailto:nyscaup@gmail.com) or the National AAUP at [organizing@aaup.org](mailto:organizing@aaup.org).

If you can, plan to attend our state conference business meeting and in-person conference on April 17 & 18 at NYSUT headquarters in Albany (look out for more information on this in the weeks ahead). This is a great opportunity to network with folks on other campuses. If you can't, attend one of our other virtual events this spring, such as an upcoming virtual book talk by Chandra Russo on her new book *White Flank: Organizing White People for Racial Justice* (reviewed in this newsletter; email invitation forthcoming, with more information on [nyscaup.org](http://nyscaup.org)).

Take a deep breath, embrace the new year, and remember that we are stronger together!

In solidarity,

*Mary Rose Kubal*

## SAVE THE DATE!

**Spring 2026 Business Meeting & Conference**  
**April 17 & 18**

Our spring business meeting and conference will be in Albany at the New York State United Teachers headquarters. More information will be made available in the spring. Invitations will be sent to members via ActionNetwork in March.





# Protests arise as New York's New School threatens severe cuts to staffing and programs

To address a \$48 million deficit, the New School for Social Research is offering voluntary severance to many faculty and staff. An email was sent on December 3 to 169 people, including 40% of full-time faculty. The deadline to accept is December 15.

The school is cutting over thirty programs, mainly in social sciences and humanities. The AAUP reports a motion expressing concern that the President and Provost bypassed shared governance in these decisions. The New School Free Press added that the school will reduce salaries for top employees, pause retirement contributions for 18 months, and halt most doctoral program admissions for 2026–27. The school has also faced over \$30 million in deficits for three years.

Dozens of students, faculty, and staff gathered outside the Greenwich Village school on December 10, in cold rain, to protest during a board meeting. They demanded the school rescind voluntary separation agreements, set a \$200,000 salary cap, and hold a public meeting between the board and community. President Joel Towers and Provost Richard Kessler faced sharp criticism.

The New School's part-time faculty union noted on Instagram that between 2022 and 2023, many high-level

officials received big pay raises, including Joel Towers (11.6%, to nearly \$417,000), Executive Dean Richard Kessler (11.7%, to \$469,000), and Provost Rene White (10.9%, over \$712,000). The union stated that the \$30.3 million deficit could have been a \$7 million surplus if administrative, professional, and facilities costs had grown proportionally to revenue.

The school faces declining enrollment and was warned by the Department of Education in March that it would be investigated if it failed to protect Jewish students after students organized a pro-Palestinian encampment and faculty showed solidarity.

School president Joel Towers announced a restructuring: Eugene Lang College of Liberal Arts and the New School for Social Research will merge into one unit, and Parsons School of Design with the College of Performing Arts and Media into another.

Founded in 1919, the New School provided refuge to intellectuals fleeing Nazi Ger-

many. It has 75 full-time faculty across 10 departments, including anthropology, creative writing, philosophy, psychology, and sociology, serving 800 graduate students from 70 countries, offering master's and doctoral degrees. Arts are mainly at Parsons School of Design.



The University Center for the New School. © 2019 Ajay Suresh



# UUP Hosts Forum on Adjuncts With Independent Filmmaker

The independent film “Adjunct,” in which filmmaker Ron Najor draws on personal experience to portray the real-life challenges adjuncts face on the job, resonated with UUP members who observed Campus Equity Week with watch parties and a forum on the film.

UUP and Higher Education Labor United provided free links to the 2024 movie in the days before the Oct. 29 UUP virtual forum.

For the forum, statewide Secretary-Treasurer Jeri O’Bryan-Losee moderated a discussion about the movie with a panel that included Jaclyn Pittsley, a full-time lecturer at Cortland and chair of the UUP Contingent Employment Committee; Bret Benjamin of the University at Albany, the chief negotiator for UUP; NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist Chris Sielaff; and Najor, the movie’s director and star.

“Universities have really built their budgets on the backs of adjuncts,” Benjamin said, reflecting a common theme among the comments and questions during the forum. Benjamin, Pittsley, and Sielaff also noted, however, that UUP has set a national standard in addressing the issues of adjunct labor.

I believe our union has made significant progress [on this issue] during the years I have been involved,” Benjamin, a statewide Executive Board member, said.

Pittsley, the first UUP member to solely represent contingents on the Executive Board, stated that UUP has been a leader in this field.

“We fight back to ensure all those adjuncts have job security, fair pay, and health insurance, and that’s what I’m in UUP to do,” she said.

## REALISTIC DEPICTIONS

Najor, an acclaimed independent filmmaker, is a former adjunct who drew on many of his experiences and observations for the movie. The film’s depiction of the ever-present hope that the adjunct position might lead to a permanent or tenure-track job; the reluctance to turn down requests for unpaid additional assignments to be perceived as a team player; the constant push and pull to meet the demands and needs of students—these scenes would resonate with almost anyone who’s been an adjunct, the panelists said.

The term “adjunct,” as used by UUP and in the movie, refers to faculty members who teach semester by semester without any guarantee that their employment will be renewed for the next semester. Within UUP, the term “contingent” describes all academic and professional staff who are not eligible for permanent appointment or tenure.



Adding to the problems most adjuncts face is the constant stress of low pay and the ongoing worry about losing health benefits. The movie’s protagonist—an adjunct English instructor at an unnamed college in southern California—works as an Uber driver to supplement his income and is always concerned that he will lose his health insurance.

“I never wanted to say what the college is because to me, this could be any college in the country,” Najor told the audience. “I’ve had multiple full-time and tenured and tenure-track professors come up to me after watching the movie and saying, ‘Wow, I had no idea’ ... I didn’t cover everything, but I feel I covered a lot.”

## WORK TO BE DONE

Even in a higher education union that started prioritizing adjuncts’ needs two decades ago, leaders recognize there is still more work ahead. Adjuncts make up as much as 50% of the faculty at some U.S. campuses, and UUP is working to ensure they continue to gain improvements in their employment terms and conditions at SUNY campuses they represent.

UUP’s current contract with the state, which expires on July 1, 2026, has achieved real improvements for UUP’s lowest-paid members, including adjuncts. The contract saw substantial increases in the maximum per-course payments for non-tenure-track members, raises in contractually set minimum salaries for full-time lecturers, on-base retention awards for qualifying full-time contingent faculty, and increases in guaranteed appointment periods for qualifying part-time and full-time contingent faculty, among other gains.

UUP aims to build on these and other improvements for contingents in future negotiations for a new contract.

*“Adjunct” can be purchased or rented through various outlets, including Amazon Prime Video, Fandango At Home, Apple TV online, and YouTube.*

# Wagner College Eliminating Fifteen Programs

On December 7, the Staten Island Advance reported that Wagner College is moving forward with a plan to eliminate 15 academic programs, which will lead to the dismissal of more than 40 full-time faculty members by the end of the current academic year.

In March, the Grymes Hill college's president, Dr. Jeffrey A. Doggett, decided to propose decommissioning some low-enrollment programs and instead focus on expanding core programs and creating new ones.

"We're going to evolve over time and grow more unique programs," said Doggett in March.

This proposal to decommission programs was approved, meaning several programs will no longer be available after the spring 2026 semester ends.

The programs set for elimination include Anthropology (including all minors and tracks); Certificate in Leadership; Dance Education; English (including all minors and tracks); Environmental Studies (including all minors and tracks); Government and Politics (including all minors and tracks); History (including all minors and tracks, such as American Studies); Mathematics; Modern Languages (both majors and minors); Music; Music Education PreK-12; Philosophy and Religious Studies (including all minors and tracks); Physical Sciences (chemistry and physics); Sociology (including all minors and tracks); and Visual Arts.

Regarding new programs, faculty have approved majors in digital design and human services, each with three tracks: criminology, pre-law, and social work. The college



Main Hall at Wagner College, Summer 2018

is also working on getting a new major in business analytics approved.

Once this plan is implemented, nearly all of the College's liberal arts programs will have been eliminated. The only liberal arts programs remaining will be Psychology and Biological Sciences.

A college spokesperson said students must still take core classes like writing, ethics, math, science, and art, though it's unclear who will teach these courses.

The school was established in 1883 as a Lutheran seminary prep school in Rochester, New York. It moved to Staten Island at the end of World War I, and later settled on its current 105-acre campus on Grymes Hill in 1918.

## PSC Leaders Appointed to National Roles:

Two elected Professional Staff Congress (PSC) leaders have been appointed to roles where they can help lead the national effort to defend adjunct and contingent academic workers.

James Davis (PSC President) has been appointed to the Workers Defense League (WDL) national board, joining former PSC President Barbara Bowen in that role. A nonprofit organization advocating for workers' rights and focused on assisting those denied unemployment insurance,

the WDL has served as a vital resource for New York City workers, particularly CUNY adjuncts.

Lynne Turner (PSC Vice President for Part-Time Personnel) has been appointed to the American Association of University Professors' (AAUP) standing Committee on Contingency and the Profession. Under Turner's leadership, the PSC joined with AAUP and Higher Education Labor United to organize last month's forum, Combatting Contingency in a Time of Political Repression.

# THE AAUP'S BIENNIAL CONFERENCE IS NOW : The Higher Ed Summit and Biennial Meeting!

## What's new

The summit will be a gathering of AAUP leaders and members with an emphasis on organizing to meet the political moment and building strong chapters. We'll strategize together and take part in workshops focused on our political agenda, shared governance, and nuts and bolts skills for running effective advocacy and collective bargaining chapters.

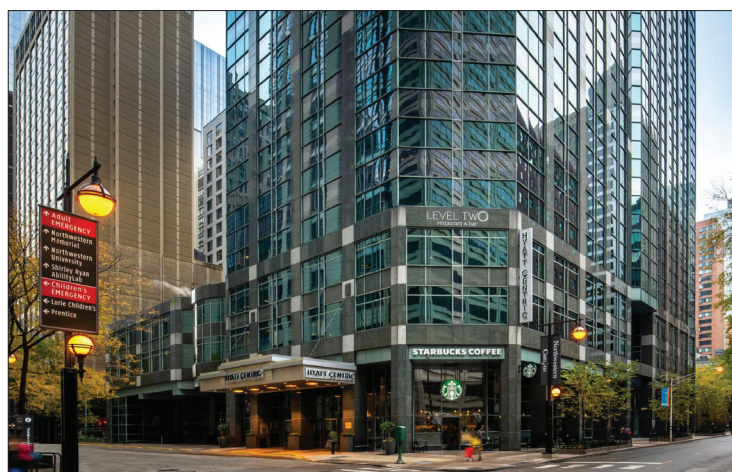
It also includes, on June 12 and 13, the Biennial Association Meeting, which is the formal business meeting of the AAUP.

## SUMMIT PROGRAMMING:

**The 2026 sessions will include these tracks:**

- Shared governance in a crisis, including putting AAUP policies into action through shared governance; shared governance and collective bargaining; and faculty on contingent appointments and governance.
- Political action, including how to educate and engage chapter members, electoral politics, and legislative work at the state level.
- Organizing nuts and bolts, including conducting great 1:1s, campaign planning and tracking, leader ID and development, running an issue campaign, building a steward network, and conducting a salary equity study.
- Bargaining and faculty handbook development, including open bargaining and contract campaign basics, bargaining for the common good, bargaining AI and Edtech, and codifying academic freedom, shared governance, financial exigency, suspension, and termination provisions for tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty in your handbook or collective bargaining agreement.

**The conference will also include presentation of awards, social events, and plenaries.**



**VENUE :** Both the conference and meeting will take place in downtown Chicago at the Hyatt Centric Chicago Magnificent Mile, a stylish boutique hotel just steps from Michigan Avenue.

## BIENNIAL ASSOCIATION MEETING AND ELECTIONS

The purposes of the meeting are established by the AAUP Constitution and include electing AAUP officers and Council members, voting on amendments to the Constitution, expressing the AAUP's views on professional matters, voting on proposals and resolutions, and acting on recommendations presented to it by Council.

The 2026 Biennial Association Meeting on June 12 and 13 will include elections for at-large and regional members of the AAUP's governing national Council. Elections are conducted in person in a secret ballot election by credentialed delegates of AAUP chapters and sections. Nominations are due by March 16, 2026. Chapters and sections (which are groups of small chapters) submit delegate forms to AAUP by May 15, 2026. Further information is available on the AAUP website and will be sent to chapter leaders. A formal nomination and election notice will be sent to AAUP members in early January.



# Chandra Russo, *White Flank: Organizing White People for Racial Justice*

Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2026



**CHANDRA RUSSO** is an Associate Professor of Sociology at Colgate University. She is the author of *Solidarity in Practice: Moral Protest to the US Security State* (2018).

## RACIAL POLITICS IN THE U.S. REMAIN TUMULTUOUS

A resurgent white nationalism gains support, while the Movement for Black Lives becomes a more visible part of the Black Freedom struggle. The Trump administration has dismantled DEI policies and argues that race is no longer an issue in American society.

White people's role in racial justice is complex, raising debates on involvement. The key question: how to encourage more white people to fight for racial justice? Chandra Russo discusses this in *\*White Flank\**. White participation in anti-racist action has always been fraught, with competing narratives about what meaningful allyship entails and how to handle white privilege.

Russo's *White Flank* examines anti-racist organizing in the U.S. Through interviews, fieldwork, and theory, Russo offers a nuanced view of efforts beyond ethical stance toward practical political action toward an egalitarian, multi-racial democracy. This work explores the trajectories, inner lives, and dilemmas of white anti-racist groups, urban and rural. Drawing on ethnographic research and a deep understanding of struggle, *White Flank* shares insights from Russo and activists, describing campaigns that build mutual interests across races and foster white solidarity. It is useful both for social movements and classrooms.

Russo says moving white communities' view of antiracism from individual morality to collective action is key. Expanding the white part of a multiracial justice movement will be messy.

This book highlights a new wave of white antiracist efforts across U.S. regions, from Los Angeles to Appalachia. These groups are part of Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ), the largest U.S. effort mobilizing white people for racial and economic justice. SURJ encourages white communities to engage in antiracist actions and organize for lasting change.

Beyond book clubs and virtue signaling, SURJ urges white communities to take concrete antiracist actions and organize for lasting change. The book uses SURJ as a case to showcase a new generation of white antiracist efforts across local contexts.

Russo says these groups shift anti-racism from individual morality to collective action to change systems, a crucial achievement. These stories teach us humility, strategy, and hope for our shared future. She writes, "This book was built on the wisdom and experiences of organizers who have dedicated their lives to fighting for multiracial democracy. They give me hope in these dark times."

# aaup AAUP Online Skills Training

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF  
UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS



**We are thrilled to invite you to join the February 2026 online AAUP Core Skills Training. This intensive will help you and your colleagues develop essential organizing skills.**

**What:** Five two-hour sessions over three weeks covering organizing skills to help you build strong leadership structures in your chapters, execute high-participation campaigns, and win on issues that matter to you and your colleagues.

**When:** February 2, 4, 9, 11, and 18 / 6:30–8:30 p.m. ET / 5:30–7:30 p.m. CT / 4:30–6:30 p.m. MT / 3:30–5:30 p.m. PST. Please plan to attend the entire training, as the organizing methods build on each other.

**Where:** Zoom! The Zoom link will be provided to your group after you register.

**How to sign up:** Chapters should send at least five people to the training. Please designate one person to serve as your chapter's coordinator. Only the coordinator should complete this registration. If you don't yet have five people recruited, don't worry! You can still register as the group coordinator for your chapter now and continue recruiting more chapter members.

Participants in this training will be able to participate in our revamped pods program, which will consist of four monthly meetings with chapters in your region to follow up on how you've implemented the skills you learned. If you have questions about the pods program, please email lead organizer Kim Piper at [kpiper@aaup.org](mailto:kpiper@aaup.org). Participation in this training will count toward eligibility for dues-sharing for advocacy chapters.



**The registration deadline is Tuesday, January 20.**

Scan code to learn more about Organize Every Campus, including training opportunities. If you have any questions, please email: Trent McDonald at [tmcdonald@aaup.org](mailto:tmcdonald@aaup.org)