

NEW YORK Academe

NEW YORK STATE CONFERENCE – AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

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From the President's Desk:

by Mary Rose Kubal

AS THE FALL SEMESTER BEGINS, I have never felt so conflicted about the start of an academic term.

It has been heartbreaking to watch the repeated attacks on higher education, which in many ways embody the broader attacks on our democracy – the destruction of our research infrastructure and the politicization of research funding; the rollback of student aid and the weaponization of civil rights law to block access to higher education for some of the most marginalized student populations; and the rollout of AI with no guardrails and the negative consequences for student learning.

Yet, I look around and see my students frustrated with AI and hungry for human interaction and my colleagues doing amazing work producing incredible learning experiences for their students and valuable research and creative work. Part of me feels guilty and frustrated that we seem to be in an ivory tower – apart from the realities that threaten the very existence of our mission, our institutions, equal access to

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NYS AAUP Website: <https://nyscaaup.org>

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

YouTube: NYS AAUP – YouTube

Fall 2026 Business Meeting and Conference October 2nd & 3rd

Our fall business meeting and conference will be held in Manhattan at the PSC Union Hall on October 2nd and 3rd. Invitations were sent out to all current members via Action Network on September 4. If you are a current member and did not receive the invitation, please send us an email at nyscaaup@gmail.com. The registration deadline is Tuesday, September 29.

The business meeting will be held on Friday, October 2, from 2:30 to 5:00 p.m., with a Zoom option. The meeting agenda, including officer, committee, and council reports, will be emailed to registered attendees prior to the meeting.

The organizing conference on Saturday, October 3, will be held in person only from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Saturday's program will focus on the Building Power to Win the Future of Higher Education & Democracy agenda, which was passed at the AAUP Biennial meeting in June, with particular focus on the Taking Control of AI and Technology motion.

If possible, attendees should bring copies or links to any AI-related policies, whether existing or proposed, for their campuses. A more detailed agenda for Saturday's program, updates prior to the conference, and a link for hotel registration will be provided to those who register.



BUILDING POWER TO WIN THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION & DEMOCRACY CAN BE FOUND AT:

https://www.aaup.org/sites/default/files/2026-06/Council-Proposal-2026-Final-As-Passed_0.pdf



SUNY Nassau Community College Faculty Without A Contract

CONCERNED FACULTY: SUNY-Nassau Community College, Garden City, NY

THE FACULTY AT SUNY Nassau Community College in Garden City, New York, have worked without a successor agreement or contract for over a year. The Nassau Community College Federation of Teachers (NCCFT) reports that the college administration and its lawyers have consistently canceled negotiation meetings. The NCCFT also has 30+ grievances filed, many alleging breach of contract. The NCC faculty have several ongoing concerns, including:

- The NCC Board of Trustees using college funds to sue SUNY in order to retain the current Chief Administrative Officer, who 96% of the faculty voted “No Confidence” in Spring 2026 and whom SUNY did not approve for the President position.
- The college’s continued violations of shared governance, including an announced change to the AA degree credit requirements without Academic Senate approval, a change that might adversely affect students and delay their graduation.
- An increase in both live and digital surveillance—the NCCFT has warned faculty that they may be accused of “time theft” if they spend “college time” on any work the college does not deem relevant to that employee’s role at the college.
- The administration is cultivating a toxic work environment in which faculty fear speaking out because those who do risk being targeted.
- The administration is denying “reassigned time” to faculty who coordinate crucial programs for NCC students, including the Honors program, thereby rendering these programs defunct. This has even led to the discontinuation of existing and successful degree programs.

- The administration citing “new” and “evolving” DOE rules about Distance Learning (which were actually finalized in 2020 and 2025) as an excuse to observe select online courses without faculty knowledge, to require all faculty to be recertified to teach online courses in the last six weeks of summer, and to move all online courses to “Late Start” in the Fall semester, before refusing to allow full-time faculty to teach those courses as part of a full-time load, even if the faculty members finished the recertification well before the beginning of the term, in effect making it impossible for full-time faculty to teach asynchronous courses
- The administration requires faculty members with ADA accommodations to complete a timesheet accounting for all daily activities (which is against ADA regulations).
- The administration’s negligence in its handling of both the Distance Learning Program Integrity requirements and the ADA Accessibility Requirements is evident in both cases, as the administration did not educate faculty about the need to meet these requirements until 1-2 months before the deadlines.
- The administration is rejecting past precedent and refusing to bring approved sabbatical, tenure, and promotion applications to the BOT for approval when there is no finalized contract.

In light of the above issues, many NCC faculty fear, at best, administrative negligence and, at worst, a deliberate dismantling of a crucial public resource. If these practices are allowed to stand at SUNY-Nassau Community College, we fear that the destruction of our college will serve as a roadmap for further assaults on public higher education.

Faculty, Staff, Students and Administrators Must “Refuse to Comply” with Latest Trump Administration Demands

COMPACT 2.0: WHY ACADEMIC FREEDOM MATTERS NOW

On September 16, the AAUP’s Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure issued a new statement advising faculty, staff, students, and administrators to “remain clear-eyed about the need to refuse to comply” with the latest attempt by the Trump administration to assert authoritarian control over American higher education. The statement, “Why Academic Freedom Matters Now,” reiterates the Association’s longstanding position that “academic freedom and shared governance are intertwined and necessary for any college or university to fulfill its public mission.”

The statement is the latest AAUP response to Education Secretary Linda McMahon’s August letter, “A National Call to Action to University

Presidents and Governing Boards,” widely known as “Compact 2.0” for its repackaging of demands and promises from the Trump administration’s fall 2025 “Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education.” The original compact, which promised preferential treatment to institutions that aligned with Trump’s agenda, was rejected by seven of the nine colleges and universities invited to sign after it faced widespread resistance from a broad coalition of higher ed

workers, students, and alumni. The remaining two universities did not respond publicly.

On September 10, AAUP President Todd Wolfson and AFT President Randi Weingarten issued a formal response to McMahon’s letter, demanding that the Trump administration immediately cease weaponizing taxpayer funds and civil rights enforcement to politically coerce colleges and

universities into adopting its agenda. The letter asks McMahon to provide written assurance that no college or university will face federal retaliation or receive favorable treatment based on its response to Compact 2.0.

Last month, the AAUP offered an analysis of Compact 2.0, outlining how university leaders

who heed McMahon’s attempt to create a “compliance regime” would violate principles of shared governance and the customary role of faculty in decision-making. It warns that asking institutions to take responsibility for student loan repayment “naturalizes high student debt” and that subjecting research priorities to “the administration’s understanding of national interest” could chill critical scholarship and international collaboration.



**THE AAUP'S LATEST STATEMENT
CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE:**

<https://www.aaup.org/reports-publications/aaup-policies-reports/policy-statements/why-academic-freedom-matters-now>



**A COMPREHENSIVE COLLECTION
OF RESOURCES OF COMPACT 2.0
CAN BE FOUND AT:**

<https://www.aaup.org/issues-higher-education/political-attacks-higher-ed/compact-20>



Whistleblowers Confirm Findings of AAUP-MESA Report on Trump's “Antisemitism” Witch Hunt

A WHISTLEBLOWER COMPLAINT SENT TO Congress has shed new light on the Trump administration's lawless and arbitrary campaign against higher education, confirming findings from a report on the weaponization of civil rights law, jointly published last year by the AAUP and the Middle East Studies Association (MESA).

In early 2025, the Trump administration established a Task Force to Combat Antisemitism and withheld hundreds of millions of dollars in federal research funding from colleges and universities based on spurious accusations of antisemitism.

On August 27, 2026, Department of Justice civil rights attorneys assigned to the task force came forward to confirm that the Trump administration adopted a “predetermined, outcome-driven approach to enforcement rather than a fact-based investigative process.” The detailed whistleblower complaint revealed several important facts about the government's antisemitism probes:

- Investigators determined that the allegations of antisemitism against Brown University were unfounded, but task force leadership refused to disclose this finding to maintain leverage over the school during settlement negotiations. The settlement ultimately led to sweeping policy changes targeting racial and gender equity efforts. That agreement now appears to have been negotiated under false pretenses, as it required the government to “close any and all pending Investigations” even though there were no such pending investigations.
- Although the Brown investigation stemmed from allegations concerning the medical school, task force staffers sought to “systematically interview Middle East studies professors, particularly Muslim faculty” who had nothing to do with the allegations. Rather, the task force hoped to elicit opinions that could be labeled as antisemitic, which “seemed like an attempt to intimidate those professors.” The whistleblower described the plan as “rooted in Islamophobic assumptions that Middle East studies professors would harbor antisemitic viewpoints rather than any actual evidence of complaints about antisemitism.”

- When an investigation into Columbia University's medical school was “not bearing much fruit,” the task force decided not to close it but to expand it across the rest of the campus to find a pretext for withholding research funds from the university.
- In its attempts to reach a settlement with Harvard, the Trump administration demanded “MOUs with police, installing a provost to oversee the curriculum, ending DEI programs, placing endowment money in trusts the government could seize, and investing in programs in Israel.”

These revelations align with findings in *Discriminating Against Dissent: The Weaponization of Civil Rights Law to Repress Campus Speech on Palestine*, jointly released last year by the AAUP and MESA. The report traced the use of antidiscrimination law under both the Biden and Trump administrations to pressure colleges and universities to crack down on speech related to Palestine. The AAUP-MESA report also examined the background of the task force's leadership, including Sean Keveney, a top official in Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s Department of Health and Human Services who features prominently in the whistleblower report and has since been appointed counsel to the Food and Drug Administration.

In light of these revelations, the AAUP and MESA support all efforts to ensure congressional oversight of the Trump administration's campaign against higher education and its attempts to punish those speaking out about Palestine. Moreover, the AAUP and MESA call upon Brown and Columbia, in particular, to repudiate their settlements with the Trump administration, which were negotiated under false pretenses.

Finally, the AAUP and MESA reiterate their call for faculty, administrations, and governing boards to refuse to comply with unlawful federal government demands stemming from politicized Title VI investigations that impinge on institutional autonomy, faculty academic freedom (including the faculty's role in governance), student academic freedom, and the freedom of expression of faculty members, students, and staff.

UUP encouraged by SUNY ESF's successful fundraising drive

America's largest higher education union says that \$43.5 million raised by the college would allow the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry to address its structural deficit, expand programs, rehire faculty, and plan for the future

Over 9,000 donors contributed, underscoring the community's support for ESF.

United University Professions President Fred Kowal is heartened by news that a yearlong fundraising effort for SUNY's College of Environmental Science and Forestry raised a record \$43.5 million—donations from alumni, students' families, private foundations, corporate supporters, and ESF boosters who recognize the importance of the cash-strapped campus and want to see it thrive.

Over the past year and a half, UUP members and ESF students have worked to spotlight ESF's untenable fiscal situation and to push for more state funding for the college. Despite significant increases in SUNY state funding over the past four years, thanks to Gov. Kathy Hochul and the state Legislature, SUNY Central Administration — which determines how much state funding each campus receives—has not provided adequate aid to ESF.

"It is clear that students, faculty, professional staff, and community groups have effectively demonstrated that ESF deserves the resources it needs to grow at a time when the federal government is abandoning our nation's commitment to the environment," said Kowal.

"This public campaign clearly drove donors to step up at this crucial time in ESF's history."

More than \$24.3 million in donations—raised by the ESF College Foundation—is earmarked for academic programs and research. Another \$15.8 million is set aside for scholarships, and \$1.5 million will be used for facilities and to "enhance" student experiences, according to ESF.

The college's record-breaking fundraising campaign

should enable ESF to address its structural multimillion-dollar deficit, refill academic and professional staff positions, expand programs, and look forward to a bright future.

"Based on how much the college raised in its funding drive, it's clear that ESF alumni, parents and the Central New York community see tremendous value in this unique campus, which has become a pipeline for green jobs and a hub for groundbreaking research aimed at solving some of the world's most challenging environmental issues," said Kowal.





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AFT and AAUP on Department of War Directive Targeting 30 Universities

AFT President Randi Weingarten and American Association of University Professors President Todd Wolfson issued the following response to the Department of War's directive for 30 universities to begin comprehensive reviews of their academic, financial and research collaborations with foreign entities they deem concerning:

"The AAUP and AFT condemn the Department of War's recent directive, which publicly places 30 universities under suspicion and gives them two weeks to investigate years of academic activity. While safeguarding national security is a legitimate government priority, this demand poses a serious risk of racial and national-origin profiling that threatens the foundational principles of academic freedom, open inquiry, and global scholarly collaboration, and undermines scientific innovation and research that benefits all Americans."

"The directive represents another form of funding-based coercion. By threatening to withdraw

vital federal research funding without disclosing the standards used to target these institutions and without providing any public evidence of wrongdoing, the government may be bypassing due process. It remains unclear what legal authority permits the Department of War to condition all federal research funding, rather than just its own budget, on compliance with this order."

"The AAUP and AFT urge the Department of War to rescind this ultimatum and to engage in a transparent, collaborative dialogue with the higher education community—one that safeguards genuine security concerns without sacrificing global and cross-border scientific research and the free exchange of ideas that has long made U.S. research institutions world leaders."

Among the 30 schools were three New York institutions: Cornell University, New York University, and Stony Brook University.

Hofstra Faculty Approves 5-Year Contract With Annual Raise Over 3%

ON SEPTEMBER 9, THE HOFSTRA University faculty voted to approve a five-year contract with an average annual raise of more than 3%.

“We thank our members for their participation and unity throughout the process; hundreds attended meetings, participated in an on-campus rally, voted to support job actions, signed strike pledges, mobilized their networks to sign a petition to President Poser, shared their views, and took part in the final contract vote,” the union said in the statement. “We also received many letters of support from unions, community groups, and alumni from around the country. These expressions of solidarity and shows of strength helped move the contract talks forward.” Among the groups sending letters was the New York State Conference of the AAUP.

Professors are looking forward to “fostering a respectful working relationship with the administration,” according to the statement.

“We thank both bargaining teams for their work throughout this process and look forward to moving ahead together with a shared focus on Hofstra students and the University’s future,” Poser said in a statement the University released.

The approved contract includes a 3.5% raise effective September 1, followed by 3% annual increases for the next three years and a 3.25% increase in 2030.

Union president Anthony Basile said the administration proposed a 2.5% salary increase in the contract’s first year, followed by 1.5% annual increases. Basile also said the proposed contract included additional costs for health in-

surance and other benefits. The faculty union’s proposal included annual raises of 6.5% to make up for inflation and the salary freeze professors accepted during the pandemic.

Hofstra’s top administrators’ pay has increased by 23.2% since 2019, roughly in line with inflation, Basile said. During that same period, faculty salaries have lost ground after accounting for inflation, rising by just 12%.

The faculty’s previous five-year contract was set to expire on Aug. 31 but had been extended twice.

The union held a strike authorization vote in August, and 99% of participants approved the measure. The most recent contract negotiations between the union and the administration took place 10 years ago. According to the union, no strike has occurred since 1988.

FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK:

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higher education. But then I think perhaps rather than denial, we are engaged in providing stability for our students to learn to express themselves and engage with difficult ideas in a time of increasingly ugly divisions in our society; that continuing on with our research and teaching and engaging students is in itself an act of resistance to the attacks on academic freedom and the expansion of education to marginalized students. I don’t know.

I am thankful for the AAUP and the clear positions we have taken to confront threats to our democracy and higher education. At the Biennial meeting in Chicago in June, delegates voted to adopt a package of resolutions titled “Building Power to Win the Future of Higher Education and Democracy.” I encourage you to familiarize yourself with this agenda if you have not already. At our October meeting and organizing conference, we will discuss the implications of the ambitious agenda set out in the seven planks of the Building Power to Win agenda for our state conference and campus chapters. Our focus will be the fifth resolution, “Taking Control of AI and Technology,” which is tied to larger questions of democracy, academic freedom, shared governance, student learning, and organizing.

If you are unable to join us for the Saturday organizing conference, I hope you can Zoom into the Friday business meeting as we continue discussing how the state conference can best serve our chapters and members by building the organization we need to not only stem the tide of current

political attacks on higher education and democracy but also continue pushing for a more inclusive polity, society, and university. We are experiencing this billionaire-funded backlash because we have been successful in expanding our democracy and opening our universities, but that work was never complete and must continue.

We continue that work when we bargain for contracts that provide dignified wages and working conditions for all educators – full and part time faculty and educational support staff – and when we support our union siblings in their contract struggles. We continue that work when we advocate for increasing student aid and expanding underrepresented students’ access to higher education. We continue that work when we support candidates not only with our votes, but through volunteering and walking for candidates who support educators and students.

At our business meeting Friday, Fred Floss the chair of our Government Relations committee will give us some ideas of how we can do this, including participating in AFL-CIO organized labor walks around the state. These events provide a good opportunity to get your local chapter engaged with K-12 teachers and other union activists – especially in more rural areas where we may feel fairly isolated on our campuses.

I hope to see many of you in person or virtually at our October 2-3 meeting and conference and others as we continue our work throughout NYS this academic year defending higher education and democracy.

In solidarity,

Mary Rose Kubal

NYS ACADEME SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

NYS Academe, the magazine of the NYS Conference of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), welcomes proposals for feature articles and book reviews as well as submissions of articles and opinion columns.

NYS Academe seeks to publish compellingly written, rigorous, salient, and original articles on the critical issues facing higher education and especially those involving and/or relevant to NYS. Our readership includes faculty members, academic professionals, and graduate students from many different disciplines as well as academic leaders, policy makers, and media professionals involved in higher education issues and policy.

Submission of an article, column, or book review (including by invitation) does not guarantee its acceptance; *NYS Academe* is under no requirement to accept any submission. Accepted articles may be published in print or as online-only features. Decisions about the placement of articles will be made by the Editor.

Submissions should not include defamatory statements or raise other significant legal concerns. Promotion or criticism of candidates running for office in local, state, or national AAUP elections is not allowed in the magazine; neither is misrepresentation of AAUP policy.

All article and column proposals and submissions should be sent to: jfkraus1@aol.com

NYS ACADEME DISCOURAGES THE FOLLOWING:

- Submissions primarily devoted to specific ongoing disputes involving individuals and their colleges or universities, except in cases of national significance. In such cases, submissions should focus on the wider implications and lessons.
- Submissions that are primarily focused on another national higher education group or union.
- Submissions primarily devoted to specific ongoing disputes involving individuals and AAUP entities including chapters, conferences, or affiliates. However, productive self-reflection and critique of an AAUP entity's successes and failures are welcome.
- Submissions of material previously published elsewhere. Such submissions must be clearly marked as previously published material.

ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS:

If you have a topic in mind, please prepare a brief proposal detailing your specific qualifications to write on the topic, what your approach will be, and how your article will distinguish itself from other coverage of the issue. You may also submit completed manuscripts.

Length: We accept submissions of a variety of lengths; however, it is recommended that submissions are less than 750 words. Submissions must be sent as Word Docs.

Review Process: Please allow sufficient time for review of submissions. Reviewers may include the Editor or the President of the NYSC. *NYS Academe* is not a peer-reviewed publication.

Editing: Accepted submissions are edited by the Editor.

Biographical Statement: Include a one- or two-sentence biographical statement and indicate whether you would like your email address published with the statement if your submission is accepted.

Notes: *NYS Academe* articles generally do not include end-notes or footnotes. If and when possible, identify cited works in the text of the article. Avoid bibliographies and lengthy parenthetical references.

Contact Information: Please provide home and office addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses with your submission. It is important for *NYS Academe* to have these details in one place so that authors can be contacted in a timely manner.

For further information, write to: jfkraus1@aol.com

BOOK REVIEWS:

Send proposals for book reviews directly to: jfkraus1@aol.com

OPINION COLUMN SUBMISSIONS:

NYS Academe's Faculty Forum is an opinion column open to all faculty members, academic professionals, and graduate students who belong to the AAUP. Nonmembers may submit columns but will be expected to join the Association before publication.

Contributions to Faculty Forum should address issues of concern to a wide range of *Academe* readers, including academics from many different disciplines and others interested in higher education issues and policy. Submissions should adopt a clear point of view and be written in a lively, nontechnical style. They must maintain a collegial tone and be interesting, insightful, and original. In evaluating submissions, the editors will seek a broad representation of institutional types, regions of the country, and ranks in the profession, giving priority to voices that are often marginalized within the profession.

Faculty Forum submissions should be approximately 700 words in length and should not include subheadings, endnotes, tables, or similar attributes. We do not accept submissions that have been previously published elsewhere.



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