

## COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND RIGHTS ANNUAL REPORT 2013-2014

CAFR serves as guardian of academic freedom and rights for all members of this academic community. CAFR issues can be approached informally or formally; this year the committee heard both.

**Informal Cases:** CAFR met with two students and four faculty members on an informal basis. In two of these cases, it was determined there were insufficient grounds to pursue a formal case. In two cases, the complainants decided to resolve the matters through alternative mechanisms. Two of the informal complaints were brought forth as formal cases.

**Formal Cases:** CAFR heard two formal cases from faculty members. In both cases, the committee found some but not all of the charges brought by each faculty member to constitute a violation of the complainants' academic rights. The committee made recommendations to address these issues to the President.

**Other Activities:** The Chair of the committee met with the Board of Trustees both in the fall (by phone) and in the spring (in person). During the spring meeting of the Committee of Committees (CoC), the Chair was asked by the committee to address the issue of communication between the Tenure Review Board and CAFR. The CoC was informed that CAFR's work this past year illuminated the need for direct and open communication between CAFR and TRB. CAFR has discussed this issue, and the committee believes it is in the best interests of all stakeholders involved that when the same case comes before CAFR and TRB that there be some mechanism which allows for the two committees to communicate and coordinate their efforts on behalf of candidates. CAFR's and TRB's Operating Codes did not allow for such communication this past academic year. CAFR believes it is crucial for CAFR and TRB to communicate and if necessary for the TRB to adjust timelines to accommodate CAFR's investigations and promulgation of findings before the TRB makes a decision regarding a case that has been brought before both committees,

**Revisions to Operating Code:** CAFR's Operating Code was revised in the following ways:

- Clarification regarding CAFR's role in grade disputes was inserted. ("CAFR does not have the authority to change a grade, but in cases of violation of academic freedom and rights with respect to grades, can make a recommendation that the grade be changed. CAFR does not hear grade dispute cases from students that should be resolved within the department. If, after consultation with the instructor and the department chairperson, the student has evidence that the grade reflects a bias on the part of the instructor, the student may present that evidence to CAFR regarding potential violations of academic freedom and rights related to grades.")
- Language regarding the waiving of confidentiality for cases that are brought to both CAFR and TRB simultaneously was inserted. (In the event that a faculty member brings a complaint to CAFR and the Tenure Review Board (TRB) simultaneously, the complainant may waive his/her right to confidentiality to allow CAFR to communicate directly with the TRB to best serve the complainant's interests. If it is the wish of the complainant to waive confidentiality, s/he will directly notify the chairs of both CAFR and TRB of his/her intention to waive confidentiality.)
- Clarification to language was made throughout the document but content was not substantively altered.

Committee members for 2013-2014 included:

Pat Hilleren, Biology, tenured, 2015  
Crystal Moore, Social Work, tenured, 2014, Chair  
Rachel Roe-Dale, Mathematics and Computer Science, tenured 2014  
Sara Lagalwar, Neuroscience, untenured, 2016  
Mao Chen, Foreign Languages and Literature, tenured, 2016

The committee members for 2015-2016 include:

Mao Chen, Foreign Languages and Literatures, tenured, 2016  
Pat Hilleren, Biology, tenured, 2015, Chair  
Sara Lagalwar, Neuroscience, untenured, 2016  
Feryaz Ocakli, Government, untenured, 2017  
Saleema Waraich, Art History, untenured, 2017

SGA will appoint student members in the fall.

Respectfully submitted,

Crystal Dea Moore  
CAFR Chair 2013-2014