

COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND RIGHTS ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020

The Committee on Academic Freedom and Rights (CAFR) serves as the guardian of academic freedom and rights for all members of this academic community.

During the Academic Year 2019-2020, CAFR considered five separate cases. Because all of these cases involved faculty or staff, participation was limited to the four elected faculty members of the committee and did not include the student representatives provided by SGA. Four of these cases were addressed through informal processes with only one case moving to a formal investigation and report. In addition to these five cases, members of CAFR consulted with members of the faculty and Dean's Office in an advisory capacity on a number of issues related to academic freedom and rights at the College and continued work with ATC and TRB on drafting proposed revisions to the Faculty Handbook's process for appealing negative tenure decisions.

Informal Cases: The faculty members of CAFR heard four informal cases to discuss possible violations of academic freedom and rights. These were independent, unrelated complaints. In three of these cases, the complainants elected to resolve the situation on their own or through channels other than CAFR. In one case, CAFR worked closely with the involved parties to mediate a resolution.

Formal Cases: CAFR received and adopted one formal petition and completed an investigation into the alleged violations. The formal petition was submitted on April 27, 2020 and our findings and recommendations were conveyed to the President in the form of written letter on May 29, 2020.

CAFR also delivered a report on academic freedom and rights to the Board of Trustees on May 14, 2020.

Observations and suggestions:

As noted in our previous annual report, CAFR remains deeply concerned about our ability to sufficiently protect the academic freedom and rights of all members of the academic community. Recognizing the structural inequalities within our society and our profession, we see our existing mechanisms for guarding academic freedom and rights as insufficient. Acts that may not be

violations of any college policies may be violations of academic freedom and rights. The confidentiality of our process prohibits CAFR from giving specific examples but we urge the faculty to consider ways in which we might transform these fundamental inequalities and eradicate biased practices within our College, our Departments and Programs, and ourselves.

Respectfully Submitted,

Benjamin Bogin, Chair of CAFR, 2019-2020

AY 2019-20 CAFR Membership

*Benjamin Bogin (Asian Studies), Masako Inamoto (World Languages and Literatures), Jessica Sullivan (Psychology), Dan Curley (Classics)

AY 2020-21 CAFR Membership

*Jessica Sullivan (Psychology), Dan Curley (Classics), Siobhan Hart (Anthropology), Corey Freeman-Gallant (Biology)

Student Reps will be determined with SGA at the beginning of the semester.