

Protecting Academic Freedom and Ensuring Faculty Due Process in Louisiana Higher Education

WHEREAS: The mission of higher education institutions is grounded in the principles of academic freedom, robust inquiry, open discourse, shared governance, and the protection of faculty rights; and

WHEREAS: The faculty of Louisiana's public higher education institutions must be able to teach, research, speak and participate in institutional governance without fear of retaliation, unreasonable discipline, or arbitrary process; and

WHEREAS: Recent reports at Louisiana State University, Southeastern Louisiana University, and Southern Law Center indicate serious concerns regarding the protection of academic freedom and due-process safeguards in Louisiana institutions; and

WHEREAS: While misconduct or professional failures may justify discipline, any such action must involve clear definitions, transparent processes, faculty participation, adherence to shared-governance norms, and a presumption of academic-freedom protections to prevent misuse of disciplinary procedures as tools of censorship or retaliation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the Louisiana Federation of Teachers immediately calls for transparency requirements and oversight frameworks for faculty discipline, tenure revocation, and shared governance in public institutions from the Board of Regents and Louisiana Legislature; be it further

RESOLVED: That institutional policies must clearly define grounds for discipline, outline procedural safeguards, and provide transparency on rights of faculty; be it further

RESOLVED: That faculty must have meaningful participation in the development, review and oversight of such disciplinary policies via faculty senates, governance bodies, or collective-bargaining forums; be it further

RESOLVED: That faculty members must be afforded full due-process rights in any disciplinary or dismissal proceeding (including notice of allegations, opportunity to respond and present evidence, faculty peer review, and appeal rights); be it further

RESOLVED: That any instance of faculty removal from teaching, demotion, or dismissal must be publicly documented (subject to confidentiality norms) and subject to oversight processes to ensure institutional compliance with academic freedom and governance norms.

As submitted by: United Federation of College Teachers