

## Faculty group blasts CU-Boulder for handling of philosophy probe, creating 'climate of fear'

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The state and local chapters of the American Association of University Professors blasted the University of Colorado administration Thursday for its handling of a [recent investigation of the philosophy department](#), saying campus leaders are perpetuating "a climate of fear and disregard for the academic freedom and due process protections of faculty."

The 13-page statement also alleges that CU sanctioned a tenured philosophy faculty member for expressing his opinions about the department in a meeting of Boulder campus faculty, even going so far as to remove his comments from the published record of that meeting.

CU spokesman Ryan Huff said he could not comment on personnel matters.

The university was not a party in the report, he added.

"As a result, we do not plan to follow the report's recommendations, nor will we comment on the validity of any statements made within those recommendations or the rest of the report," Huff said. "Last weekend, the philosophy department had a very productive and positive retreat and has identified concrete steps for improving the climate. (Chairman Andy) Cowell and the department have demonstrated both the leadership and the willingness to address these issues directly. Their work is important here at CU-Boulder and for the national dialogue about the climate for all in the field of philosophy."

Released Thursday morning, the shared statement from the CU-Boulder and Colorado chapters of the association criticizes the university administration's actions before and after it made public in late January an independent report that found sexual harassment, bullying and other unprofessional sexualized behaviors within the department.

Three investigators with the American Philosophical Association's Committee on the Status of Women Site Visit Program authored that report, which led administrators to replace the philosophy chairman and suspend all graduate admissions into the department until at least 2015.

The AAUP statement's authors write that Steven Leigh, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and Provost Russell Moore are to blame for damaging the reputations of dozens of faculty members.

"The tactics of Dean Leigh and Provost Moore may lead to the end of sexual harassment in the philosophy department, but at the cost of faculty trust in the (Office of Discrimination and Harassment), of Dean Leigh's and Provost Moore's personal integrity, and possibly of the (site visit team) program as a viable mechanism for improving the climate for women in philosophy," the statement's authors wrote. "Leigh and Moore's tactics perpetuate a climate of fear and disregard for the academic freedom and due process protections of faculty at the University of Colorado."

## Violations of AAUP principles

The AAUP chapters take issue with the administration's public release of the site visit report, which faculty members said they were told would be completely confidential.

In addition, by threatening to dissolve the philosophy department, and by suspending graduate admissions into the department, CU's administration violated AAUP principles, according to the statement.

"The decision to discontinue formally a program or department of instruction will be based essentially on educational considerations, as determined primarily by the faculty as a whole or an appropriate committee thereof," according to the statement.

The statement also **decries the banishment of associate professor Dan Kaufman from campus**, and recommends that the administration reverse actions taken against individual faculty members within the department.

The local chapters of the association also recommend that the administration rescind the suspension of graduate admissions into the department, and administration "revisit" replacing previous chairman Graeme Forbes with Andy Cowell, who came to philosophy from the linguistics department.

## 'Orwellian experience'

The association's statement alleges associate professor Bradley Monton was forced to resign from the Boulder Faculty Assembly and banned from participating in university committees and service responsibilities.

Monton had been a member of the Boulder Faculty Assembly's executive committee. At that committee's Feb. 3 meeting, the Monday after the site visit report's release, Monton described his feelings about the situation in his department to a group of 18 faculty members, administrators and retired professors, according to the AAUP statement.

An early version of the meeting minutes included comments, not attributed to anyone, about the philosophy department's climate committee, which had been formed several years ago to address sexual harassment within the department. The minutes also described how the administration did not warn the department when it decided to release the report publicly.

According to the AAUP statement, those were Monton's remarks.

Later, Monton was called to a meeting with Leigh and associate dean Mary Kraus. Philosophy chairman Cowell and Boulder Faculty Assembly chairman Paul Chinowsky also were present, according to the statement.

There, the AAUP statement alleges, Leigh, Kraus and Cowell pressured Monton into retracting the opinions he had expressed to the faculty assembly, and forced him to resign from the assembly altogether.

The minutes from the Feb. 3 meeting were removed from the faculty assembly website and replaced by a new document, which omits an entire section about the philosophy department. Instead, the minutes show

that "insight was given into what happened within the department of philosophy by Brad Monton. [Those comments were retracted from these minutes.]"

"It was the most Orwellian experience I've ever had," Monton told the Daily Camera, corroborating the AAUP's account of his meeting with the administration and the alteration of the meeting minutes.

### **'Scared to speak up'**

Since Leigh, Kraus and Cowell were not present at the Feb. 3 executive committee meeting, Monton said Chinowsky must have reported back to them about his comments.

Earlier this month, Chinowsky was re-elected by the faculty for a second term as chairman of the assembly.

"Any faculty member who is on the BFA should be scared to speak up with Chinowsky in charge," Monton said. "If Chinowsky disagrees with what you say at a BFA committee meeting, the first you may find out about it is when you get hauled into a surprise meeting with the deans and punished and pressured to resign from the BFA."

Chinowsky on Thursday said it would be inappropriate for him to comment on the AAUP statement and on individual claims made by department personnel, though he would say that the meeting minutes were changed because Monton asked that his comments be stricken from the record.

Monton, in response, said he gave in to intense pressure from Chinowsky and administrators.

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