

April 23, 2025

Dr. Houston Davis
President, University of Central Arkansas

Dear President Davis,

The Arkansas ACCESS Act, recently signed into law, has raised concerns for the Richard Hudson Chapter of the AAUP. We are particularly concerned about the sections of the law that institute changes to tenure and faculty performance reviews.

Accountability and transparency are important. However, such criteria as “professional incompetence,” “unprofessional conduct,” and “indoctrination” are vague, overly broad, and can be easily weaponized in ways that silence unpopular ideas and erode academic integrity. Tenure is a vital instrument of academic freedom. Any new policy that permits the removal of tenure or imposes remedial training must either follow due process as outlined in the UCA Faculty Handbook or be revised based on a Faculty Senate-led review of the current policy.

Therefore, the Richard Hudson chapter of the AAUP urges administrators to work with the Faculty Senate to create an annual review framework that reaffirms the university's commitment to the protection of academic freedom, tenure, and shared governance at UCA. We look forward to continuing this discussion in the fall.

Respectfully,

Jessica Riedmueller
President, Richard Hudson Chapter
American Association of University Professors
Faculty Librarian, Associate Professor
University of Central Arkansas

Cc:

Michael Hargis, Provost and Executive Vice President
Tori Dunlap, President Elect, Faculty Senate
Richard Hudson AAUP Executive Committee
