



Protect Faculty Governance at UK

On the 23rd of February, the Board of Trustees at the University of Kentucky passed a **resolution**, tasking the President with the responsibility of recommending changes to the University Governing Regulations. The focus of these changes is aimed specifically at the University Senate. This decision was based on an **“unscientific” study**, conducted by the controversial consulting firm Deloitte. The University Senate currently holds considerable authority over a wide assortment of educational policies, including the power to approve or terminate programs, among other things. With these proposed changes, however, it is possible that the fate of our university curricula, programs and much more could be determined by appointed administrators with little expertise in the areas they are tasked with administering.

For instance, majors and programs could be discontinued without meaningful input from faculty or departments, and curricula could be influenced by administrators with little to no experience or expertise in the fields they are affecting. In the most extreme case, we could see entire departments being shut down and faculty and staff being laid off. This has **already happened at West Virginia University**—like UK, WVU administration commissioned a private consulting firm (rpk GROUP) which recommended sweeping cuts to programs and faculty under the guise of “efficiency.”

The 220 faculty members who attended the Senate Council meeting on March 4 made clear that there has been no reliable evidence that the University Senate is causing any problems related to institutional efficiency and responsiveness. The President’s surveys and closed-door “listening sessions” attended by a select few faculty are insufficient in addressing the overwhelming concern faculty members have over shared governance and authority over educational policies.

The **approved Board of Trustees resolution** is particularly worrying in light of the broader context we find ourselves in as workers in Kentucky. Whether it is **HB228**, which seeks to grant unprecedented authority over tenure review to our Board of Trustees and administrators, or **SB6**, which aims to remove very broadly-defined “discriminatory concepts” from classroom and university materials, we are witnessing a concerted effort to reshape the university from a system in which there is a free flow of ideas at all levels to one in which ideas only start at the top and are forced down.

We believe that faculty governance must be protected to maintain and safeguard academic freedom, institutional integrity, and educational excellence at the University of Kentucky. That is why I stand with **the United Campus Workers of Kentucky** in calling on President Eli Capilouto and the Board of Trustees to:

1) Terminate immediately all administrative plans and actions based on information presented by [CR 1 Workgroup 5](#);

2) Ditch Deloitte and funnel resources to supporting faculty-driven studies on institutional efficiency and responsiveness;

3) Present a concrete proposal on how they plan to ensure future transparency and openness among faculty and all other stakeholders in lieu of closed-door meetings and secrecy.

Signed,

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