

## Academic Freedom

Recently a Kent State faculty member was singled out by a website which targets university professors who express political views contrary to its own. This website “documented” the faculty member’s political speech on social media, in addition to certain of his activities as a scholar and professor. Readers were provided with the professor’s contact information, and he has since been subjected to a wave of harassing messages.

Faculty members hold divergent opinions on a wide range of issues, but AAUP has long been united in its commitment to defend academic freedom and the free exchange of ideas more broadly. Our commitment to this ideal must extend to everyone, whether or not we agree with the ideas expressed.

Today, professors are increasingly being singled out for organized harassment or institutional censure on the basis of speech, teachings, or activities that are controversial. Kent State University has an excellent record of supporting its professors’ academic freedom, sometimes in the face of significant external pressure. AAUP-KSU confidently expects this practice to continue, and we invite Kent State University to join us in condemning the targeted online harassment of faculty members.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Larson  
AAUP-KSU Chapter President