

## **Resolution of the Bloomington Faculty Concerning Shared Governance and Graduate Student Supervision**

Endorsed by Bloomington faculty on May 9 with a vote of 683 to 39, this resolution asks you to re-assert the authority of departments, programs, and schools to appoint SAAs as granted by the Bloomington Faculty Constitution; to bar the nonreappointment of any SAA due to participation in the Spring 2022 SAA strike; and to require the VPFAA to release any appointments withheld due to participation in the strike this past spring semester. The resolution, moreover, asks for campus shared governance to be strengthened by affirming the Bloomington faculty's constitutional responsibility to review the administration's performance (and here especially with respect to labor disputes); by ensuring that all SAAs receive the due process set forth in faculty policy; and by calling upon the BFC to clarify campus policy on the paramount role of faculty in making SAA appointments.

Two concerns compel this reassertion of faculty shared governance authority: 1) the unprecedented withholding, by the Provost and VPFAA, of SAAs appointments that were duly authorized by departments; 2) the sanction against striking SAAs implied by this withholding and imposed on them without the protection of due process. The immediate consideration is that only those in departments, programs, or schools who work with graduate students in an academic capacity have the relevant knowledge and experience to judge the suitability of such an academic appointment; the fact that the VPFAA, without academic knowledge of individual appointees, withheld reappointments can only be interpreted as a sanction against them for participation in a legal collective bargaining activity.

The Bloomington Graduate Academic Appointees Guide ([SAA Guide](#)) specifies, "graduate student appointments are offered by academic schools or departments." The Provost has appealed to the SAA Guide to justify overriding the appointments of schools and departments, citing the provision that holds, "reappointment is contingent upon [...] satisfactory discharge of duties in previous appointments." There was not, however, any finding as to whether an appointed SAA had discharged duties or not. No charges were formally brought forth against any SAA, and no opportunity provided for appeal. The Guide specifies that "an SAA is entitled to appeal actions or conditions affecting his/her role, including such matters as [...] reappointment."

These are serious breaches of the standards of shared governance as legislated by the Bloomington Faculty Council (which makes available two levels of appeal, the [SAA Mediation Committee](#) and the [SAA Board of Review](#)). In its principles of shared governance, the AAUP [stipulates](#) that "graduate-student assistants, like other campus employees, should have the right to organize to bargain collectively. [...] Graduate-student assistants must not suffer retaliation from professors or administrators because of their activity relating to collective bargaining." It moreover holds that when an SAA is an instructor of record, due process and academic freedom should guarantee the SAA the same classroom access as any member of the faculty. In this regard, the [AAUP Statement on Collective Bargaining](#) is clear that a strike does not constitute grounds for non-reappointment: "Participation in a strike or other work

action does not constitute grounds for dismissal, nonreappointment, or other sanctions against faculty members.”

Given the failure of shared governance and due process represented by the VPFAA’s withholding of SAA reappointments this spring, the resolution asks the faculty to reassert its true authority over SAA appointments; to insist on due process in all cases of nonreappointment; to review the administration’s handling of labor disputes such as the current one; and to task the BFC with clarifying and strengthening IUB policy regarding SAAs to emphasize the central role of the department, program or other supervising unit in making SAA appointments.