



May 2, 2013

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Ellyn Toscano, J.D., LL.M.  
Executive Director  
New York University in Florence  
VILLA LA PIETRA  
Via Bolognese, 120  
50139 Firenze ITALIA

Dear Ms. Toscano:

Our Association has been advised by leaders of our New York University chapter of reports of changes that were made to the appointments of faculty members teaching at NYU's Florence campus this academic year that, they allege, have violated widely accepted academic procedural standards and norms of faculty governance. According to their accounts and to media reports, these changes, made with little or no consultation with the cognizant faculty, either in Florence or at Washington Square, include sudden and drastic salary reductions for faculty members serving in untenured positions and the termination of the appointments of three long-serving studio-arts professors whose courses will now be offered at an institution external to NYU. They have raised concerns that the three professors have been released in retaliation for their participation in an effort to form a faculty union. Moreover, media coverage of recent events on the campus raises basic questions about the administration's commitment to academic freedom and shared faculty governance in academic decision making.

The attached 2009 *On Conditions of Employment at Overseas Campuses*, jointly authored with the Canadian Association of University Teachers, states: "It is essential that all international initiatives undertaken by U.S. and Canadian colleges and universities respect the UNESCO *Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel*, with its emphasis on academic freedom, institutional autonomy, collegial governance, nondiscrimination, and employment security." Further, it holds that the overseas campuses of U.S. and Canadian colleges and universities should adhere to the same standards that apply at their domestic main campuses.

In the United States, these standards have been set forth in the jointly authored 1940 *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure*, which has been endorsed by more than 200 academic organizations and disciplinary societies, and the AAUP's derivative *Recommended Institutional Regulations on Academic Freedom and Tenure* (copies attached). They include:

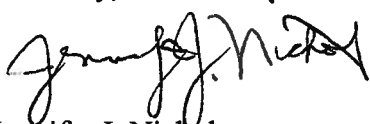
- the provision in writing of the full terms and conditions of each initial appointment before the appointment commences;

- the opportunity for a faculty member to grieve a breach of the terms of the appointment;
- the right of access to an appropriate faculty body for review of allegations that impermissible considerations contributed significantly to decisions to terminate a faculty member's services; and
- appropriate notice or severance salary in cases of appointment termination or nonrenewal.

We are troubled by reports that these standards may have been compromised at NYU's Florence campus, and thus we write to advise you of the widely accepted standards promoted by this Association and set forth in the attached policy statements.

We call upon you to address the concerns raised by current and former Florence campus faculty members and, where warranted, to take corrective action that is consistent with the attached principles and procedural standards.

Sincerely,



Jennifer J. Nichols  
Associate Secretary  
Department of Academic Freedom, Tenure, and Governance

CC: John Sexton, President  
David McLaughlin, Provost  
Linda Mills, Vice Chancellor for Global Programs and University Life, NYU  
Nancy Morrison, Vice President for Global Programs  
Bruce Edelstein, Coordinator of Graduate Programs and Advanced Research, NYU Florence  
Andrew Ross, Chapter President, NYU-AAUP