

Due to concerns about COVID-19, the AAUP office has [transitioned to telework](#). Please contact staff by [email](#).

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## Statement on COVID-19 and the Faculty Role in Decision-Making

*AAUP president Rudy Fichtenbaum has issued the following statement on campus responses to the coronavirus:*

As we are learning, COVID-19 (the coronavirus) has the potential to present a serious challenge to the health and safety of our campus communities. At this time, campuses in Washington State, New York State, California, Nebraska, and elsewhere have closed or moved to all-online teaching, and a number of study-abroad programs have been cut short or suspended altogether.

Administrations are taking the potential health impact of the virus seriously, and we applaud their efforts to do so. The safety of the students, the staff, and the faculty should be everyone's primary concern. We are hearing from AAUP members, however, that decisions to close campuses or to move to an all-online model for the short term are being made without adequate faculty involvement in decision-making. The AAUP's 1966 *Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities* makes clear that "the faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, . . . and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process."

In certain situations, it is necessary to close a campus or move to online instruction to safeguard the health of the campus community. Faculty and academic staff—through their shared governance bodies or, when applicable, their unions—should be consulted on how best to implement this decision. In order to ensure full participation, administrations should share information with faculty and seek input from the appropriate faculty bodies. In cases where the institution is moving to an all-online model to avoid virus transmission on campus, it is incumbent on administrations to provide all instructional faculty with the appropriate software and training. Administrations should also consider the needs and limitations of students, who may lack access to the internet or face other obstacles to completing their coursework remotely.

It is hard to know what the ultimate impact of COVID-19 will be on our campuses. The administration should provide the appropriate faculty body—the union or the governance body—with information regarding the impact of COVID-19 on enrollments, revenues, and hiring and renewals. In the spirit of the AAUP's [One Faculty](#) campaign, we encourage our chapters to be especially sensitive to how these closures and any future curtailment of programs could affect our colleagues on full-time non-tenure-track or part-time contingent appointments.

The AAUP has developed a web page with resources on [COVID-19](#). We will continue to update this page as new resources become available. We also ask that chapters share information with us about what is being done on their campus and what the chapter or faculty senate's role has been in decision-making around campus closures and the implementation of all-online teaching.

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