

Faculty Senate Resolution 16–15

Regarding the Professor Watchlist

Sponsored by Tracey Rizzuto and Pam Monroe

Whereas Turning Point USA launched the Professor Watchlist on November 21, 2016, with the mission to “expose and document college professors who discriminate against conservative students and advance leftist propaganda in the classroom;”

Whereas the Professor Watchlist stands to target and stigmatize individual professors without grounds, evidence, or opportunity for defense or rebuttal;

Whereas the Professor Watchlist may result in students avoiding courses, discourse opportunities, and mentorship experiences based on perceived partisanship, thus depriving them of opportunities to develop critical thinking skills and expand the diversity of thought;

Whereas the LSU Office of the Dean of Students already provides an avenue for students to file complaints and appeals pertaining to classroom incidents and professional etiquette;

Whereas an LSU professor has already been named on the Professor Watchlist;

Whereas, our colleagues at an esteemed American institution, Notre Dame University, set the example and showed solidarity with peers named to the Professor Watchlist by petitioning to have the names of the entire faculty added to the list; [similar Faculty Senate statements are currently being considered at other institutions including Syracuse University, Loyola University of Chicago, among others].

Let it be resolved that this body condemns and rejects the punitive targeting of individual faculty members without recourse, defense or rebuttal.

Let it be further resolved that the faculty Senate requests we stand as One LSU to dilute the pressure and stigma imposed by the singling out of faculty through the following action.

Let it be resolved that LSU A&M publish a letter condemning the Turning Point USA Professor Watchlist, denouncing its credibility as evidence of faculty or instructor performance or reputation, and requesting that the LSU community stand together in solidarity with those LSU professors targeted, present and future.

Dear LSU Faculty, Staff, and Students,

The Louisiana State University (LSU) values diversity of thought, respect for others, and freedom of speech and expression. It is the view of our administration that watch lists, like the one maintained by Turning Point USA, are attempts to intimidate and stigmatize individuals, as well as restrict academic freedom and freedom of speech in the academy.

The faculty colleagues at our institution and others listed on such sites are philosophers, historians, theologians, ethicists, feminists, physical scientists, social scientists and others who have devoted their professional lives to the unyielding pursuit of truth, to the critical examination of assumptions that underlie social and political policy, and to honoring this country's commitments to the premise that all people are created equal and deserving of respect. LSU holds these values dear.

We at LSU come forward to condemn such tactics of intimidation, to denounce the credibility of such sources as evidence of faculty or instructor performance, reputation or character, and to request that we as a community stand together in solidarity with those LSU professors targeted, present and future.

Most sincerely,