

October 18, 2016

Dr. David Cockrum, Provost
University of Houston-Victoria
3007 North Ben Wilson
Victoria, Texas 77901

Provost Cockrum,

In my capacity as President of the Texas Conference of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), I am writing to convey our concern about reports of coercion of untenured faculty members in the School of Business Administration (SBA) at the University of Houston-Victoria (UHV). As you are doubtless aware, the AAUP's primary mission is to serve the common good by formulating sound standards on academic freedom, tenure, and shared governance in higher education.

SBA faculty members have informed us that several of their untenured colleagues had been urged to sign a document pledging their support for the dean of the SBA in advance of a faculty vote of confidence/no confidence in this administrator. The Texas Conference of the AAUP considers such a request contrary to the fundamental principles of academic freedom. That this pledge of support was placed before untenured faculty members, several of whom, we understand, are eligible for promotion and tenure this year, and that members of the SBA administration were reportedly present when these signatures were solicited, heightens our concern. This is compounded by reports that such a pledge has been used in the recent past in the SBA.

Our information about this matter has come to us exclusively from faculty members in the business school, and we appreciate that you may have other information that would improve our understanding of what has occurred. We would therefore welcome your comments at this email address and/or mailing address:

Jklein20@gmail.com
3501 Monterrey St.
Corpus Christi, TX 78411

In the meantime, we will continue to monitor the situation. Thank you for your consideration of this matter and for your commitment to higher education.

Sincerely,

James Klein
President
Texas Conference of the American Association of University Professors

Cc: Gregory F. Scholtz, Director, Department of Academic Freedom, Tenure, and Governance,
National AAUP