

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE: MARIAN UNIVERSITY (WISCONSIN)

The report of the Association's investigating committee described the situation at Marian University as resembling that of many of the institutions discussed in the special report on the COVID-19 pandemic and academic governance. The university, having had financial problems for some time, suddenly suspended its normal processes, announced an "enrollment emergency" without declaring a state of financial exigency, and ignored any obligations to observe AAUP-supported governance standards. It did so, the report observed, to facilitate making quick personnel changes, including the termination and nonrenewal of the appointments of nine tenured or tenure-track faculty members (out of a total of around seventy). The report surmised that many of these changes might have been under consideration previously, but that the pandemic provided an "alternative explanation" for what may have been long-standing goals of cost-cutting, achieving leaner operations, and reducing student choices. The report emphasized that AAUP-supported governance and academic freedom standards serve different goals: improving educational quality by bringing professional expertise to bear on curricular decision-making and by protecting academic freedom through academic due process and tenure. The report expressed the hope that Marian University had not permanently abandoned these principles and goals, the importance of which it affirms in its regulations.

The investigating committee found that, in acting to close programs and terminate the appointments of nine tenured and tenure-track faculty members, the administration and governing board of Marian University disregarded principles and standards of academic governance articulated in the *Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities* as well as principles and standards of academic freedom and tenure.

The Committee on College and University Governance recommends to the AAUP's governing Council that Marian University be added to the Association's list of institutions sanctioned for substantial non-compliance with standards of academic government.