

# SCHOLARS AT RISK

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CHEA Summer Workshop, Washington DC, June 25, 2014

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## AAUP-CHEA Advisory Statement on Accreditation & Academic Freedom (Oct '12)

“The success of American higher education, including the high regard in which it is held worldwide, is explained in good measure by the **observance of academic freedom**. This freedom is **manifested institutionally** as colleges and universities seek to conduct their educational missions without inappropriate influence from external centers of power—**public and private**. It is **manifested professionally** as faculty seek to test and **disseminate** knowledge, **to instill** independence of mind and **to engage** in debate over **institutional and public** policies.”

## RQ restatement of AAUP-CHEA:

The [quality] of ~~American~~ higher education ...is explained in good measure by the observance of [core university values,] including:

- institutional autonomy from public and private powers
- academic freedom in research, publication, teaching and learning also (aka student academic rights/freedom)
- accountability, including shared governance & transparency
- social responsibility, including engaging in debate on “public policies”; *raises issue of on-campus vs. off-campus action*) & (missing from text, but presumptively intended is:
- equitable access to higher ed on merit (anti-discrimination principle; *but what about cost barriers to higher ed?*)

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## **AAUP-CHEA questions:**

- To what extent are accrediting organizations alert to the importance of [university values]?
- To what extent do [accreditation] standards give adequate guidance on the subject of [university values and quality] and capture the significance of institutional decision making and the faculty's role in that process?
- To what extent are these standards realized in application, by periodic inspection and, particularly, on occasions when major controversies erupt?
- Need more be done?

## AAUP-CHEA questions: (RQ replies)

- To what extent are accrediting organizations alert to the importance of [university values]? **(Generally aware/supportive, but without full attention, especially in the international context.)**
- To what extent do [accreditation] standards give adequate guidance on the subject of [university values and quality] and capture the significance of institutional decision making and the faculty's role in that process? **(Any guidance likely limited to general principles, not specific implementation.)**
- To what extent are these standards realized in application, by periodic inspection and, particularly, on occasions when major controversies erupt? **(Controversies may trigger substantial reflection, but generally no regular, on-going, transparent assessment of adherence to core values.)**
- Need more be done? **(Yes!)**

## AAUP-CHEA suggestions for concrete action:

- **Emphasize [university values]** in the context of accreditation review, stressing [their meaning, essential value & contributions to quality].
- **Affirm the role** that accreditation plays in the protection and advancement of [university values]. **(Supportive statements are vital, but...)**
- **Review current accreditation standards**, policies and procedures with regard to [university values] and assure that institutions and programs accord with high expectations in this vital area. **(... move beyond statements to concrete, implementing processes/mechanisms. This is most important!)**
- Focus on [university values] at **accreditation meetings (Like now.)**
- **Explore partnerships** among accreditors to concentrate additional attention on [university values] and further secure the commitment of the entire accreditation community. **(SAR ready to help but need accreditors to lead!)**

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