



# PROTECT IU NEWSLETTER

---

**Protect Shared Governance. Protect Diversity. Protect Due Process.  
Protect Academic Freedom. Protect Students and Staff. Protect the Future.  
(No. 3, March 10, 2025)**

The new surveillance cameras in Dunn Meadow.

## THE TRUSTEES AND LEGISLATURE TURN THE SCREWS

This newsletter has been hard to write—facing threats from all directions, it's tough for faculty to know where to focus. Here's where we landed:

- *UA-08: Deleting Shared Governance (Literally)*
- *Plagiarism as a Path to Career Advancement for IU's President*
- *More Anti-DEI Bills at the Statehouse*
- *Why Doesn't the BFC President Want to Talk about It?*

*Surveillance comes to Dunn Meadow*

### UA-08: The Board of Trustees unilaterally ends shared governance

The notion of shared governance—that both the faculty and administration are active contributors to important university policy—has long been on the ropes at IU. But with the promulgation of [UA-08 Policy Development, Revision, and Retirement](#) the Board of Trustees has delivered the knockout punch.

Released on February 20<sup>th</sup> as a replacement for the [previous version](#) of the policy (2013), the document literally deletes shared governance, removing this key phrase:

Academic policies shall be adopted and posted in accordance with the principles of shared governance of Indiana University.

Most of the rest of the changes to the document flow from this erasure. The previous policy aimed for a “*consistent, transparent, and inclusive development process.*” Those words are gone from the new revision. So is the previous policy's 30-day period for feedback, as well as a specific position, the *Policy Facilitator*, responsible for ensuring that all questions raised in that 30-day period were addressed.

Faculty input into policy development is limited to the presence of the UFC co-chairs on the new *Policy Executive Committee*, serving alongside at least 10 upper administrators. The UFC votes up or down on completed academic proposals, but has no say in administrative policy proposals. A 10-day public review period is allowed. but only *after* the policy has received final approval from the responsible

...and only after the policy has received final approval from the responsible administrator or the UFC, with no assurance that responses will be considered or responded to.

One of the most telling changes is the deletion from the previous version that “Indiana University establishes university-wide policies to *further the university’s mission.*” The new UA-08 makes it abundantly clear that the Board of Trustees and this administration believe that their mission is to consolidate the power and authority of the President and Board of Trustees.

## **IU’s President faces credible accusations of plagiarism...**

As the [Chronicle of Higher Education reported](#), based on a [detailed analysis](#) by a recognized expert, Pamela Whitten’s PhD dissertation contains copied language. At [plagiarism.iu.edu](http://plagiarism.iu.edu), the pattern of plagiarism described by the Chronicle is called “the crafty coverup.”

As usual, Whitten hired an unnamed “independent” law firm that found, unsurprisingly, that accusations of her plagiarism have “[no merit.](#)” IU has refused to name the independent law firm. When Indiana Public Media issued a public records request for the report, [IU denied the request](#), saying the materials are “protected by attorney-client privilege.”

Plagiarism can end the career of a faculty member or student. It ended the presidency of [Claudine Gay](#) at Harvard. One might well ask why such consequences don’t seem to apply to Pam Whitten.

### **What You Can Do**

- There is a petition to rescind the PhD accorded by University of Kansas to Pamela S. Whitten in 1996. You can sign it [here](#).

## **...but with this Board, that’s no obstacle to a rewarding package**

In the hours leading up to the Board of Trustees meeting on February 20th, a rather puzzling item appeared on the agenda, stating only that it had to do with President Whitten’s contract. The clandestine agenda item was of course a [five year contract extension](#) that also raised her base salary to \$900,000. That package was approved by the Board with an 8-1 margin. It puts the only university president in the nation with over a 90% no confidence vote at the [70<sup>th</sup> percentile of salary](#) among Big Ten presidents for five more years.

How does that happen?

Whitten owes a debt of thanks to W. Quinn Buckner, Chair of the IU Board of Trustees. In the face of the no confidence votes and [school after school at IUB](#) calling for her and her lieutenants' resignations, Buckner issued a [statement](#) that "President Whitten has my full support and that of every member on the Board of Trustees." That statement was demonstrably untrue: Another Trustee, Vivian Winston, later stepped forward and said she [did not support Whitten](#).

Buckner apparently gets some benefits in return. As Indiana Public Media [recently reported](#): "Indiana University paid more than \$13,500 for a one-way chartered flight for Board of Trustees Chair Quinn Buckner to travel from a March 2024 board meeting to New Orleans, where Buckner [served as a television commentator](#) for that night's Indiana Pacers game."

### **SB 289: More anti-DEI legislation at the Statehouse**

Most expected that the first anti-DEI bill to come out of the legislature, SEA 202 (2024), would not be the last. Indeed, five explicitly anti-DEI bills, and another that would have turned all schools in Gary and the Indianapolis Public Schools into [charter schools](#), were introduced in this legislative session. Somewhat surprisingly, only one of those bills, SB 289 *Nondiscrimination in employment and education*, made it through the first half of the session.

Even though somewhat watered down, SB 289 poses [significant threats](#) to universities in Indiana. It prohibits DEI offices and DEI officers, as well as bringing in outside DEI consultants. Institutions violating the provision could face a fine from the attorney general of \$250,000 for each violation. While K-12 school districts and state agencies would need to post all materials used for any trainings on the topics of nondiscrimination, diversity, equity, inclusion, race, ethnicity, sex and bias, universities would not yet face such requirements.

While the failure of five of six anti-civil rights bills is encouraging, portions of those bills could still be amended into another bill. We encourage you to closely attend to the progress of SB 289 as it moves through the Indiana House.

### **What you can do...**

- Monitor the progress of SB 289 on the [IGA website](#) or through policy publications like the [Capital Chronicle](#) or [Chalkbeat Indiana](#).
- Join organizations, like the [University Alliance for Racial Justice](#) or the [Indiana Coalition for Public Education](#) to keep you informed of legislative developments and citizen actions.

## **“Lets just not talk about it”: The blank spaces in the BFC agenda**

A restrictive new expressive activity policy and candlelight vigils in protest throughout the semester. An anti-DEI bill passed by the state legislature, with more on the way. The closing of the Intensive Freshman Seminar and defunding of the Center for Research on Race and Ethnicity in Society. The end of tenure as we know it. These are clearly issues that affect IU faculty profoundly.

But you’d never know it from discussions at the Bloomington Faculty Council.

Since beginning her term, BFC President Danielle DeSawal, along with Provost Shrivastav, have sought to minimize conversation on any of these topics. Requests by BFC members to have SEA 202 placed on the agenda were rebuffed until over 200 faculty signed a petition calling for it to be discussed, and neither 202 nor the expressive activity policy have been allowed on the agenda since.

AAUP President Alex Tanford suggested that low interest among faculty in running for the BFC may be due in part to the lack of substantive discussion at BFC meetings. In response, BFC members three times this semester requested that time be set aside for a standing agenda item for New Business. DeSawal and the Provost resolutely opposed those motions, which were finally heard and passed on the third try.

## **Smile! 😊 You’re on surveillance camera...**

Nothing says free speech like CCTV cameras!

After 136 days being closed and fenced-off, Dunn Meadow was re-opened in December, with security cameras posted on the perimeter of the meadow. The IUPD refused to answer questions about the move, saying it doesn’t comment on security cameras.

As you recall, the administration suspended a 55-year old policy setting Dunn Meadow aside as a free speech zone, in a late night meeting only hours before police and snipers arrived. Then, with the support of the Board of Trustees, the administration annulled the special status of Dunn Meadow with a [restrictive expressive activity policy](#) in the dead of summer when faculty and students were away. That policy and its revision have both been the topic of [lawsuits from the ACLU](#).

The placement of the security cameras begs the question: Security against what?

Dunn Meadow doesn’t seem a particularly promising hotspot for identifying crime

Dunn Meadow doesn't seem a particularly promising hotspot for identifying crime. Virtually the only violence seen in the Meadow since being set aside as a free speech zone in 1969 was the assault on 55 peaceful protesters by state police last April.

There is of course another, darker reason for video monitoring of citizens. In China, the government of President Xi Jinping has posted over 600 million cameras on the streets for domestic surveillance. Posting security cameras in a quiet verdant meadow seems to be pointless...unless you view free speech as a prohibited activity.

## Commentary

### **IU's Leadership, Then and Now...**

Pamela Whitten [portrays herself](#) as a leader creating “transformative progress.” Yet time and again she has stood in firm opposition to the values and principles that define this university. In such times, we would do well to reflect on a real leader of this institution, an iconic figure of our heritage.

During and after his tenure as President, Herman Wells was a staunch defender of free speech and civil rights. He steadfastly defended Alfred Kinsey when others were excoriating him, and actively encouraged the development of the Kinsey Institute, both verbally and financially. In 1962, Wells received the [NAACP Golden Brotherhood](#) award for his work ending segregation on campus and discrimination in athletics.

He set aside office hours where anyone could come and talk with him about anything. And while you couldn't call Wells an uncritical admirer of 1960s student protest, he was always willing to listen. This archival image shows Wells meeting with some members of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) in 1969.

At the core of many of Herman Wells' messages to the University community was the notion of mutual respect. He clearly expected student protesters to maintain civility and respect the institution and those administering it. Yet he also argued that administration must reciprocate that respect towards students and faculty.

Unfortunately, that notion of mutuality seems to have vanished from administrative consciousness. Upper administration representatives demand to be respected: After receiving tough questions over the course of several BFC meetings, the Provost subjected BFC members last October to a ten minute lecture on the importance of maintaining protocol and decorum. Yet this Administration consistently violates its own dictums. Reversing long-established policy in midnight conclaves. Announcing the termination of an effective program (Intensive Freshman Seminar) during a celebration of that program's accomplishments. Stonewalling departments and

faculty seeking to know if they'll be the next targets of retrenchment. Ramming through unenforceable and possibly unconstitutional "free speech" policies. Arresting and pointing military grade weapons at students and faculty.

There could not be a starker contrast between such actions and the ideal of mutuality and respect that Herman B. Wells endorsed and embodied. He expressed his philosophy of administration in his autobiography, *[Being Lucky](#)*:

*Remind yourself daily that general administration must be the servant, never the master, of the academic community.... It follows, therefore, that generally the least administration possible is the best.*

We are the ones who were lucky in having had such a leader helping grow Indiana University. We should defend his legacy today.

## **OTHER DEVELOPMENTS**

- Members of the BFC raised serious questions about the erosion of shared governance in the new policy on policies *UA-08* at its [most recent meeting](#)
- IU has been [named a 'hostile campus'](#) by the Council on American Islamic Relations
- Concerned Scientists @ IU and its student affiliate Advocates for Science @ IU published an [Open Letter](#) to the President and Provost, urging them to speak publicly and forcefully in support of the scientific community in the face of numerous recent national threats.

- How much are IU administrators paid to mismanage and create harm at the University? Read [this article](#) by our talented student journalists for the answer (Note that among the lowest paid upper administrators at IU is the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Rashad Nelms).

## FOR YOUR READING PLEASURE

The University Alliance for Racial Justice now has a Substack site where you can find commentary about the University and state, and even previous editions of the Protect IU newsletter! Some representative recent works:

- [\*The Legacy of Herman B. Wells: A Man for Our Time\*](#)
- [\*National and State Leaders Pushing Us into Racial Conflict: Is That Really What Hoosiers Want?\*](#)
- [\*Indiana's Anti-DEI Bill: A Referendum on Racism?\*](#)
- [\*Resolve to Get Involved ...a call to action\*](#)

## WHAT YOU CAN DO: FACULTY MOBILIZATION & EVENTS

- Join the [University Alliance for Racial Justice](#), the campus and statewide organization fighting anti-CRT and anti-DEI legislation in the statehouse and SEA 202 at IU. Email [uarj2024@gmail.com](mailto:uarj2024@gmail.com) to get on the UARJ listserv.
- A group of colleagues are exploring the option for IU faculty to unionize. More on that soon. If interested, contact Professor Ben Robinson at [brobinso1@gmail.com](mailto:brobinso1@gmail.com).
- Participate with students and faculty in the [IU Green Feather Movement](#), originally founded in 1954 to fight McCarthyism, and recently re-formed to face the new challenges. If interested, please email [greenfeathercoalition@proton.me](mailto:greenfeathercoalition@proton.me)

*NOTE ON THIS NEWSLETTER: Since our community--faculty, staff and students--lacks channels to communicate among ourselves during this critical time, a group of faculty members offers this periodic newsletter updating ourselves about significant and continuing threats to the University community from the administration and statehouse. It is not affiliated with any group, including those whose activities are described.*

*We welcome tips or suggestions for stories you would like to see covered. Email us at: [protect.iu.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:protect.iu.newsletter@gmail.com)*

*If you do not wish to receive future mailings, you may unsubscribe from the list by emailing [protect.iu.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:protect.iu.newsletter@gmail.com)*

