

Pratt

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"Any woman in my position has seen the struggles too many women have faced of being fully able to enter into the professional life while juggling other roles and expectations that society has placed on her."

Behind this woman of policies, politics and responsibilities lies an artist, a musician and a poet.

Pratt said her artistic interests balanced her work.

"I need the two to balance myself," she said. "We all have to live in the world, but we each need a place to ourselves."

She has found her niche as head of the 45,000-member AAUP, which works to defend academic freedom and professors' tenure.

By creating policies and investigating possible violations of academic freedom and tenure on campuses across the United States, she said, the AAUP sets standards for the conditions in which faculty work. The association makes sure structures and salaries remain fair for professors and ethical conduct is ensured.

"We keep track of what is happening in higher education and what sort of things are affecting budget, employment and professional practice to protect the quality of life of the professor," Pratt said.

Most of the standards by which universities operate, such as protecting the rights of free thinking and free speech on campus, are AAUP standards designed to protect academic freedom, she said.

"Much of what we do by way of investigations and policy recommendations are designed to protect academic freedom and faculty who might be charged with something that violated their academic freedom," Pratt said.

"A professor has to have the right to teach or research a subject that might be controversial to someone."

If a professor's contract is terminated because of an infringement of his or her academic freedom, Pratt said, the AAUP will investigate and publish the results.

"We're not having many outrageous violations of academic freedom in this country," she said. "But we are in danger of having deep violations of tenure because of budget cuts."

Pratt said some schools had responded to budget cuts by trying to terminate tenured faculty.

"When you start terminating your tenured faculty, you take away the protection of tenure, and . . . it becomes a less stable thing," she said.

"If a faculty member can't feel secure that their tenure is there, as long as they are doing a good job, they feel more vulnerable, and that affects

Chambers

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aid they are eligible for — will be in violation of NCAA rules if they play against Utah in Nebraska's season-opener Saturday at Memorial Stadium.

But state law prevents coaches from keeping players out of competition for the sole purpose of avoiding NCAA rules violations.

Chambers said there was a viable solution.

"The athletic department finally admitted that the only program affected by the bill is their walk-on program," he said. "They should abolish it, and stop luring impoverished young men to make money for the university and none for themselves."

The players are lost in the shuffle when the university and the NCAA are at odds, he said, and are ultimately the ones who suffer.

Chambers said athletic department officials had been too busy "breast-beating, whining and pulling their hair out" over the NCAA's action and hadn't spent enough time finding solutions to the problem.

"What irritates me is that the university made a last-minute request to the NCAA for an interpretation on the rule," he said. "This case has been pending for a long time."

Chambers said the athletic department needed to assume more responsibility for its student-athletes.

their ability to speak and write freely." The AAUP also is looking at issues concerning the fiscal crisis, Pratt said. The association is gathering information from all states to publish a regular update on what officials on different campuses are doing about budget woes.

Classroom overload, cuts in faculty and programs, and the acute problem of access to classes and higher

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— Pratt
AAUP president

education, she said, are factors affecting universities across the nation. States that once had stable budgets — that could cover the expenses of public education — are finding their budgets drained by the added burden of paying for federal programs, Pratt said.

Many students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, she said, already have felt the pressure of not being able to get the courses they want and sitting in overcrowded classes.

"Many other institutions have an even more acute problem with that than Nebraska does," she said.

The danger of having an education system that lacks funding and a public that needs more higher education, Pratt said, is an increase in tuition and more restrictive admissions standards.

"You just can't have it both ways," she said. "You can't cut it back financially and expand it to meet the public demand at the same time."

"The reductions in funding higher education across the United States are posing very serious problems for the life of higher education."

The AAUP is organizing a traveling group of staff and faculty members who have had experience dealing with the fiscal crisis.

By visiting different campuses, Pratt said, the group will help individual universities deal with budget cuts, professional ethics and other education dilemmas.

The AAUP has members from all fifty states and territories, she said. Eastern European countries have requested advice from the association on how to run their systems.

"Now that those countries and universities are free to shape their own policies," Pratt said, "we've had a lot of contact from Eastern European universities (that) want us to advise them on how to write policies to protect academic freedom and tenure."

But, he said, "if we don't hear anything, then no news is good news." Dutcher said he was unsure what type of sanction UNL would receive if it was found guilty of the violation.

NCAA

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Al Papik, assistant athletic director for compliance and administration at UNL, said he was uncertain what route he would take if three or four Cornhusker players accepted their aid.

ASUN supports Chinese activist

From Staff Reports

ASUN has joined University of Nebraska at Kearney students in support of Chinese pro-democracy demonstrator Shen Tong.

Andrew Sigerson, president of the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska, Trent Steele, first vice president, and ASUN senators signed a petition at Wednesday's ASUN meeting condemning the Chinese government's arrest of Tong, who was taken into custody Tuesday in Beijing.

Tong, 24, was a leader of the student pro-democracy movement and one of the organizers of the 1989 Tiananmen Square demonstrations.

He had been back in China for one month when he was arrested.

The students plan to send the petitions, including one signed by the University of Nebraska at Omaha student government, to U.S. senators, President Bush and the Chinese Embassy.

Steele said he hoped the petition made a difference, and he was happy to see Nebraska's universities working together.

"It's good to be working with our friends at UNK," he said. "Hopefully, working together we can make things happen."

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