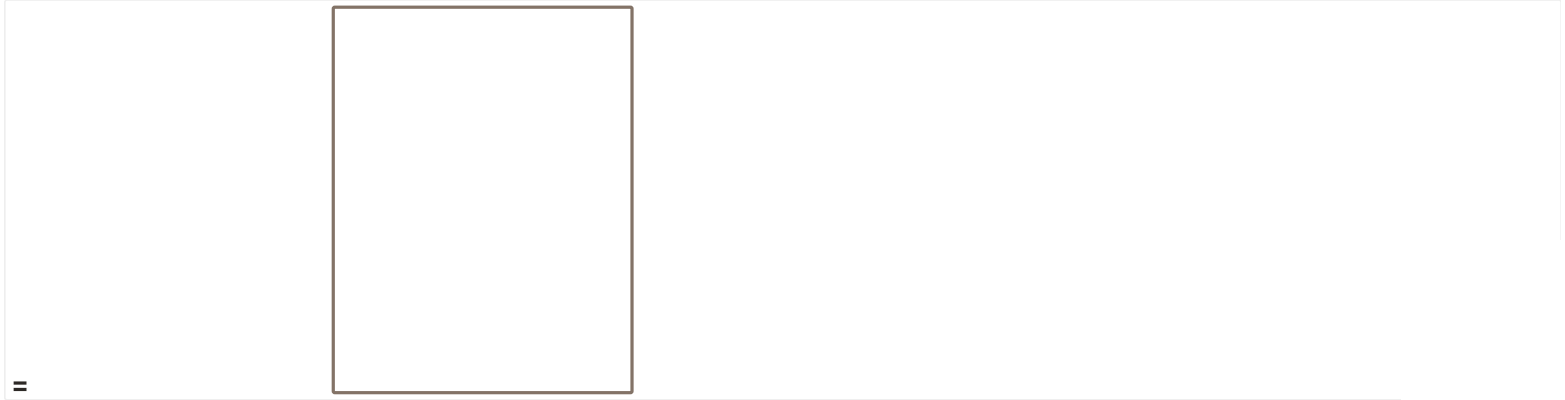




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NEWS

Alabama professors react as Auburn takes more control over faculty, curriculum

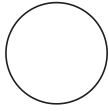
Published: Jun. 14, 2026, 8:10 a.m.



Previously known as The Ferguson Center, the University of Alabama Student Center on campus. University of Alabama students brought their umbrellas and raincoats on a wet first day of the fall semester Wednesday, Aug. 17, 2022. (Ben Flanagan / AL.com)



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Alabama professors react as Auburn takes more control over faculty, curriculum

About 2 Minutes



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By [Williesha Morris | wmorris@al.com](#)

After Auburn University made sweeping changes to faculty representation and curriculum, professors at other schools are wondering whether they are next.

Last week, Auburn’s Board of Trustees [dissolved its faculty senate](#) and asserted more control over curriculum.

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“Faculty governance is one of the key safeguards against institutional indoctrination,” said Matthew Hudnall, a University of Alabama professor. The university is a place where “people are allowed to question, challenge and test ideas.”

Auburn voted to [dissolve its faculty senate](#) months after Gov. Kay Ivey signed HB580, legislation that limited the power of faculty senate groups.

Auburn and Alabama had an exemption from the state law, which applies to other public universities.



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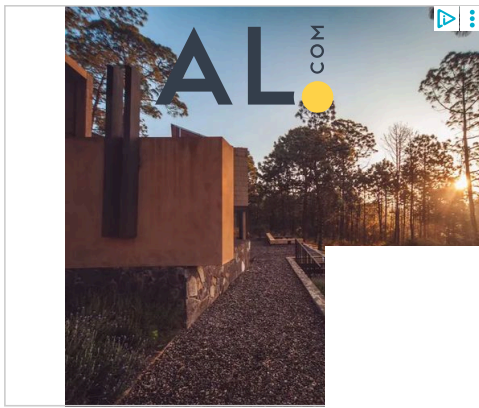
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No other universities have made any changes so far.

Hudnall said Auburn’s new presidential academic advisory council makes faculty advice “subordinate to the president and board where final control over curriculum is concentrated at the top.”

“When faculty are reduced to a limited advisory role, and when curriculum can be directed from the top down without strong independent academic checks, the university weakens its protection against turning education into institutional messaging.”

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Sara McDaniel is an education professor at Alabama and president of UA's chapter of the AAUP. She said she was "confused and surprised" about the changes.

She said she thought the board "overcorrected" because of concerns that state legislators had about content they didn't agree with, especially in the wake of SB 129, which banned diversity, equity and inclusion programming.

Auburn responded to AL.com's request for comment with a [news release on the changes](#). The University of Alabama System declined to comment.

There have been no signs of any major changes coming to Alabama, according to Hudnall and McDaniel.

McDaniel said the AAUP and Provost Lesley Reid have "collaborative back and forth communication" and a good working relationship.

She said the faculty senate is strong and working with the board of trustees to ensure they're complying with the law.

"We haven't heard of any big changes that are coming down," McDaniel said.

"Our faculty are experts in their fields, and I don't believe anyone wants to remove that expertise and substitute it with reduced input and narrowed perspectives," Hudnall said.



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