

COALITION FOR ACADEMIC JUSTICE



Press Release

Coalition for Academic Justice
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June 1, 2020

For: Immediate Release

Layoffs and Non-Renewals Begin, While New Contracts are Created for Administrators and Coaches at the UA

Tucson, Ariz. – Layoffs and non-renewals of key personnel at the University of Arizona are now underway. The university administration has not been forthcoming about who and how many people are being let go, but members of the Coalition for Academic Justice at the UA (CAJUA) have been fielding calls from staff and faculty who say they either have been given termination notices or notices that their contracts will not be renewed. At the same time, a new coach and another vice provost have been hired.

The layoffs and non-renewals of faculty and staff will impact the quality of teaching and services at the university. The contracts of numerous staff members in UA Thrive Center and Think Tank, have not been renewed, and there have been layoffs at the UA Bookstore. Other staff layoffs are likely in other units such as Study Abroad. In addition, at least 29 faculty in an award-winning writing program in the English Department have not been renewed. Faculty who remain in the writing program are being encouraged to take pay cuts, so that their colleagues can be rehired. Such an arrangement pits instructor against instructor. The CAJUA brought these concerns before the UA Faculty Senate meeting this afternoon, June 1, at 3 pm. The organization also released a top-down and alternative furlough/pay-cut plan at the meeting.

One CAJUA member stated, “While the CAJUA recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic has seriously hurt the economic situation at the UA, our group is extremely concerned about the types of layoffs the administration has begun to implement. These layoffs and non-renewals cut into one of the core missions of the university – teaching.” The Coalition calls on the UA administration to reconsider these layoffs and non-renewals and instead implement a more equitable approach to addressing the shortfall. In 2019, the university had more than 580 employees making more than \$200,000 annually. The CAJUA is unaware of any cuts among the administration.

Cutting key programs such as the Think Tank, an academic tutoring service, Thrive, a community-building program for first-generation and underrepresented students, and Student Success and Retention Innovation will directly and negatively impact the very students these programs were designed to assist.

Alex Karaman, who worked as project coordinator for the Masculinities in the Mix program just received a notice of non-renewal. “Those of us who have been non-renewed, including myself, received little or no notice and others who are still employed are nervous that they are next. I have worked at the university for eight years and got two degrees here and naively thought that time would count for something. None of us have seen this lack of transparency and leadership before,” said Karaman.

Since April 17, when the UA administration rolled out its first furlough plan, it has been adjusted at least twice. The CAJUA requests that administrators consider a more compassionate plan (a core UA value) that protects the most vulnerable students, staff and faculty at the university, and abandon its current regressive response to the pandemic.

The Coalition for Academic Justice is a campus-wide group comprised of graduate students, staff, and faculty that formed shortly after the [financial stability plan](#) was released on Friday, April 17.

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