



Australian Association of University Professors annual conference 2022: Academics in the University of the 21st Century

Thursday February 17th, 2022

Zoom: <https://jcu.zoom.us/j/87438885740>

Passcode: 660261

Meeting ID: 874 3888 5740

Foreword

The Australian Association of University Professors (AAUP) was founded to address the decades-long slide into a focus of the Australian Higher Education sector on monetary goals and top-down managerialism. These changes have reduced academic freedom and autonomy and, consequently, the influence of academics over key decisions concerned with the quality of research and teaching. It is time to re-conceptualise the academic role in the context of these systemic changes to ensure the essence of their work is understood, acknowledged, valued and supported. Only in this way can Universities again fulfil their broader role within Australian society.

The 'Pillars of a University (What a University should be)' was formulated by the AAUP Council following extensive national consultation with members¹. The needs are clear. Universities should be preparing students to identify and confront the challenges of the future. Getting them ready for jobs that may no longer exist by the time of their graduation is insufficient. Higher education has disappeared from public debate and political view during recent elections. This is a dangerous development for the future of Australian democracy.

Refocusing public debate on future-proofing our universities will help maintain a robust Australian civil society. The strength of our institutions of government depends on the strength of our system of education. In this context, we strongly endorse academic freedom when speaking or writing as scholars and citizens as this is essential for a modern democracy that needs to be able to take on challenges such as COVID-19 biosecurity, climate change or increasing competition from artificial intelligence.

The last year has seen a broadening of recognition of the threats to Australian Higher Education and the maintenance of a robust democracy. This has seen the formation of a new coalition of concerned academics and students – Public Universities Australia ([PUA](#)). This organization was formed from the AAUP, Academics for Public Universities (APU) and the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA). We have also begun or deepened new relationships with similar organizations internationally – the American Association of University Professors (also [AAUP](#)), the National Council of University Professors based in the United Kingdom ([NCUP](#)) and the Canadian Association of University Teachers ([CAUT](#)).

Today we will explore some of the issues faced by Higher Education and the role of the academic in the 21st Century University, what's working, what's not ... Welcome to the Conference!

¹ <http://www.professoriate.org/2020/03/21/statement-on-academic-freedom-the-pillars-of-a-university-what-a-university-should-be/>

start date	Thursday February 17th, 2022				Wednesday February 16th, 2022		
location	WA	QLD	NSW/VIC/TAS	NZ	US west	US east	UK
start time	6am	8am	9am	11am	2pm	5pm	10pm
difference	-3 hrs	-1 hr	0	+2 hrs	-19 hrs	-16 hrs	-11 hrs

Program (note: times below based on Australian Eastern Daylight Saving Time in bold above)

Session 1 – International and National perspectives on Higher Education in the 21st Century

09:00 - 09:10 Introduction, welcome and housekeeping – Michael Bird, JCU

09:10 – 09:30 National Council of University Professors (UK-NCUP) Overview, perspective and issues – Janet Wilson, University of Northampton (outgoing) and Roger Watson, University of Hull (incoming) NCUP president (15min talk, 5min questions) <http://www.ncup.org.uk/>

09:30 – 09:50 American Association of University Professors (US-AAUP) Overview, perspective and issues – Chris Sinclair, Secretary Treasurer of the AAUP, introduced by Michael Levitan, Villanova University (15min talk, 5min questions) <https://www.aaup.org>

09:50 – 10:10 Canadian Association of University Teachers (CA-CAUT) Overview, perspective and issues - David Robinson, Executive Director (15min talk, 5min questions) <https://www.caut.ca>

10:10 – 10:30 Twenty minutes for further questions and/or break

10:30 – 10:45 Academics for Public Universities – (AU-APU) Overview and perspectives on Public Universities Australia – Peter Tregear, University of Melbourne, <https://publicuniversities.org>

10:45 – 11:00 Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (AU-CAPA) Overview and perspectives on Public Universities Australia – Errol Phuah, President <http://www.capa.edu.au>

11:00 – 11:15 Australian Association of University Professors (AU-AAUP) - Overview and perspectives on Public Universities Australia – Manuel Graeber, AAUP President, USYD (10 min talk, 5 min questions) <http://www.professoriate.org>

11:15 – 11:30 National Tertiary Education Union (AU-NTEU) Academic Freedom in Australia – Kelly Thomas, Chief Legal Officer <https://www.nteu.org.au>

11:30 – 11:45 general discussion

11:45 – 12:00 fifteen minutes for additional discussion and/or break

Session 2 – An ethical framework for Academics in the 21st Century

12:00 – 12:30 Towards a Professional Ethical Framework for Academics – John Kenny, University of Tasmania, on behalf of the AU-AAUP Ethical framework working party

12:30 – 13:00 Discussion

13:00 – 13:15 closing remarks (Michael Bird, JCU) with additional time for discussion as required till 14:00