

From: John Zomchick, Provost provost@utk.edu
Subject: Response to questions about faculty rights of Dr. Anming Hu
Date: August 4, 2021 at 1:06 PM
To: John Zomchick, Provost provost@utk.edu



Colleagues

I recently provided information to Faculty Senate President Lou Gross to address his questions regarding the faculty rights of Dr. Anming Hu. I thought it would be beneficial to share the response with all faculty. Dr. Gross agreed, and I am forwarding the message below to you.

*Thank you,
John*

Dear President Gross,

In response to your questions about whether the faculty rights of Dr. Anming Hu have been protected by the university during the ongoing criminal proceedings, I wanted to share the following information.

At every stage, the administration has followed the letter and spirit of the faculty handbook in observing Dr. Hu's tenure rights. While I cannot release detailed information about the university's internal review, I can share with you an accurate timeline of administrative actions taken regarding Dr. Hu's faculty appointment:

- On February 25, 2020, Dr. Hu was indicted by a Knoxville grand jury on six counts of grant fraud and making false statements to the government.
- On February 27, 2020, Dr. Hu was arrested, suspended with pay, and given notice of possible suspension without pay.
- On March 6, 2020, after Dr. Hu (through his lawyer) confirmed that he had been indicted, the suspension with pay was converted to a suspension without pay, as outlined by the faculty handbook.
- Dr. Hu (through his lawyer) requested that the university delay any further proceedings regarding his tenure until after the criminal case was resolved.
- Dr. Hu remained on unpaid leave (with access to benefits and other university resources) until October 8, 2020, after the university received notice of a change in Dr. Hu's immigration status. Dr. Hu was unable to renew his U.S. work authorization. At that point, the university could not legally continue to employ Dr. Hu.

We continue to follow the progress of the case. Should Dr. Hu be acquitted and have his work authorization restored, I plan to form a faculty committee to review his employment status and advise me on what further actions, if any, are appropriate.

Through the entire timeline of the case, the university has respected the legal process and been careful not to make public statements that might affect the ongoing criminal proceedings. UT fully supports its diverse and talented faculty and will continue its strong commitment to international collaboration across our academic, research, and outreach initiatives.

I believe the best forum to further discuss this matter is the Faculty Senate meeting in September, and I will be glad to listen to the Senate's concerns and answer additional questions.

I will share this message with the entire faculty later today.

Best regards,

John

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