

# Committee on the Defense of the Professional Rights of Philosophers

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## *2015-2016 Membership*

Judith Lichtenberg, chair (2017)

Joan McGregor (2016)

Timothy Shiell (2016)

Natalie Nenadic (2017)

Jacqueline Taylor (2017)

Heimir Geirsson (2018)

Connie Rosati (2018)

Geoffrey Sayre-McCord, *ex officio* (2016)

Amy Kind, *ex officio* (2017)

Andrea C. Westlund, *ex officio* (2018)

**2015-16 Report of the Committee for the Defense of the Professional Rights of Philosophers  
(CDPRP)**

**Submitted by Judith Lichtenberg, Chair, 2014-17  
September 27, 2016**

At its meeting on November 20, 2015 the APA board approved the recommendation of the CDPRP to lift the censure of the University of Houston. The UH philosophy department contacted the committee in December 2014 to inquire about the process for having censure lifted; the department had been under censure since 2010. For more information on the case, see last year's report from this committee.

In January I received messages, as chair of the committee, from Lucas Thorpe, a philosopher working at Bogazici University in Istanbul, and Eric Palmer, a philosopher at Allegheny College, about the dire state of academic freedom in Turkey. After consultation with committee members, we asked the APA Board to endorse a letter published by the organization Scholars at Risk condemning the punitive measures taken against Turkish academics who had signed a petition addressing government policies in southeastern Turkey. The board unanimously adopted the letter and issued a press release about it.

The committee received an inquiry in January from a faculty member at a small college in the West who had been accused by an administrator of plagiarism for a five-year review of the program he wrote at the request of the administration. In the (internal and unpublished) review, he had taken some material from other colleges' websites without attribution. The faculty member was charging the administrator with harassment and retribution (there had, he claimed, been previous incidents as well). After a few months of communication with both the faculty member and the administrator, the dispute seemed to peter out.

In July a young philosopher who had been teaching on a non-tenure line position (renewed each year) for several years at a public university in the South contacted the committee. Her most important complaint was that she had not been compensated, as she believed she should have been, for several courses she developed for the university. She also had not received a renewal contract until the day before the new contract was set to begin. The committee is in the process of reviewing her case and requesting further information from her and others at the university. From what we can tell at the moment, at least some of her complaints seem to be warranted.