

# RIDER UNIVERSITY CHAPTER

American Association of University Professors

2083 Lawrenceville Road

Lawrenceville, NJ 08648-3099

609-896-0092 email [aaup@rider.edu](mailto:aaup@rider.edu)

*vox facultatis*

March 1, 2018

Dear Colleagues,

Following today's conversation on the Princeton campus the AAUP leadership wishes to ensure all our members understand the union's position on Westminster's future. It is a position we have stated directly to the University administration, in public comments, and during our regular chapter meetings.

What are the goals of the AAUP's current actions?

- Stop the current process to sell Westminster Choir College.
- Begin a new process that actively involves all Westminster stakeholders.
- Allow those stakeholders to determine the future of Westminster.

Does the AAUP want Westminster to remain part of Rider?

Westminster is part of Rider. That means the AAUP is both morally and legally obligated to our members for as long as that is the case. Ideally, the two would remain together, but unfortunately, the actions of Rider's senior leadership have violated the trust of Westminster's stakeholders and the damage caused may be irreparable.

Thus, the only way the AAUP envisions a long-term continuation of the relationship between Rider and Westminster is under new senior leadership at the University — one that will seek to undo the present harm, restore trust, and support Westminster's mission.

In the absence of new senior leadership the AAUP sees no viable future for the 26-year relationship. Instead, Westminster and its stakeholders must be allowed to determine the future of the College. And that independence must not come with a price tag.

Under a "reset" could WCC stakeholders seek a new partner?

First of all, the AAUP believes the answer to that question ought to be determined by WCC stakeholders actively cooperating in a transparent process.

The administration's use of the word "partner" to date has been deliberately misleading. Kaiwen is a buyer, not a partner. It would own Westminster, which creates a power differential. It is beholden to shareholders who seek a profit rather than to stakeholders who believe in the nonprofit mission of Westminster.

True partners enter a mutual relationship willingly out of common interests and desires and do so in the bright light of stakeholder involvement throughout the entire process. A true partner would possess the expertise and experience to manage a highly specialized music college. No true partner would expect to pay a price for Westminster. Whether with a true partner or as a newly independent entity, Westminster would be free to seek true partnerships in China and elsewhere.

There is a AAUP chapter meeting on April 10 at 11:30 in Fireside Lounge. The Westminster situation is a primary topic of the agenda, as it has been since the administration's actions. During the meantime and afterwards, if you have questions regarding the AAUP's position or the actions being taken on your behalf, please don't hesitate to reach out to one of us or any other member of the Executive committee.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Scheiber, Jeff Halpern, and Joel Phillips  
On behalf of the AAUP Executive Committee