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Larry Stout, 2012 James D. Dougan Award Presentation

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2012 Presentation of the James Dougan Award for outstanding contributions to defending academic freedom and furthering faculty governance.

This year the Selection Committee of AAUP received four nominating letters that put forward three names for consideration. This year's selection received the unanimous support of the committee and myself.

I first met today's honoree on the very first committee on which I served, Curriculum Development. I was a newbie and still trying to figure out how things worked at Illinois Wesleyan. What I learned on this committee was that today's honoree would pick apart every course submission, would challenge every lazy assumption, would make every course proposal earn out approval. Of course, this meant lengthy committee meetings, and I remember walking home late one evening after such a meeting, wondering to myself, "Who is this guy?" This guy, it turned out, lived in my neighborhood, had children around the ages of our own, and saw to it that we became involved with the Dimitt's Grove Neighborhood Association.

As I watched "this guy" over the early years of my work at IWU, I learned that if you added it all up, he was both a mentor and a model to me in how to interact with the university. The first rule of faculty governance he taught me was that one has to participate. I believe our honoree has served on every faculty committee multiple times. His rule seems simple: if you are a faculty member, you serve your colleagues. And I agree with him: there is no better example of participation in governance than that.

The second aspect of governance he has modeled for me is a fearless commitment to holding all speakers at faculty meetings, especially administrators accountable for their proposals and their comments. With the same fastidiousness that he displayed in committee meetings, our honoree compelled Presidents and Provosts and Deans to calculate very carefully before they spoke. Our honoree knows the rules of parliamentary procedure better than any other human I have ever met, and has wielded this knowledge skillfully over the years to ensure as much as possible that we do the right things at the right time for the right reasons.

Finally, I have never seen our honoree fiddle around when it comes to faculty governance. We all know him to be a relentless pursuer of truth, and as such a staunch opponent to anything that keeps that truth out of our classrooms. Our honoree is a longtime supporter of the principles of AAUP, a man who insists we get it right; it is with enormous pleasure and deep deep humility that I announce the 2012 James Dougan Award recipient: Professor Larry Stout.

James D. Matthews
President