

Jiang's hiring by school draws protest

Written by Taipei Times

Monday, 06 August 2018 12:09 -



A plaque declaring National Chung Cheng University's support for academic freedom and the actions of students who participated in the Sunflower movement is pictured yesterday on the campus in Chiayi County's Minxiong Township.

Photo: Tseng Nai-chiang, Taipei Times

Three National Chung Cheng University alumni on Saturday launched an online petition calling on the school to fire former premier Jiang Yi-huah (江宜華) for ordering an eviction of student protesters occupying the Executive Yuan during the Sunflower movement protests in 2014.

Jiang was hired on Wednesday as a full-time professor at the Institute of Strategic and International Affairs.

In their petition, Lin Hung-tai (林宏泰), Hsu Yung (許瑢) and Tseng Yi-hsien (曾宜先) said the university should find someone more qualified for the position.

They cited Jiang's controversial late-night order on March 23, 2014, to evict student protesters who had occupied the Executive Yuan as part of the protests against a cross-strait service trade agreement, as well as new rules that would allow Jiang to receive additional subsidies without having to actually teach any classes.

The police used batons, sticks and two water cannon trucks to force the protesters from the complex by shooting after 5am the next morning. At least 110 people were injured in the crackdown, including 52 police officers, and 61 people were arrested.

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Following the eviction, the university had issued a statement supporting the movement.

The following July, a memorial plaque was installed on campus with a sentence from that statement: "Universities are considered the fifth power, in addition to the government and news media, for their fearless and unbiased devotion to knowledge and truth. Students and teachers' participation in public affairs in non-violent methods should not be defamed or disregarded, as it is what public intellectuals ought to do."

According to the petition, Jiang is to receive NT\$100,000 in addition to a monthly salary of NT\$116,000 for three years.

Jiang had previously taught at National Taiwan University's political science department, where an alumnus in 2014 launched a petition against the university rehiring him, Hsu said.

Even though that campaign gathered about 1,500 signatures, National Chung Cheng University decided to hire him, Hsu said.

If the university ignores the petition, the trio said they would ask the Control Yuan to investigate Jiang's hiring, Lin said.

Chen Shang-chih (陳尚希), an associate professor of political science at National Chung Cheng University, on Friday posted on Facebook that he disagreed with Jiang's decision to "clamp down on student movements" and urged him to pay a three-minute visit to the memorial plaque and think about what he did.

If Jiang did stay at the university, he should not be given any special privileges, but should be asked to teach enough courses to meet the school's requirement for professors to teach eight credits per semester.

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The university should also clarify Jiang's role as the chairman of Fair Winds Foundation, to ensure that he would not be violating the Principles Governing the Handling of Part-time Employment by Full-time Instructors at Public Schools of All Levels (師範法) or other regulations.

Jiang, who is traveling in the US, could not be reached for comment.

However, National Chung Cheng University secretary-general Wang An-hsiang (王安祥) said Jiang's hiring followed the university's regulations.

It would ask Jiang to provide an explanation of his position at the foundation to clarify whether he has violated any regulations by investing in a for-profit organization or working for more than eight hours in a part-time position, Wang said.

As for the new rules on subsidies, the funding is being provided by private companies and has yet to be approved, he said, but added that the issue was irrelevant to Jiang's hiring.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2018/08/06](#)