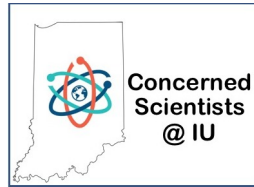


Indiana University Bloomington



AAUP-IUB and Concerned Scientists @ IU statement on the closure of Myers Hall

5/18/2026

The Indiana University Bloomington chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP-IUB), together with Concerned Scientists @ IU, condemn the sudden and unannounced closure of numerous biology laboratories in Myers Hall starting on May 7th, 2026. This closure continued for a full week until the afternoon of May 14th, 2026. It was not formally required by any federal directive and the careers of many faculty and students in the Biology Department have been endangered by this action of choice on the part of the IU administration.

Vice-President Russell Mumper's statement that "The actions taking place are being directed by federal authorities, and the university is cooperating as required" are contradicted by the federal authority he referenced as giving the order. The USDA has [stated](#) they are undertaking an investigation but did not specifically order the closure of any lab on the Bloomington campus. In a response to the Chair of Biology asking him to confirm the order from the federal authorities, Mumper stated: "on the afternoon of May 7, 2026, representatives of IU were notified by the USDA of certain work it expects to be performed in Myers Hall. We continue to wait for formal written notice from the USDA clarifying this work and now hope to receive more information about these directives on or about May 13, 2026." In short, no written order was given and the actions starting on May 7th were preemptive rather than responding to a written federal directive.

For over a week after the closure, IU administrators refused to meet the Biology faculty and visit Myers Hall to see the damage effected by the lab closures. We expect transparency from our administration: who ordered this lockout and why was it conducted in this manner? Why weren't the affected faculty and departmental leadership consulted prior to the closure to discuss alternative, less damaging approaches, to meet the written USDA directive?

A strict lockdown, affecting some 50 IU faculty, staff, and students, including five labs conducting active, time-sensitive research has both short-term and long-term consequences for the research and teaching mission of our university. These actions are blocking continuity and completion of ongoing experiments required as part of IU funding agreements and for publication of scientific results. Disrupting this research is harming the individual researchers, graduate and undergraduate education, and the national and international reputation of one of IU's top-ranked science departments. For the longer-term, the negative light that this incident sheds on our university affects our ability to recruit and retain the top international talent essential for the long-term health of our academic programs. With a more collaborative approach between IU administration and IU faculty in addressing external pressures, we can protect both the reputation of IU and the careers of our faculty and staff.

As the IUB AAUP Executive Committee and Concerned Scientists @ IU, we

- Call on Chancellor David Reingold, Interim Provost John Ciociari, and Executive Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences Rick van Kooten to speak out in support of our faculty and students' work and reputation.
- Call on Vice President Russell Mumper to work with Biology Department leaders to develop a set of clear communication and action procedures to 1) minimize the negative impacts of federal government requests; 2) avoid unintended consequences of university actions such as damage to physical infrastructure and loss of research materials, and 3) support individual faculty and their teams so that their research can thrive.
- We believe it is in the interest of both the individual faculty, staff, and students and for the goal of enhancing our university's research and teaching reputation to create a stable and supportive work environment for our world-class researchers. We ask the IU administration to help support and protect IU's world-class researchers now and in the future!

IUB-AAUP Executive Committee

iubaaup.org

Concerned Scientists @ IU

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