

Faculty Handbook



Academic Freedom

Academic freedom is essential in institutions of higher education if they are to make their proper contribution to the common good. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition. It is that which justifies academic freedom, not the interest of the individual faculty member or even the interest of a particular university.

Academic freedom is the freedom to engage in research, scholarship, or other creative work in order to expand knowledge, to publish research findings, to teach and to learn in an atmosphere of unfettered free inquiry and exposition.

The rights of the faculty member and the student to academic freedom, however, carry with them duties and responsibilities. The faculty member is entitled to full freedom to engage in research, scholarship, and creative work and to publish or produce the results, subject to responsible performance of these and other academic duties. The faculty member is likewise entitled to freedom in teaching and discussing the subject matter. Yet, as in research, the

concomitant of this freedom must be a commitment to accuracy and integrity. Controversy is a normal aspect of free academic inquiry and teaching, and it is proper to incorporate both the knowledge and the beliefs of the faculty member into that which is taught; however, the freedom to teach must be joined by a constant effort to distinguish between knowledge and belief.

The University faculty member is a citizen, a member of a learned profession, and an officer of an educational institution. When the faculty member speaks or writes as a citizen, he or she should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but the faculty member's special position in the community imposes special obligations. As a person of learning and an educator, a faculty member should remember that the public may judge the profession and institution by the faculty member's utterances. Hence the faculty member should be at all times accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that the faculty member is not speaking for the institution.

This policy applies to all faculty members of the University.

Adopted April 18, 2007, by the University Council.

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