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Statement on Rights, Freedoms, and Responsibilities

STUDENT AFFAIRS (/student-affairs/)

The Student Association and the Faculty Senate will review the Statement on Rights, Freedoms, and Responsibilities during the fall semester. If you have suggestions regarding revisions to the Statement, submit them to the president of one of these groups or to the Office of Student Affairs.

The University of Tulsa exists to promote the academic and social development of its students, the transmission of knowledge, the pursuit of truth and a sense of responsibility toward self and society.

A deep respect for the fundamental rights of expression, assembly and petition is indispensable to the attainment of these goals. Academic freedom, based upon the freedom of the professor to teach and the freedom of the student to learn, is paramount to the purpose of the University.

Students at The University of Tulsa have varied educational goals and objectives but, as members of the academic community, they share a common important responsibility. That responsibility is to develop an inquisitive attitude toward the social, political, economic, moral, scientific, technological and aesthetic issues of the day; to achieve an understanding of these issues from all points of view and to participate in the humane solution to the problems that arise from them.

It is believed that these ideals can be best pursued and accomplished in an environment where individual and group department are tempered with a mutual respect for the rights of all people in the academic community.

I. The Freedom of Academic Inquiry

- A. **Freedom of Expression:** Students should be free to question or take reasoned exception, either written or oral, to the interpretation and/or application of data, and matters of opinion in any course of study. However, students are responsible for learning the content of any course of study as required by the professor.
- B. **Freedom of Attendance:** Attendance policies developed by Colleges, departments, or individual faculty members take precedence over contrary statements below. Students are encouraged to read course syllabi carefully and discuss attendance requirements with their professors. Students should be free to attend class or not to attend class in those classes where fair academic evaluation does not necessitate direct student participation. Class attendance should not be required for the sake of attendance itself. However, if the students voluntarily choose not to attend, they should not expect the professor to repeat for their benefit any information already presented in class. In those cases where the accreditation of a School or College requires a regular attendance policy, the requirement of the accrediting agency shall take precedence.
- C. **Access to Professor:** Students should have the opportunity to confer with the professor outside the classroom. Professors should allot a reasonable proportion of their time for appointments with students to an extent consistent with class size and nature of the course.
- D. **Confidentiality:** Students and professors have the ethical obligation to consider as confidential that information concerning views, academic achievement, beliefs, political association, and personal information acquired during their association.
- E. **Academic Evaluation:** Students have the right to fair academic evaluation. At the beginning of each course, the professor should inform students of the standard by which they will be evaluated. Any serious deviation from this standard should be implemented only if no student

- is penalized by the change. Results of achievement measurement should be made available to the student in a reasonable period of time. Students are responsible for meeting the standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled.
- F. **Evaluation of Faculty:** In an attempt to assist the University in the pursuit of academic excellence, students should have the opportunity to evaluate the faculty, courses, curriculum, and policies of the University community.
- G. **Acquisition of Personnel:** Students should have a means of voicing their opinions regarding appointment of faculty and administrative personnel. These opinions should be given fair and serious consideration in the decision-making process. In such cases where advisory committees are formed for acquisition of faculty and administrative personnel, students should have voting representation on such committees.
- H. **Facilities:** Students should have access to facilities of learning where physical conditions such as lighting, seating, temperature control, noise limitations, and electrical facilities are conducive to learning and are adequate to prevent distraction from the learning process.
- I. **Records and Class Procedures:** Students should be allowed to take notes and, with the permission of the instructor, make electronic and photographic records of class proceedings, as long as they do not disturb the class. These records may be reproduced and disseminated only with the permission of the instructor.
- J. **Retention of Original Work:** Students and professors have an ethical obligation to respect the sanctity of original ideas as original work. They also have an obligation to recognize that benefits from such original work belong to the originator unless they are voluntarily relinquished.

II. Freedom of Expression

The rights of free inquiry and free expression, both public and private, are essential to the learning process and must be protected by the responsible and mutually supporting efforts of all segments of the University community. These rights shall not be infringed upon. It is the responsibility of students and student groups to make clear that they speak only for themselves when they are supporting causes, participating in public expressions, and conducting demonstrations.

- A. **Guest Speakers:** Officially recognized student organizations may invite speakers of their own choosing to campus. Sponsorship of guest speakers does not necessarily imply approval or endorsement of the views they express, either by the sponsoring group or the University.
- B. **Peaceful Protest and Assembly:** The University, groups, organizations, or individuals shall not infringe upon the right of peaceful assembly and protest, and the freedom to petition. Peaceful assembly shall not interfere with normal passage of other students and members of the academic community or the continuity of the educational process.
- C. **Dissemination of Printed Materials:** Leaflets and printed materials may be distributed at gatherings, in common areas, and also in classrooms with the permission of the instructor. Other materials may be posted in designated areas. (Students should check with the deans' offices, resident hall directors, etc. for designated areas.)
- D. **Employment Interviews:** The University, in recognition of the desire of students to seek employment, provides an employment interview service. Students shall be given equal opportunity to interview with any employer.
- E. **Student Communication Media:** An integral part of the freedom of expression is contained in the freedom of student publications and communications media to discuss, examine, and intellectually explore information and ideas emanating from within as well as from outside the University community. The student editors and student directors of student communications media shall possess editorial rights and responsibilities and should be guided by principles of responsible journalism. Student originated codes shall protect student editors and student directors from harassment or removal from office and from prior censorship of material. Whenever editorial opinion is expressed, it should be so stated, and the source identified. Where federal broadcast regulations require faculty advisors, they shall be protected from harassment, removal from office, or loss of position due to the conduct of students involved.

III. Freedom of Association

Students, having a variety of interests and motivations, shall be free to organize and to join campus associations and groups to promote their common interests. Although the nature of groups based upon common interest does limit participation, no student otherwise eligible shall be excluded from membership in a campus organization on the basis of personal status or group characteristics including, but not limited to, the classes protected under federal and state law in its programs, services, aids, or benefits.

- A. **Organizations:** The recognition, continued approval, and discipline that may be necessary for the governing and regulation of the Student Association as well as other student organizations shall rest with a regulatory body of the Student Association. While organizations periodically may be required to submit a constitution, and a list of current officers, membership lists may not be required as a condition of recognition. If a student organization has an off-campus affiliation, this should not disqualify the organization from recognition. Only those members in the University community will be eligible to make policy in student organizations. Each organization shall retain the freedom to choose its advisor, but the inability to secure an advisor shall not be the basis for non-recognition by the regulatory body. An advisor shall not control the policy of an organization or direct its activities.

- B. **Use of University Name:** Individuals or organizations may use the University name only to identify their affiliation with the University. University approval or disapproval of any action or policy of an organization may not be stated or implied by that organization without expressed or written authorization.
- C. **Use of University Facilities:** The provision of the University facilities used by campus, public, or other private groups shall in no way interfere with academic activities of the University. The appropriate administrative office responsible for coordinating the assignment of facilities is entitled to impose reasonable regulations upon the use of these facilities, including timeliness of request, the appropriateness of the facility, and the maintenance and care of the facility. In scheduling these facilities, priority should be given to groups and individuals within the student community. Those regulations shall not be used for purposes of censorship.
- D. **Use of Allocation of Funds:** Student organizations should exercise autonomy in maintaining their financial affairs. If University funds are allocated to a student organization or if an organization utilizes the University Business Office, University standards of financial accountability will be prerequisite to the continued allocation of such funds or use of such services. The procedures shall not be used to influence the policy of any organization.

IV. The Right to Privacy

The right to freely exchange ideas and opinions, which is fundamental to the educational process, must be supported by the rights of individuals to the privacy of their beliefs. Students are responsible for their social morality, within the limits of civil legality. Individuals' political beliefs and activities are private and beyond the control of the University. Matters of political and moral behavior on the part of any student shall not be the subjects of recorded information.

- A. **In Residences on University Property:** The right of privacy of University students living in University residence halls shall be as provided by law.
- B. **Confidentiality of Records:** Respect must be accorded the confidential relationship between the University and its students by reserving the privacy of all records of each student. This relationship presupposes that records will be kept only on matters relevant to the educational process and that even those minimal records will not be disclosed except with the student's consent or in carefully circumscribed instances based upon clearly defined policy. The student's records, their supporting documents, and other files are confidential. They are to be maintained only by University staff.
- C. **Maintenance of Separate Files:** Separate files should be maintained as follows: 1. Academic records, supporting records and documents, and general education records 2. Student personnel records 3. Records of disciplinary proceedings 4. Financial records 5. Medical and psychological records. Students may reserve the right to determine what honors, awards and organizational membership information are to become a part of their student personnel record.
- D. **Accessibility of Records for Faculty Advisement:** Members of the faculty may have access to records and files necessary for academic advisement. Normally, records relating to financial, medical, psychological, and disciplinary matters will not be available for such purposes.
- E. **Retention of Records:** Records shall not be preserved beyond graduation or other final departure of any student except as follows:
 - a. The academic records, which include academic probation and dismissals may be retained indefinitely.
 - b. Financial records may be retained so long as any obligation exists.
 - c. Disciplinary records should not be retained beyond graduation, termination of affiliation with the University, or after a certain agreed upon time, such as a period of probation.
 - d. Medical or psychological records shall not be retained more than five years after graduation or other final departure from the University.

V. Off-Campus Freedom

Students occupy the dual role of members of the civil community as well as members of the academic community. Therefore, students shall enjoy the freedoms and obligations of any other citizen, while at the same time being subject to the freedoms and obligations of the University community. Where the professional nature of a college requires jurisdiction to be exercised over students' off-campus behavior in accordance with established professional standards, such jurisdiction may be exercised in accordance with such standards. In cases where students are accused of violating civil law, University officials should be prepared to inform students of sources of legal counsel and may offer other assistance. Students who violate institutional regulations, without intent, as the direct result of off-campus activities, should not be penalized unduly and should be subject only to the penalty normally imposed for the violation of the specific regulation.

VI. Student Self-Government

The student body shall have the right of self-government. The right shall include the use of allocated funds and the passage of student resolutions, in addition to that usually implied by self-government.

VII. The Right of Students to Participate in University Government and the Decision-Making Process

As constituents within the University community, students shall possess the freedom and the channels for expressing their opinions on matters of University policy. The faculty and administration must bear final responsibility for the implementation and maintenance of degree requirements, course grades, and general academic standards.

- A. **Representation on University Committees:** In all cases where it is capable of being effected, students shall have adequate representation on University committees.
- B. **Participation in Housing Regulations:** In the matter of student residences, specifically residence halls, fraternities, and sororities, students shall have the right to develop governing rules in conjunction with others directly concerned provided that such rules shall not conflict with any University-wide regulation or policy then in force or thereafter adopted.
- C. **Autonomy in Student Conduct Process:** Students shall have the right to participate in the conduct proceedings and the imposition of sanctions pertaining to student violations based upon codes of conduct.
- D. **Access to Statements of University Policy:** The University administration shall be responsible for providing statements of policy and general information, which affects the activities and well-being of students.

VIII. Standard in Disciplinary Proceeding

- A. **Expected Conduct:** The University has a continuing obligation to make clear the standards of behavior that it believes students must accept in order for the institution to carry out its education purposes. In addition to these statements of expectation, the University shall also clearly describe the means where-by a student shall have recourse in disciplinary proceedings.
- B. **The Right of Notice:** Students who are accused of violating prescribed codes of conduct shall be informed of the complaint against them, student rights and responsibilities, and University Student Conduct Board procedures. They shall also be advised that they need not provide a statement until they have had opportunity to speak to counsel.
- C. **Complaint Information**
 - a. Individuals filing or named in a complaint may receive a copy of the complaint upon request to the Dean or Associate Dean of Students in the Office of Student Affairs.
 - b. Per Family Education and Rights to Privacy regulations, complainants of a crime of violence may receive notification of the results of the disciplinary proceeding. See regulations for further information.



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