



12.01.99.D1.02

Academic Freedom and Responsibility

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Procedure Statement

Institutions of higher education exist for the common good. The common good depends upon an uninhibited search for truth and its open expression. Hence, it is essential that each faculty member be free to pursue scholarly inquiry, and to voice and publish individual conclusions concerning the significance of evidence that the faculty member considers relevant. Each faculty member must be free from the corrosive fear that others, inside or outside the academic community, because their vision may differ, may threaten the faculty member's professional career or the material benefits accruing from it.

Reason for Procedure

Consistent with The Texas A&M University System Policy Statement 12.01 *Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure* this procedure enumerates the essential components of academic freedom and documents the responsibilities and obligations of faculty.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1. GENERAL

Texas A&M University-Central Texas (TAMUCT) openly supports diverse beliefs and the free exchange of ideas. TAMUCT vigorously protects freedom of inquiry and expression and expects civility and mutual respect to be practiced in all deliberations. The University provides a clear mechanism for addressing possible infringements of academic freedom or responsibility. The *Complaint and Appeal Procedures for Faculty Members* is intended to provide a fair, internal process for resolving disputes that arise between faculty members and between faculty and their administrative supervisors. University Procedure 12.02.99.D1.01, *Institutional Procedures for Implementing Tenure* outlines the due process for faculty that have been dismissed from a tenured position.

2. ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM

2.1 The essential components of academic freedom include the following:

- 2.1.1 Faculty are entitled to academic freedom in scholarship and creative activity and in the publication or performance of the results. American Association of University Professors (1990)
- 2.1.2 Faculty are entitled to academic freedom when teaching face-to-face, online, or any combination thereof. Specifically, faculty are free to discuss material that is relevant to their subject matter. Faculty should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to the subject. American Association of University Professors (1990)
- 2.1.3 Faculty are free to exercise their constitutional rights as citizens without institutional censorship or discipline. As scholars and educational officers, faculty should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. At all times faculty must strive to be accurate, exercise appropriate restraint, show respect for the opinions of others, and make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution. American Association of University Professors (1990)

3. ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The scope of academic freedom is broad, but it is not unlimited. Academic freedom does not protect false statements, refusing reasonable requests from a supervisor, chronically ineffective teaching or unprofessional conduct. The academic responsibilities that go along with academic freedom include the faculty members' responsibility to:

- 3.1.1 Meet assigned teaching, research, and service obligations.
- 3.1.2 Pursue excellence, intellectual honesty, and objectivity in conducting research and publishing research findings.
- 3.1.3 Teach the subject matter in a professional manner, choosing from methods accepted in the discipline.
- 3.1.4 Encourage students and colleagues to engage in free discussion and inquiry.
- 3.1.5 Support intellectual pluralism in the spirit of openness, tolerance and civility.
- 3.1.6 Evaluate student performance and assign grades that follow institutional grading standards and to assign grades without discrimination or arbitrariness.
- 3.1.7 Be available at reasonable intervals to students for consultation on course work.
- 3.1.8 Evaluate colleague performance on a scholarly basis judged by intellectual standards of relevant academic and professional disciplines.
- 3.1.9 Refrain from persistently introducing matters that have no bearing on the subject matter of the course.
- 3.1.10 Differentiate carefully between official activities as teachers and personal activities as citizens, and to act accordingly.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

System Policy [*12.01 Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure*](#)

University Procedure [*12.02.99.D1.01 Institutional Procedures for Implementing Tenure*](#)

References

American Association of University Professors (1990). 1940 statement of principles on academic freedom and tenure. Retrieved February 5, 2013 from <http://www.aaup.org/report/1940-statement-principles-academic-freedom-and-tenure>

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