



POLICY ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Responsible Executive:	Provost
Approving Official:	Provost
Effective Date:	August 16, 2021
Revision History:	New, April 30, 2013, Reviewed, reformatted, and reapproved, August 16, 2021 Formerly, 9-1

I. INTRODUCTION

It is the policy of Florida State University to maintain and encourage full freedom, within the law, of inquiry, discourse, teaching, research and publication, and to protect members of the academic staff against influences, from within or without the University, that would restrict them in the exercise of this freedom in areas of scholarly interest.

II. POLICY (Including any Forms and Attachments)

Academic freedom and responsibility are essential to the full development of a university's faculty and apply to teaching, research and creative activity, and assigned service. In the development of knowledge, research endeavors, and creative activities, a faculty member must be free to cultivate a spirit of inquiry and scholarly criticism and to examine ideas in an atmosphere of freedom and confidence. A similar atmosphere is required for university teaching. Consistent with the exercise of academic responsibility, an instructor of record, graduate teaching or research assistant working in the classroom under guidance of the instructor, or guest speaker, must have freedom in the classroom to discuss academic subjects. The university student must likewise have the opportunity to study a full spectrum of ideas, opinions, and beliefs, so that the student may acquire maturity for analysis and judgment. Objective and skillful exposition of such subject matter is the duty of every instructor.

The *1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) states that "institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual teacher or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition." However, membership in the academic profession, and thus, academic freedom, carries with it an awareness of certain responsibilities, both in performance of university duties and duties outside the university, as the following language, modified from the most recent AAUP statement, indicates.

Faculty members must recognize the special responsibilities placed upon them. They accept the obligation to exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge. They practice intellectual honesty. Although faculty members may follow subsidiary interests, these interests must never seriously hamper or compromise their freedom of inquiry.

As teachers, faculty members encourage the free pursuit of learning by their students. They hold before them the best scholarly and ethical standards of their discipline, demonstrate respect for students as individuals and adhere to their proper roles as intellectual guides and mentors. Faculty members make every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct and to ensure that their evaluations of students reflect each student's true performance. They avoid any exploitation, harassment, or discriminatory treatment of students, acknowledge significant academic or scholarly assistance from them, and protect their academic freedom.

As colleagues, faculty members have obligations that derive from common membership in the community of scholars. They do not discriminate against or harass colleagues. They respect and defend the free inquiry of associates. In the exchange of criticism and ideas they show due respect for the opinions of others, acknowledge academic debt, and strive to be objective in their professional judgment of colleagues. Faculty members must accept their share of faculty responsibilities for the governance of the institution.

Faculty members must give due regard to their paramount responsibilities within their institution in determining the amount and character of work done outside it. As members of their community, faculty members have the rights and obligations of other citizens. When they speak or act as private persons, they avoid creating the impression of speaking or acting for their college or university. As citizens engaged in a profession that depends upon academic freedom for its health and integrity, faculty members have a particular obligation to promote conditions of free inquiry and to further public understanding of academic freedom.

A faculty member who believes that he or she does not enjoy the academic freedom that the University endorses through this policy shall be entitled, upon written request, to facilitation and other grievance processes, as specified in the BOT/UFF Collective Bargaining Agreement. The right to the protection of the University shall not, necessarily, include any right to the service of the University's legal counsel in any proceedings in which the academic freedom of the faculty member may be an issue.

[University documents underlying this policy include the FSU Constitution, the FSU Faculty Handbook, and the BOT/UFF Collective Bargaining Agreement.]

III. LEGAL SUPPORT, JUSTIFICATION, AND REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

Article IX, Section 7, Florida Constitution, BOG Regulation 1.001, Delegations to President from Board of Trustees, President Delegation to Provost.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sally McRae", is positioned above a horizontal line.

Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs