



Academic Freedom and Responsibility	
Responsible Official: Provost	Responsible Office: Academic Affairs

Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the exercise of academic freedom and responsibility.

Policy Statement

East Tennessee State University endorses the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure of the American Association of University Professors as revised and refined since 1940, and also the Statement on Professional Ethics of the same organization, insofar as these are not limited by state law. The university recognizes the principle of academic freedom, pursuant to which: The faculty member is entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing his or her subject, being careful not to introduce into the teaching unrelated subject matter.

Faculty are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their academic duties and subject to conditions of a sponsored grant or contract, if any, supporting the research and the university's financial conflict of interest policy. Research for financial gain must be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the university, which is documented, reduced to writing and signed by the faculty member and the appropriate academic officer(s).

Faculty members are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational university/college. When faculty members speak or write as citizens, they should be free from university/college censorship or discipline, but their special positions in the community impose special obligations. As people of learning and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge the profession and the university/college by their utterances. Hence, faculty members should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they do not speak for the university/college. Academic freedom is essential to fulfill the ultimate objectives of an educational university/college-the free search for and exposition of truth-and applies to both teaching and research. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth, and academic freedom in teaching is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the faculty member in teaching and of the student to freedom in learning.

Implicit in the principle of academic freedom are the corollary responsibilities of the faculty who enjoy that freedom. Incompetence, indolence, intellectual dishonesty, failure to carry out assigned duties, serious moral dereliction, arbitrary and capricious disregard of standards of profession conduct: These and other grounds as set forth in university policy may constitute adequate cause for dismissal or other disciplinary sanctions against faculty members. The right to academic freedom imposes upon the faculty

an equal obligation to take appropriate professional action against faculty members who are derelict in discharging their professional responsibilities. The faculty member has an obligation to participate in tenure and promotion review of colleagues as specified in university policy. Thus, academic freedom and academic responsibility are interdependent, and academic tenure is adopted as a means to protect the former while promoting the latter. While academic tenure is essential for the protection of academic freedom, all faculty members, tenured or non-tenured, have an equal right to academic freedom and bear the same academic responsibilities implicit in that freedom.

Authority: American Association of University Professors (AAUP) 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure

Policy History

Effective Date: May 8, 2017

Procedure (s)

N/A

Procedure History

N/A

Related Form(s)

N/A

Scope and Applicability

Primary: Academics