

Augusta University

Policy Library

Academic Rights and Responsibilities

Policy Owner: Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs

POLICY STATEMENT

Intellectual pluralism and the free exchange of ideas are key elements to any institution of higher education. Academic freedom is a core value in the American community of higher education. Augusta University encourages these elements in freedom of inquiry, discovery, and creativity in the pursuit of truth and understanding that benefits society, as outlined in our mission, vision, and values. To achieve these aims, Augusta University ascribes to the central tenets outlined by the American Council on Education's Statement of Academic Rights and Responsibilities and the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure with 1970 Interpretive Comments of the American Association of University Professors.

1. One of the basic tenets of Academic Freedom is the freedom to teach in a way that is largely left up to the individual instructor, consistent with the approved Course Description and meeting the standards set by the academic and clinical discipline. With exceptions that include choosing common textbooks across a course and common final examinations where appropriate, and content/assessments required by accreditation agencies, this freedom generally includes the right of the faculty to select the materials, determine the approach to the subject, make the assignments, and assess student performance in teaching activities for which faculty members are individually responsible, without having their decisions subject to the veto of a department chair, dean, or other administrative officer. Faculty are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial or other matter which has no defensible relation to their subject. Intellectual pluralism and free exchange of ideas in the classroom will inevitably lead to discussions in which individuals will disagree. Such discussion should be held in an environment characterized by openness, tolerance, and civility. Faculty should base academic decisions solely on considerations that are intellectually relevant to the subject matter under consideration, not based or evaluated on opinions or conduct unrelated to established academic standards.
2. Faculty are entitled to freedom in research within applicable laws and regulations and in the publication of the results; subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties. Validity of academic ideas, theories, arguments, and views should be measured against the intellectual standards of relevant academic and professional disciplines. Application of these intellectual standards does not mean that all ideas have equal merit. The responsibility to judge the merits of competing academic ideas rests with the discipline and college and is determined by reference to the standards of the

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academic profession. Research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution.

3. Faculty are private citizens, who are also members of a learned profession and educational institution. When they speak, write, or act as private citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and members of an educational institution, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Thus, faculty should be able to support their assertions with data, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution. The central tenets outlined above do not provide immunity from consequences arising from breach of responsibilities as a faculty member.

The Statement on Academic Rights and Responsibilities addresses the rights conferred to and responsibilities of faculty with regard to teaching, research, and service as they pursue the mission of Augusta University.

AFFECTED STAKEHOLDERS

Indicate all entities and persons within the Enterprise that are affected by this policy:

- Alumni Faculty Graduate Students Health Professional Students
 Staff Undergraduate Students Vendors/Contractors Visitors
 Other:

DEFINITIONS

Faculty – Defined as adjunct, part-time, or full-time professors, associate professors, assistant professors, instructors, lecturers, senior lecturers, full-time research and extension personnel, and duly certified librarians.

PROCESS & PROCEDURES

If any faculty member feels that their rights have been violated as they pertain to Augusta University Statement on Academic Rights and Responsibilities, they should follow the procedures outlined in Faculty Affairs Policy– [Faculty Grievance Policy](#) .

REFERENCES & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Intentionally left blank.

RELATED POLICIES

[Faculty Grievance Policy](#)

APPROVED BY:

President, Augusta University and CEO, AU Health System Date: 12/13/2016