

## Academic Freedom and Responsibility

### POLICIES

**Issued:** January 10, 2018

**Responsible** Provost and Vice President for Academic

**Official:** Affairs

**Responsible Office:** Office of Academic Affairs

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#### Policy Statement

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APSU 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 or policy documents & reports (1984) as a useful philosophic and practical guide to academic rights and responsibilities.

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#### Procedures

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The University recognizes the principle of academic freedom, including:

- A. 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.
- B. The faculty member is entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of his/her other academic duties. 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).
- C. The faculty member is a citizen, a member of a learned profession, and an officer of an educational university. When the faculty member speaks or writes as a citizen, he/she should be free from university censorship or discipline, but his/her special position in the community imposes special obligations. As a man or woman of learning and an educational officer, he/she should remember

that the public may judge the profession and the university by the faculty member's utterances. Hence, a faculty member should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, and should make every effort to indicate that he/she does not speak for the university. Although faculty are free in the classroom to discuss subjects within areas of their competence, faculty shall be cautious in expressing personal views in the classroom and shall be careful not to introduce controversial matters that have no relationship to the subject taught, and especially matters in which they have no special competence or training and in which, therefore, faculty's views cannot claim the authority accorded statements they make about subjects within areas of their competence; provided, that no faculty will face adverse employment action for classroom speech, unless it is not reasonably germane to the subject matter of the class as broadly construed, and comprises a substantial portion of classroom instruction.

Academic freedom is essential to fulfill the ultimate objectives of an educational university - the free search for and expression 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. No faculty will face adverse employment action for classroom speech, unless it is not reasonably germane to the subject matter of the class as broadly construed, and comprises a substantial portion of classroom instruction. Incompetence, indolence, intellectual dishonesty, failure to carry out assigned duties, serious moral dereliction, arbitrary and capricious disregard of standards of professional conduct - these and other grounds as set forth in APSU Policy, "Policy on Tenure" 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.

**Revision Dates**

APSU Policy 2:052 – Rev.: January 10, 2018  
 APSU Policy 2:052 (previously 5:063) – Rev.: March 8, 2017  
 APSU Policy 2:052 – Rev.: October 12, 2004  
 APSU Policy 2:052 – Issued: January 13, 2003

**Subject Areas:**

Academic	Finance	General	Human Resources	Information Technology	Student Affairs
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**Approved**

President: signature on file