

STOCKTON UNIVERSITY



POLICY

Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure

Policy Administrator: Assistant Provost

Authority:

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POLICY:

Statements on Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, November, 1971

Stockton University as a member of AASCU endorses the following statements.

"Introduction

The purposes of these Statements are to clarify and to promote understanding and support of academic freedom and responsibility, and academic tenure.

Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not necessarily to further the specific interests of either the individual or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for and the exposition of truth and understanding wherever and whenever they may be found.

The freedoms granted by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States are indispensable to a democratic society. Within the academic community, the vigorous exercise of these freedoms by its members to participate in the democratic process of government as citizens, to learn and to teach what scholarsh

By its nature, no freedom is absolute. Academic freedom is no more absolute than any other. It is protected in order that academic people may perform a vital social role, not in order to create a privileged class. It does not afford any special protection to those who themselves violate academic freedom. Responsibility is the counterpart and condition of academic freedom. The academic community which asks protection from outside interference in order to perform its mission must not tolerate sabotage of that mission by its own members.

Governing boards are responsible for establishing overall policy and interpreting the institution to the public and the public to the institution. Faculty, as the professional staff, whether their roles be instructional or administrative, must reserve freedom for all in the academic community, as well as interpret it to the public. Those who teach and those who administer must be faithful to the canons of their calling, utilizing the best their disciplines have yielded, in order that their commitment may be respected by others. Each must play his role under self-imposed constraints which preserve the fabric of, civilized life. All must protect the right of dissent, including dissent from dissent. However, no one can be accorded the privilege, under any pretext, of exercising his self-defined rights at the cost of those rights which by common consent and usage belong to all.

Academic freedom and responsibility are inseparable, and must be considered simultaneously; they are shared by all members of the academic community. Tenure, however, is a specific provision of employment which may be accorded to those members of the academic community who qualify for it. Therefore, academic tenure should be considered separately from academic freedom and responsibility.

These Statements are concerned primarily with the faculty members (teachers, researchers and administrators) of the academic community. However, it is recognized that students also must enjoy academic freedom, and must realize that this freedom carries concomitant responsibilities.

Academic Freedom and Responsibility

Academic freedom is the right of all members of the academic community freely to study, discuss, investigate, teach, conduct research, publish and administer. It is the responsibility of administrators to protect and as

However, academic freedom should be distinguished clearly from institutional freedom, which all citizens enjoy equally under the law. Academic freedom is an additional assurance to those who teach and pursue knowledge, and thus, properly should be restricted to rights of expression pertaining to teaching and research within their areas of recognized professional competencies. Beyond this, expressions by members of the academic community should carry no more weight or protection than that accorded any other citizen under the guarantee of constitutional rights: that is, outside of one's professional field, one must accept the same responsibility which all other individuals bear for their acts and utterances. In these cases, there is and should be no guaranteed immunity from possible criticism under the guise of academic freedom.

The concept of academic freedom must be accompanied by an equally binding concept of academic responsibility. The concern of the institution TD [(no)8.66.1 (T

