

## **403.1 INTRODUCTION**

The University is operated for the common good which depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition. Academic freedom is essential to these purposes and applies to teaching, research, and service. (See policy 401.9.1 regarding provisions which are the same or similar to certain statements of the AAUP).

The University is a community dedicated, through promulgation of thought, truth, and understanding, to teaching, research, and service. It must, therefore, be a place where innovative ideas, original experiments, creative activities, and independence of thought are not merely tolerated but actively encouraged. Because thought and understanding flourish only in a climate of intellectual freedom, and because the pursuit of truth is fundamentally a personal enterprise, a statement of faculty responsibility must be strongly anchored to principles of intellectual freedom and personal autonomy. While faculty must abide by standards of professional responsibility, the University must provide and safeguard a climate of intellectual freedom. Relationships within the university should consist of shared confidence, mutual loyalty, and trust. Dealings should be conducted with courtesy, civility, decency, and a concern for personal dignity. Such an atmosphere can be achieved only when all concerned behave responsibly. While the right of academic freedom is respected, the exercise of the right cannot be through disruptive actions or physical force.

The values held most strongly by the University community are those of academic freedom and integrity as they are expressed collectively by the colleges and departments as well as individually through research and teaching and as they exist within the wider context of advanced study as commonly understood by all universities. The community also values diversity and respect, without which there can be no collegiality among faculty and students. In addition, the University community values individual rights and freedoms, including the right of each community member to adhere to individual systems of conscience, religion, and ethics. Finally, the University recognizes that with all rights come responsibilities. The University works to uphold its collective values by fostering free speech, broadening fields of inquiry, and encouraging generation of new knowledge that challenges, shapes, and enriches our collective and individual understandings.

## **403.2 ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

Academic freedom is the right to teach, study, discuss, investigate, discover, create, and publish freely. Academic freedom protects the rights of faculty members in teaching and of students in learning. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. The faculty member is entitled to full freedom in teaching, research, and creative activities, subject to the limitations imposed by professional responsibility.

### **2.1 Freedom and Responsibilities of the University**

Subject to the power and authority of the Board of Regents to control, manage, and supervise the State System of Higher Education, and Utah State University as a member

institution, the University has the freedom to pursue its ends without interference from government. Included therein are the four essential freedoms of the University to determine for itself on academic grounds: 1) who may teach; 2) what may be taught; 3) how it shall be taught; and 4) who may be admitted to study. Consistent with principles of academic freedom, the faculty, individually and collectively, has the responsibility for determining the content of the curriculum.

The University consists of many components all of which support the interactive, collegial enterprise that exists in the quest for knowledge and its transmittal. The University has the general responsibility to protect the academic freedom of every faculty member and the freedom of every student to learn. The University itself shall not violate the academic freedom of any faculty member or the freedom of any student to learn and shall use its powers and resources to defend its faculty and students from unjustified attempts to compromise or restrict those freedoms, even should the exercise of those freedoms generate hostility.

## **2.2 Freedom and Course Content**

Students are expected to take courses that will challenge them intellectually and personally. Students must understand and be able to articulate the ideas and theories that are important to the discourse within and among academic disciplines. Personal disagreement with these ideas and theories or their implications is not sufficient grounds for requesting resolution of the conflict from the instructor (Utah State University Academic Policy Manual, Resolution of conflict between course content and sincerely – held core beliefs). Resolutions requested on such grounds will not be granted. The University recognizes that students' sincerely-held core beliefs may make it difficult for students to fulfill some requirements of some courses or majors. *The University assumes no obligation to ensure that all students are able to complete any course or major.*