



Faculty Code of Ethics

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[The first two paragraphs of the following statement is a preamble to the Code of Ethics approved by the Faculty Council on May 9, 1972, with editorial changes made by the Faculty Senate on June 19, 1979. The balance of the document, with one paragraph added, appears as Article VI, Sections 2 and 3 of the Statutes of the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University.]

In developing a statement of faculty responsibilities and ethical standards, we subscribe to the belief, long held by the learned professions, that self-regulation is preferable to any externally imposed discipline.

In a university faculty it is, therefore, desirable that the most stringent obligations be laid upon individual professors; that, so far as possible, any serious breach of duties be judged by colleagues who are well acquainted with the problems and practices of a specialized field; and that only in cases of the most serious violations of professional responsibilities shall the academic profession regulate itself by calling upon a group representative of the whole university to deal with faults that have been avoided neither by individual self-control nor by departmental discipline. We endorse the edited statement of professional ethics by the American Association of University Professors, which is as follows:

Professors, guided by a deep conviction of the worth and dignity of the advancement of knowledge, recognize the special responsibilities placed upon them. Their primary responsibility to their subject is to seek and to state the truth as they see it. To this end they devote their energies to developing and improving scholarly competence. They accept the obligation to exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge. They practice intellectual honesty. Although they may follow subsidiary interests, these interests must never seriously hamper or compromise freedom of inquiry.

As teachers, professors encourage the free pursuit of learning in their students. They hold before them the best scholarly standards for their discipline. They demonstrate respect for students as individuals and adhere to their proper role as intellectual guide and counselor. They make every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct and to assure that the evaluation of students reflects their true merit. They respect the confidential nature of the relationship between professor and student. They avoid any exploitation of students for their private advantage and acknowledge significant assistance from them. They protect students' academic freedom.

As colleagues, professors have obligations that derive from common membership in the community of scholars. They respect and defend the free inquiry of associates. In the exchange of criticism and ideas they show due respect for the opinion of others. They acknowledge academic debts and strive to be objective in the professional judgment of colleagues. They accept their share of faculty responsibilities for the governance of the institution.

As members of their institution, professors seek above all to be effective teachers and scholars. Although they observe the stated regulations of the institution, provided they do not contravene academic freedom, they maintain the right to criticize and seek revision. Professors

determine the amount and character of the work they do outside the institution with due regard to their paramount responsibilities within it. When considering the interruption or termination of service, professors recognize the effect of their decision upon the program of the institution and give due notice of their intentions.

As members of a community, professors have the rights and obligations of citizens. They measure the urgency of these obligations in the light of their responsibilities to their subject, to their students, to their profession, and to their institution. When they speak or act as private persons, they avoid creating the impression that they speak or act for their college or university. As citizens engaged in a profession that depends upon freedom for its health and integrity, professors have a particular obligation to promote conditions of free inquiry and to further public understanding of academic freedom.

[The preceding five paragraphs paraphrase a document approved at the Fifty-second Annual Meeting and published in the Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors, 55 (1969), 86-87.]

Cognizant of the dangers to academic freedom that may arise from its misunderstanding and abuse, we subscribe to the following principles defined in the statement on freedom and responsibility unanimously approved on October 31, 1970, by the Council of the American Association of University Professors, with minor editorial revisions:

Membership in the academic community imposes on students, faculty members, administrators, and trustees an obligation to respect the dignity of others, to acknowledge their right to express differing opinions, and to foster and defend intellectual honesty, freedom of inquiry and instruction, and free expression on and off the campus. The expression of dissent and the attempt to produce change, therefore, may not be carried out in ways which injure individuals or damage institutional facilities or disrupt the classes of teachers or colleagues. Speakers on campus not only must be protected from violence but given an opportunity to be heard. Those who seek to call attention to grievances must not do so in ways that significantly impede the functions of the institution.

Students are entitled to an atmosphere conducive to learning and to even-handed treatment in all aspects of the teacher-student relationship. Faculty members may not refuse to enroll or teach students on the grounds of their beliefs or the possible uses to which they may put the knowledge to be gained in a course. Students should not be forced by the authority inherent in the instructional role to make particular personal choices as to political action or their own part in society. Evaluation of students and the award of credit must be based on academic performance professionally judged and not on matters irrelevant to that performance, such as personality, race, religion, degree of political activism, gender, personal beliefs, etc.

It is the teachers' mastery of their subject and their own scholarship which entitle them to the classroom and to freedom in the presentation of their subject. Thus, it is improper for instructors persistently to intrude materials which have no relation to the subject matter of the

course as announced to their students and as approved by the faculty in their collective responsibility for the curriculum.

Because academic freedom has traditionally included the instructors' full freedom as citizens, most faculty members face no insoluble conflicts between the claims of politics, social action, and conscience, on the one hand, and the claims and expectations of their students, colleagues, and institutions, on the other. If such conflicts become acute, and the instructors' attention to their obligations as citizens and moral agents precludes the fulfillment of substantial academic obligations, they cannot escape the responsibility of that choice, but should either request a leave of absence or resign their academic position.