



Policy Chapter: Chapter 6 Faculty Affairs

Policy Number and Title: 06.035 Academic Freedom and Academic Responsibility

I. Policy Statement

The University of North Texas (UNT) exists for the common good. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free expression. Academic freedom is essential to these purposes and applies to both teaching and research. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Academic freedom in its teaching aspect is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the faculty member in teaching and of the student to freedom in learning.

Academic freedom carries with it special responsibilities correlative with rights. Faculty have the academic responsibility to subject their knowledge and postulates to rigorous review by peers who are experts in the relevant subject material, to have a firm foundation of their postulates in the most relevant and suitable available evidence, and to work with one another to provide the best education possible for our students.

II. Application of Policy

All Faculty Members.

III. Policy Definitions

A. Faculty Member

"Faculty Member," in this policy, means a person who is employed by UNT in a faculty appointment, whose duties include teaching, research, and/or administration, including professional librarianship.

B. Unit Administrator

"Unit Administrator," in this policy, means an individual with unit supervisory responsibilities. Unit administrators include, but are not limited to directors, chairs, associate deans, and deans.

IV. Policy Responsibilities

A. Academic Freedom

Consistent with the 1940 AAUP Statement on Academic Freedom, this policy affirms the Chicago principles on free expression, as articulated in the 2015 Report of the Committee on Freedom of Expression. "Because the University is committed to free and open inquiry in all matters, it guarantees all members of the University community the broadest possible latitude to speak, write, listen, challenge, and learn," except insofar as this policy 1) limits inquiry and expression in subsections A, B, and C, and 2) establishes Academic Responsibilities in section II. "[I]t is not the proper role of the University to attempt to shield individuals from ideas and opinions they find unwelcome, disagreeable, or even deeply offensive." Academic Freedom extends to in-person and on-line environments.

1. Research

Faculty members are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication or presentation of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties and the requirements of UNT policy.

2. Teaching

Faculty members are entitled to freedom in teaching and discussing their subject and in the selection of textbooks and other materials for their courses, but they should not introduce controversial matter that has no relation to their subject into the curriculum.

3. Public Expression

Faculty members are citizens as well as officers of their educational institution. When faculty members speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline. Their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and the University by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times attempt to be accurate, exercise restraint, and make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution. Faculty members are not permitted to use official letterhead or other University resources for the purpose of public expression.

B. Academic Responsibility

1. Faculty members are expected to maintain professional competence in their field of specialization, congruent with the teaching, service, and scholarly expectations of their UNT assignments. They are expected to exercise such competence in their teaching, public lectures, discussions, publications, performances, exhibitions, or other activities whereby scholarly and professional stature are demonstrated and may be appraised.
2. Specific faculty members' responsibilities include, but are not limited to: preparing for and meeting their assignments (including scheduled classes); holding office hours; conferring with, mentoring, and advising students; evaluating fairly and reporting promptly student achievements; assessing learning goals and outcomes; participating in those group deliberations which relate to the development of instructional programs; and working collaboratively with their colleagues in their respective units and with administrators to facilitate student learning and educational experiences.
3. Faculty members are expected to promote and maintain, congruent with the teaching, service, and scholarly expectations of their UNT assignments, learning and working environments free from harassment, discrimination, or bias on the basis of culture, national origin, race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, age, religion, family structure or relationships, economic status, veteran status, or intellectual point of view.

C. Faculty Member Redress

The University provides timely due process for faculty member complaints and grievances in [UNT Policy 06.051](#); redress of such grievances will follow University guidelines and processes.

V. References and Cross-References

1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, American Association of University Professors

2015 Report of the Committee on Freedom of Expression, the University of Chicago

[UNT System Board of Regents Rule 06.400, Rights and Responsibilities of Faculty](#)

[UNT Policy 06.051, Faculty Grievance](#)

VI. Revision History

Policy Contact:	Asst. Vice Provost, Faculty Success
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