

Policies of the University of North Texas	Chapter 6
06.035 Academic Freedom and Academic Responsibility	Faculty Affairs

Policy Statement. It is the policy and responsibility of the University of North Texas (UNT) to assure and protect academic freedom within the governing framework of the institution, and it is the responsibility of faculty members to insure that their actions fall under appropriate academic responsibility, as outlined below.

The right to academic freedom and the demands of academic responsibility apply equally to all faculty members at UNT.

Academic freedom and academic responsibility give vitality to the UNT and its mission. As such, the academic freedom to be able to freely consider or investigate important, and, perhaps, controversial questions is essential to the education of students and advancement of knowledge. 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.

Application of Policy. Faculty.

Definitions. None.

Procedures and Responsibilities.

1. Academic Freedom

Academic freedom is the right of members of the academy to study, discuss, investigate, teach, conduct research and/or creative activity, and publish, perform, and/or display their scholarship freely as appropriate to their respective UNT-assigned roles and responsibilities.

Members of the academic community at UNT may publically express their opinions as privately engaged citizens, separate from the opinions formulated from their use of the reliable methods of their discipline. When they do so, they are expected to clarify that they are not official spokespersons for UNT; and they are not permitted to use official letterhead or other university resources (see UNT Policy 3.10, Computer Use Policy).

Responsible Party: Faculty.

2. Academic Responsibility

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.

A primary responsibility of faculty is to acquaint students with the intellectual diversity of scholarly and creative views related to the faculty member's discipline and/or specific field of study, consistent with their UNT-assigned responsibilities and roles. Faculty members are expected to balance their freedom to teach and students' freedom to form independent judgments.

Specific faculty responsibilities include, but are not limited to, preparing for and meeting their assignments (including scheduled classes); conferring with, mentoring, and advising students; evaluating fairly and promptly reporting 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.

Appropriate stewardship of resources, participation in governance, cooperation and collaboration toward department, college, and university goals, and the ability to compromise and work to benefit these units and their constituents are expected of faculty members, as are respect for diverse personalities, perspectives, styles and demographic characteristics, and maintenance of an atmosphere of civility.

Responsible Party: Faculty; Unit Administrators.

3. Faculty Redress

The University provides timely due process for faculty complaints and grievances; redress of such grievances will follow University guidelines and processes.

Responsible Party: Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

References and Cross-references

UNT Policy 14.003, Computer Use

AAC&U Academic Freedom and Educational Responsibility principles reaffirmed in the AAC&U Board of Directors Statement, January 6, 2006

Forms and Tools. None.

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