

FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES TO STUDENTS IN THE INSTRUCTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

As an institution that encourages inquiry and exchange of ideas, California State University, Sacramento recognizes the importance and value of ideological diversity, debate, and constructive conflict, inside and outside the classroom. In recognition of students' rights and expectations regarding instruction, Sacramento State subscribes to the following critical elements of the Council of the American Association of University Professors' position in its "Statement on Freedom and Responsibility" (AAUP *Policy Documents & Reports* (10th Ed.). 2006. Washington, DC: American Association of University Professors, pp. 173-174.).

Membership in the academic community... [carries with it] an obligation to respect the dignity of others ...[and] 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 that injure individuals or damage institutional facilities or disrupt the classes of one's teachers or colleagues. ...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 the faculty or students' beliefs or the possible uses to which students 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 social behavior outside the instructional environment. Evaluation of students and the award of credit must be based on academic performance professionally judged and not on matters irrelevant to that performance, whether personality, race, religion, degree of political activism, or personal beliefs.

It is the mastery teachers have of their subjects and their own scholarship that entitles them to their classrooms and to freedom in the presentation of their subjects. Thus, it is improper for an instructor persistently to intrude material that has no relation to the subject, or to fail to present the subject matter of the course as announced to the students and as approved by the faculty in their collective responsibility for the curriculum.

Because academic freedom has traditionally included the instructor's full freedom as a citizen, 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 attention to obligations as a citizen and moral agent precludes an instructor from fulfilling substantial academic obligations, the instructor cannot escape the responsibility of that choice, but should either request a leave of absence or resign his or her academic position.

Given the statements above, faculty responsibilities in the instructional environment are delineated as follows:

- a. Faculty shall endeavor to foster an instructional environment free of denigration.

- b. Faculty may not refuse to enroll or teach students on the grounds of the faculty or students' beliefs or the possible uses to which students may put the knowledge to be gained in a course.
- c. Students will be evaluated solely on an academic basis, consistent with the standards articulated in the course syllabus, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students may take respectful and reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study.
- d. 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 social behavior outside the instructional environment.
- e. Faculty will make available a syllabus detailing course requirements, the methods to be employed in determining the final course grade, and any other course-related requirements, including attendance, on or before the first class meeting.
- f. Faculty will not schedule tests or assign additional work, beyond what has already been designated in the course syllabus, during the week prior to final examinations of each semester, in accordance with the Last Week of Instruction Policy [UML10000.htm].
- g. Faculty will make reasonable effort to enable graduating seniors to have the right to complete all requirements for a course before Commencement ceremonies.
- h. Faculty will provide thoughtfully prepared and delivered curricula that are purposefully related to the stated objectives of the course in question, consonant with the description in the University catalog.
- i. Faculty will meet their classes and labs regularly and at officially scheduled times and in officially scheduled places, following the modality published in the schedule of classes. An effort will be made to notify students when a session is not being held or when an instructor is to be late. Any change in the published schedule (time, location, mode of delivery) must be approved in advance by the appropriate administrator (ordinarily the Dean of the College or the Dean's designee) pursuant to a recommendation from the chair of the pertinent department.
- j. Faculty will adhere to the Faculty Office Hours Policy [UMF04360.htm].
- k. Students will be able to participate in procedures designed to solicit their opinion on teaching effectiveness consistent with University policy and collective bargaining agreements.
- l. Faculty will provide students with an opportunity in a timely fashion to review and discuss any graded examinations, papers, and other assignments, so that students may make informed decisions based on the feedback received.
- m. Faculty must retain all grading records, examinations, papers, and other assignments not yet returned to students who have completed the course for at least six months after the completion of the course to enable students to review their work and its evaluation. Faculty must safeguard the confidential nature of the instructor-student relationship, as articulated in relevant statutes, regulations, and professional standards.
- n. Faculty must appropriately acknowledge academic or scholarly assistance provided by a student.

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