ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

The Faculty of California State University, Sacramento recognizes that academic freedom is essential to the functioning of the University. The Faculty also recognizes that with academic freedom comes responsibility. The Sacramento State Policy on Academic Freedom and Responsibility includes excerpts from the *1940 AAUP Statement of Principles of Academic Freedom and Tenure* (including notes from the *1970 Interpretive Comments*), which serves as a Guiding Principle for Sacramento State's Academic Freedom and Responsibility policy. Sacramento State's policy does not include any language from the Tenure section of the AAUP Statement because matters related to tenure and promotion are governed by the MOU and not policy.

"a. Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties; but research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution.

"b. Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject."[1]

Understanding that academic subject matter overlaps between disciplines the phrase "relation to their subject" is to be understood in the most broad manner, giving teachers the freedom to draw connections between controversial issues and the subject matter at hand.

"The intent of this statement is not to discourage what is 'controversial.' Controversy is at the heart of the free academic inquiry[,] which the entire statement is designed to foster. The passage serves to underscore the need for teachers to avoid persistently intruding material which has no relation to their subject."[2]

"c. College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but 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 their institution by their utterances. Hence they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution."[3]

"The controlling principle is that a faculty member's expression of opinion as a citizen cannot constitute grounds for dismissal unless it clearly demonstrates the faculty member's unfitness for his or her position. Extramural utterances rarely bear upon the faculty member's fitness for the position. Moreover, a final decision should take into account the faculty member's entire record as a teacher and scholar.

"Paragraph 5 of the *Statement on Professional Ethics* also deals with the nature of the 'special obligations' of the teacher. The paragraph reads as follows:

"As members of their community, professors have the rights and obligations of other citizens. Professors measure the urgency of other 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 of speaking or acting 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."[4]

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[1] *1940 AAUP Statement of Principles of Academic Freedom and Tenure*
http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/policydocs/contents/1940statement.htm
[2] *1970 Interpretive Comments*
[3] *1940 AAUP Statement of Principles of Academic Freedom and Tenure*
[4] *1970 Interpretive Comments*