

# DECLARATION OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM



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1. Universities are the institutions where all the opinions, various truth claims as well as social and political problems are discussed in a liberal and civilized way and the complicated problems are expressed clearly without any oppression and prevention.
2. Academic freedom includes first and foremost the right of freedom of research and thus freedom of using the essential knowledge methods, the right of possessing the necessary tools and conditions required for the research and the rights of scientific production, informing, learning and dissemination.
3. Academics possess the rights to benefit from the academic freedom without any limitation, to research and investigate according to their own preferences and interests, and to teach these without being exposed to any oppression and prevention.
4. This freedom of teaching that the academics have should not be used in a manner restricting students' freedom of learning; academics should avoid from being dogmatic in the research and education processes and respect students' rights of thinking differently and expressing themselves.
5. Academics accordingly should lead the students to evaluate and understand the new thoughts as a whole and to be tolerant to the thoughts they do not agree and to think in various ways. Also, academics should encourage the students to create their own opinions based on evidences and enable them to express these opinions freely and respect their freedom of expression.
6. Campuses should be safe environments where the students can express their own opinions freely. Suppressing the intellectual diversity and the plurality of viewpoints will decrease the productivity of teaching and learning process, restrict students' freedom of learning, and constrain the chance of formation of critical and in-depth thinking.
7. Critical thinking develops only in the campuses where various thoughts are expressed in a liberal way. Students should feel that they would not be prevented, despised or labeled by academics and other students due to their own opinions, stances, attitudes and differences. No student should be subjected to discrimination due to his or her worldviews. Assessment and evaluation of the students must be based solely on the content and the subject of the lectures. Students have the right to object if they think the evaluations or assessments are unfair.
8. Every person in the university has academic freedom. Just as academics and students, guests invited to the university also possess the right of freedom of expression. The guests who visit the university for academic, cultural and sportive events or activities should be welcomed appropriately, should not be deprived of their freedom of expression due to their political thoughts or identities, and should not be prevented by the academics or students because of their different views. The freedom of expression is also valid for the people with opposite views. People with opposite views can express themselves in various ways as long as they do not violate the guests' rights to express themselves and others' rights to listen to them.
9. Both students and academics have the right to criticize and protest when there is a subject they disapprove or reject. However, this right cannot interrupt the operation of academic activities and the organization of the university. Any action, occupying and protesting that restricts the students' freedom of learning, academics' freedom of teaching, and freedom of expressing an opinion in the university setting is a violation of academic freedom. Freedom of expression is a necessary condition of pluralism, tolerance, and open-mindedness as well as of democratic society; but it is not absolute. Any discourse ignoring the individual rights and freedoms; including insult, slander, contempt or abuse and prompting rebellion and pointing the individuals and groups as a target in order to harm them overtly due to their difference can never comply with the freedom of expression.

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