

**CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA  
POLICY NO: 1210**

**FACULTY STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

Academic freedom is the most fundamental condition that must be met for education to flourish. Academic freedom is neither automatic nor free. It is a philosophical concept that has evolved in conjunction with the search for knowledge, a search often fettered by widespread restrictions and restraints throughout the course of human history. The university is the primary institution within society that has been designated to revere and foster intellectual liberty. Indeed it is the commitment to academic freedom that distinguishes the university community from the community at large and from other institutions within the larger community.

Our commitment to academic freedom at Cal Poly stems from our vision of the special kind of community that is needed to nurture academic freedom. Therefore, we are not satisfied with a brief disclaimer that focuses on academic non-interference. Instead we actively seek to promote and sustain a community which provides the leadership, vigilance, and vision necessary for academic freedom to take root, grow, blossom, and bear fruit.

It is in this spirit that we have conceptualized the kind of community we are devoted to creating at Cal Poly. Our vision is admittedly poetic but we endorse it unapologetically for it is not merely ornamental. Rather, it is fundamental to our understanding of the university as a special place wherein we fulfill special roles as agents and guardians of academic freedom. Without academic freedom, a free society cannot endure. Therefore we envision Cal Poly as a community of learners composed of both scholars and students who strive to do the following:

- ❖ Interact in structured, constructive ways that reflect an individual and collective respect for the freedom to teach and the freedom to learn in an arena dedicated to the love of wisdom and the quest for knowledge.
- ❖ Pursue intellectual freedom in a way that results in a concomitant commitment to the responsibility that must accompany the courageous and ethical use of such freedom if it is to be preserved and perpetuated in viable form.
- ❖ Exhibit respect for the dynamic nature of academic freedom as a concept that is subject to vigorous, rigorous defense, debate, and redefinition in light of prevailing customs, new knowledge, competing social and religious values and political systems, and the pressing realities of limited economic resources.
- ❖ Celebrate the human capacity for cognitive-effective development and aesthetic expression by making a personal commitment to excellence through individual effort and achievement.
- ❖ Advocate intellectual freedom and the responsible use of that freedom in the

incentive and reward systems that govern faculty recruitment, hiring, retention, tenure, and promotion as well as student recruitment, admissions, and grading policies.

- ❖ Support curriculum offerings, teaching efforts, research endeavors, and educational activities that reflect a wealth of opportunities to pursue, promote, and disseminate a wide range of diverse viewpoints in all areas of knowledge.
- ❖ Cultivate freedom of inquiry and expression in ways that protect and facilitate the unmolested flowering of ideas in all realms of human experience.
- ❖ Engage in the accumulation, transmission, discovery, and creation of knowledge not only for its own exalted sake but for its application to the resolution of human problems, the expansion of human horizons, and an understanding of the universe.
- ❖ Recognize that true academic freedom constitutes intellectual freedom that transcends freedom of speech and elevates freedom of thought to its rightful place as pinnacle of human endeavors.
- ❖ Nurture systematic efforts to exemplify the spirit embodied in Bertrand Russell's observation: "Thought is great and swift and free, the light of the world, and the chief glory" of humankind.