

II.A. Academic Freedom and Responsibility

(Source: Resolution of the Executive Board of Trustees, February 13, 1953; Statutes of the Trustees, September 16, 1959 and Handbook for Faculty and Administration, 1969; revised, Statutes of the Trustees, Article 10, June 17, 1983; revised as [Article 11, November 2, 2001](#))

The University recognizes the importance of a system of tenure for faculty members as the preeminent means of fostering and protecting academic freedom in teaching and in scholarly inquiry.

There shall be a Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility of ten members, consisting of the Faculty Senate Chair-Elect and nine members of the Faculty Senate, three of whom are selected each year in accordance with the Rules of the Senate. This committee shall advise and consult with each faculty's Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility, and with administrative officers, on the establishment of appropriate procedures to be followed in the event of a claim of violation of academic freedom or responsibility. At the beginning of each year, the Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility shall distribute the "Procedural Principles for Handling Complaints Concerning Academic Freedom and Responsibility" to the members of each faculty's Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility. The Committee shall have power to make investigations, reports, and recommendations on any matter relating to academic freedom and responsibility within the University. The Committee shall be governed in its responsibilities and procedures by rules established by the Faculty Senate.

Each faculty shall have a standing Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility that shall be elected annually. Each faculty's Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility shall, subject to review by the faculty, and to the extent provided in the relevant procedures, including the Procedures Governing Sanctions Taken Against Members of the Faculty adopted on June 20, 1997, and as they may be hereafter amended, represent the faculty in all proceedings that involve temporary exclusion of or imposition of a major sanction on a faculty member; suspension or termination of the appointment of a faculty member, some matters arising from financial exigency proceedings, or other questions concerning an individual faculty member's claim of violation of his or her academic freedom. The committee shall have power to make investigations, reports, and recommendations on any matter relating to academic freedom and responsibility within the school that may affect one or more faculty members.

Each faculty's Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility shall consist of not less than three members. The faculty shall also elect one or more alternate members to serve in the event of the resignation or disqualification of a Committee member. A faculty's Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility shall not contain department chairs or administrators. Exceptions, if necessary in small schools, should be allowed with the approval of the Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility. Most members of a faculty's committee should be tenured faculty. Such committees shall be elected annually, and in accordance with the bylaws of a faculty, by those faculty members who are members of the Standing Faculty. Elections shall be held not later than the beginning of the academic year. The dean shall report to the Provost, not later than October 15 of each year, giving the names of the members of the

faculty Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility that is currently in existence. Each faculty Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility shall elect its own chair.

It is the policy of the University of Pennsylvania to maintain and encourage freedom of inquiry, discourse, teaching, research, and publication and to protect any member of the academic staff against influences, from within or without the University, which would restrict him or her in the exercise of these freedoms in his or her area of scholarly interest. The teacher is entitled to freedom in research and in the publication of results, subject to the adequate performance of his or her other academic duties, and to the institutional policies and procedures as set forth in the research policies of the University. Research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution.

The teacher is entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing his or her subject. The teacher is a member of a learned profession and of an educational institution. When speaking or writing as an individual, the teacher should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but should note that a special position in the community imposes special obligations. As a person of learning and a member of an educational institution, the teacher should remember that the public may judge the profession and the institution by his/her utterances. Hence the teacher should at all times show respect for the opinions of others, and should indicate when he or she is not speaking for the institution.