

## S99-8 Professional Responsibility Statement

Legislative History: This proposal would amend the policy on Professional Responsibility

Rationale: The Statement of Professional Responsibility found in University Policy S99-8 has not been updated in nearly a quarter of a century, while the statement(s) upon which it is based have undergone some revisions in that time. In addition, in recent years many institutions of higher education have begun to enact policies to describe unprofessional conduct (often described as “bullying”) that does not fall under any specific statutory protections, but is nevertheless disruptive to the work of the university, and that undermines the environment for free pursuit of scholarship. At present, SJSU does not have a formal definition of bullying in University policy. This policy adds such a definition, and includes it as an example of behavior that falls outside of acceptable standards for professional responsibility among faculty.

After feedback from the first Senate reading, three significant changes were made:

1. Language about respect for differing research methodology has been added to Section B.3.
2. More specific language about what sorts of nonverbal and/or nonvocal expressions would possibly be considered “bullying” was added to Section D.
3. Language addressing power differentials was added to Section D.
4. The word “faculty” was added to the title and the preamble to clarify that this policy establishes professional expectations *for faculty by other faculty*.

Additional feedback received during the first reading included concern about the use of the term “bullying” and whether the more general “other unprofessional conduct” or “other conduct of concern” might be more palatable. The committee considered this, but came to the conclusion that bullying, specifically, is an issue of great concern on campus, and has been for many years, and since one of the goals of this amendment is to begin to address that concern, it is preferable to keep the more specific language.

Resolved: That S99-8 Professional Responsibility Statement be modified as follows:

Approved: November 27, 2023

Vote: 9-0-0

Present: Barrera, Chen, French, Kazemifar, Pendyala, Pruthi, Raman, Ruiz Blanco, Smith

Absent: None

Financial Impact: None anticipated

Workload Impact: None anticipated

# FACULTY PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY [& Declaring our Support for Academic Freedom and Establishing the Academic Freedom Committee]

## I. Statement of Professional Responsibility for Faculty<sup>1</sup>

### A. Preamble

Professional responsibility is the natural complement of the academic freedom essential to the university's mission. Through their responsible professional conduct, faculty members<sup>2</sup> promote and protect academic freedom. Since faculty members belong to a profession with the rights of self-governance, they also have the obligation to establish standards of professional conduct and procedures to enforce them. The following standards provide guidance for certain ethical questions which may arise over the course of a faculty member's career, but they are not an exhaustive list. They are built upon the foundations of academic freedom; they are the ideals to which all faculty members should aspire.

### B. Faculty Responsibilities

The responsibilities of faculty members may be considered from five related, but somewhat conceptually distinct, perspectives: (1) as members of an academic profession; (2) as teachers<sup>3</sup>; (3) as colleagues; (4) as members of an academic institution; and (5) as members of a community.

#### 1. As members of an academic profession, faculty members:

- a. serve as intellectual leaders; they
  - seek and state the truth as they see it.
  - develop and improve their instructional and scholarly competence
  - exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in applying, extending, and transmitting knowledge.
  - practice, foster, and defend intellectual honesty, freedom of inquiry and instruction, and free expression on and off the campus.

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<sup>1</sup> Derived in part, from the Academic Senate of California State University proposed policy AS-2080-92/FA-I, May 7-8, 1992. Also consulted were the original sources on which AS-2080-92/FA-I was based, including earlier AAUP documents: primarily the *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* (1940), the *Statement on Professional Ethics* (1966, revised 1987 and 2009), the *Statement of the Association's Council: Freedom and Responsibility* (1970, revised 1990).

<sup>2</sup> The faculty of the university include all those who engage in scholarly activities and/or those who directly or indirectly participate in instructional activity. Thus faculty members include professors, lecturers, teaching assistants, research assistants, coaches, counselors, librarians, and all those faculty employees under Unit 3.

<sup>3</sup> Teaching is meant in an inclusive sense. All those who directly or indirectly contribute to instructional activity are teachers. For example, librarians and other academically related faculty contribute to instructional activity, even in those cases where they do not engage in direct classroom instruction.

- promote the free and open exchange of ideas in the classroom as related to the subject matter.
  - strive to foster a campus environment that i) supports a robust discussion of issues (including political and societal issues), ii) promotes respect for the opinions of others, and iii) encourages sensitivity to the possibility of multiple interpretations of speech and actions.
  - do not allow their subsidiary interests to compromise their freedom of inquiry.
- b. engage in research and other professional and creative activities; they
- perform their research with honesty and integrity.
  - respect the ethical and legal considerations<sup>4</sup> that underlie their work and output, as consistent with the ethical principles and guidelines of their discipline.
  - comply with guidelines governing any grant or other funds related to a research or creative project.
  - strive to contribute to the body of knowledge in their discipline and to disseminate such knowledge appropriately.
  - critically evaluate their work prior to dissemination.
  - use university and other resources with integrity and consideration of the mission of the university.

2. As teachers, faculty members:

- a. treat students fairly and respectfully; they
- assure that their evaluations of students reflect only matters relevant to the students' academic performance.
  - guard against improper disclosure of confidential information regarding students.<sup>5</sup>
  - ensure that their professional contacts with students are free from any exploitation, harassment, or discrimination.
  - acknowledge significant academic or scholarly collaboration with or assistance from their students.
  - adhere to published descriptions of course content and grading practices, such as those contained in syllabi and course catalogs.
  - maintain awareness of and adhere to University policies governing student rights and responsibilities.
- b. encourage the free pursuit of learning; they
- encourage students to make their own judgments and to express them when appropriate.
  - allow students to take reasoned exception to or to reserve judgment about the data or views offered in a course of study.

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<sup>4</sup> Such ethical and legal considerations include compliance with copyright laws and not plagiarizing.

<sup>5</sup> The confidentiality of student records and information is also governed by law and SJSU policy. See the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (often referred to as the Buckley Amendment), information available from either the SJSU Division of Student Affairs or the SJSU Office of Faculty Affairs, and University Policies S66-20 and S90-5 (and any related updates or modifications) available at the Senate Web site.

- refuse to tolerate exploitation, harassment, or discrimination by students in an instructional setting.
- protect student academic freedom
- c. exhibit and uphold the highest scholarly and ethical standards of their disciplines; they
  - foster honest academic conduct.
  - do not instruct, advise, or supervise students with whom they have personal or professional conflicts of interest.<sup>6</sup>
- d. serve as intellectual guides and advisors; they
  - are available during reasonable, posted hours to assist students who request their intellectual and academic help.
  - utilize instructional time to help students learn course materials.

3. As colleagues and co-workers, faculty members:

- a. respect and defend free inquiry even when the methodology used or the findings and conclusions reached differ from their own.
- b. show due consideration for diverse opinions.
- c. acknowledge the contributions of others to their academic work.
- d. seek objectivity in their professional evaluations.
- e. do not evaluate or supervise those with whom they have personal or professional conflicts of interest.<sup>7</sup>
- f. avoid exploitive, harassing, or discriminatory behavior.
- g. hold themselves and colleagues to high ethical standards and address ethical abuses when they become known.

4. As members of an academic institution, faculty members:

- a. observe the stated regulations of the institution that are consistent with the statement of academic freedom in Amendment A to University Policy S99-8, and with their contractual and legal obligations.
- b. maintain the right to criticize regulations and seek their revision.
- c. assure that their outside interests do not compromise the obligations of their primary appointment.
- d. request a leave of absence or resign when the claims of outside interests preclude the fulfillment of substantial academic obligations.
- e. give appropriate notice of their intent to interrupt or terminate their services to the university.
- f. share in the responsibilities for governing the university.
- g. share in periodic review and improvement of curriculum.

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<sup>6</sup> For a discussion of the concept of "conflicts of interest" in the context of this Statement of Faculty Responsibility, see Section C of this policy. A separate University policy (S99-11) exists dealing with conflicts of interest for principal investigators; see the Senate Web page.

<sup>7</sup> See note 6.

- h. cooperate in the pursuit of stated goals of one's program, department, college, or university.
- i. help ensure that the university meets its commitment to maintain an environment that values diversity and that is free from discrimination and harassment.

5. As members of a community, faculty members:

- a. publicly distinguish when they speak or act as private citizens from when they do so as an official representative of the university so as not to lead others to mistake them as a spokesperson for San José State University or the California State University system.<sup>8</sup>
- b. recognize that breaking legal and civil codes for academic gain is also an infringement of professional ethics.<sup>9</sup>
- c. promote conditions of free inquiry.
- d. further public understanding of academic freedom.

C. Conflicts of Interest

*Definition:* In the context of professional responsibility, a conflict of interest is an agreement, relationship, or other arrangement, be it personal or professional, formal or informal, that undermines the faculty's disinterested performance of its professional duties and obligations.

*Importance:* Students have a just expectation that they will be instructed, evaluated and supervised by a disinterested faculty. Faculty members have a similar expectation that their professional and academic evaluations and supervision are free from the self-interest of their peers. Maintaining disinterestedness is one of the faculty's central ethical responsibilities. The disinterestedness of the faculty assures both the academic integrity of the University and the faculty's academic freedom.

*Conflicts of interest between faculty and students:* In addition to the legal contracts existing between students and the University, there is an equally important "social contract" between them and the faculty, in which each fulfills its duties and obligations to the other. Many of the faculty's responsibilities under this "contract" are found in Section B.2. of this document. Interests that conflict with those obligations include actions or requirements of the faculty that appear to be grounded in private interest or gain, not in professional responsibility. Examples of conflicting interests are: requiring the purchase of course materials from which an instructor makes a profit (texts and other materials professionally reviewed, published, and distributed are excluded); and giving academic credit for student research which the instructor puts to use for private gain or profit.

Other conflicts of interest may arise in view of the disproportion of influence and power between faculty and students. Instructors, thus, ought not engage students in their classes or

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<sup>8</sup> See also California Education Code Section 89005.5.

<sup>9</sup> See also California Government Code Section 8314 on unlawful use of state resources by state employees.

under their supervision in relationships that are so personal that the presumption of professional disinterest is difficult to maintain. Faculty members, for example, ought not instruct or supervise students who are obligated to them financially; and faculty ought not supervise or instruct students with whom they have relationships grounded in interests inconsistent with their professional responsibility and the mission of the University. These conflicts of interest include but are not restricted to sexual relationships.

A similar caveat applies, of course, to the instruction and evaluation of students who are family members, since faculty disinterestedness is problematic in this case as well.

Exceptions to these injunctions may be made after consultation with an instructor's department chair or other appropriate party, such as a supervisor or a dean. The grounds for exception must be compelling (e.g., curricular or staffing restrictions in a student's chosen academic program).

While acknowledging that the propriety of a personal relationship between a student and an instructor is indeed a sensitive issue for all involved, the faculty holds that the rights of faculty and students to free association must be honored and protected in instances when professional disinterestedness is not expected or required. The faculty also acknowledges that disinterestedness thrives best in an atmosphere free from suspicions of favoritism, nepotism, coercion and harassment.

*Conflicts of interest in professional relationships:* Faculty members rightfully expect unbiased evaluations of their academic and professional performance. The responsibilities of the faculty in this regard are detailed in Section II.B.3. of this document. Examples of conflicts of interest here include evaluating or supervising faculty who are family members or parties in relationships grounded in interests (e.g., personal, professional or financial interests) that preclude disinterestedness.

Beyond questions of peer evaluation, the faculty must ensure that its research or comparable activities are consistent with the mission of the University and with professional standards. The faculty must maintain a disinterested pursuit of truth in their professional activities, one uncompromised, for example, by the pursuit of fees, royalties, and other forms of compensation. Disinterestedness comes into question when subsidiary concerns or private gain makes one's intellectual honesty and freedom of inquiry problematic.

The faculty holds that the right of a faculty member to freely associate with colleagues must be honored and protected in instances when professional conflicts of interest are not at issue. Following the principle of disinterestedness, the faculty also recognizes that non-academic relationships between faculty members may become sensitive issues when placed in the context of professional evaluation and supervision (e.g., the recruitment, retention, tenure or promotion of faculty). A faculty member should be excused from these duties when a potential conflict of interest exists. If it is not possible to excuse a faculty member in such circumstances, the faculty member who conducts the evaluation or supervision should advise his/her chair or other appropriate party (e.g., a supervisor or dean) of the situation.

*Importance of ethical conduct in fact and appearance:* Recognizing a conflict of interest in the area of faculty responsibility is often a matter of common sense; at other times it is a matter of law. But beyond the ethical minimums of law and common sense, there exists a higher standard toward which the faculty should strive. That is, a faculty member ought to avoid actual conflicts of interest as well as the appearance of such conflicts whenever possible. This ethical standard is not born of scrupulosity. Rather, it arises from the faculty's full awareness of the wide scope of thought and expression it enjoys under the protection of academic freedom.

#### D. Bullying and Other Unprofessional Conduct

*Definition<sup>10</sup>:* In the context of Professional Responsibility, “other” unprofessional conduct is defined as repeated unprofessional behavior that does not fall under statutory protections, including but not limited to Title IX, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. Of particular concern in this area is bullying. Bullying is behavior that a reasonable person would find hostile, intimidating, offensive, and unrelated to the University’s legitimate instructional or research interests. Such behavior is generally pervasive or severe to the extent that it makes conditions inhospitable and undermines another person’s ability to carry out their responsibilities to the university. A single act will typically not be sufficient to qualify as unprofessional conduct or bullying, but an especially severe or egregious act may so qualify. Examples of bullying could include, but are not limited to:

1. Abusive expression directed at another person in the workplace, such as derogatory remarks that are outside the range of reasonably accepted expressions of disagreement, disapproval, or critique in an academic or professional setting;
2. Unwanted physical contact and/or aggressive, derogatory, hateful, or otherwise unprofessional nonverbal and/or nonvocal expressions;
3. Exclusion and/or isolation leading to harm to another person’s reputation or hindering of another person’s work;
4. Sabotage of another person’s work and/or impeding another person’s capacity for academic expression;
5. The sharing of personal or private information about another person causing embarrassment, intimidation, shaming and/or humiliation; and

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<sup>10</sup> This definition is partially derived from the following sources:

- The CSU Chancellor’s Strategic Workgroup Black Student Success Report (<https://www.calstate.edu/impact-of-the-csu/diversity/Documents/CSU-Black-Student-Success-Workgroup-Report-2023.pdf>)
- The University of California, Berkeley definition of “bullying” (<https://campuspol.berkeley.edu/policies/bullying.pdf>)
- The University of Wisconsin, Madison policy on Hostile and Intimidating Behavior (<https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/principles-and-policies/>)
- The University of New Mexico Respectful Campus Policy (<http://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/2000/2240.html>)
- The California State University, Chico Policy on Campus Behavior and Violence Prevention (<https://www.csuchico.edu/pres/em/2012/12-025.shtml>)

6. Cyberbullying, which is the use of electronic/digital communication in any form to engage in any of the behaviors listed herein

*Importance:* Severe, persistent, or pervasive unprofessional behavior can undermine other faculty member's performance of their professional duties and obligations with regard to the university's mission, and chill the environment for free pursuit of learning. While it is often easier to recognize conduct of concern when it occurs in a relationship with a power imbalance, this policy is meant to specifically include bullying between individuals of perceived equal levels of power, as well.

#### E. Applicable Laws and Regulations Governing Conduct

Various federal and state laws and regulations apply to the university and its employees. Faculty members must take responsibility for awareness of such rules and to comply with them. Many of these laws and regulations are noted in this and other University policies related to faculty responsibilities (a partial list is included at Section F below).

Examples of laws and regulations applicable to the university and its employees include:

1. California law prohibits use of state resources or the "California State University" name to advocate a position regarding a candidate or ballot proposition.<sup>11</sup>
2. As a recipient of federal and state funds, and other grants, the university and its faculty involved in research projects or programs may be governed by certain laws, regulations, and guidelines.
3. Federal and California laws dealing with non-discrimination, equal employment opportunity, and affirmative action govern employment practices at SJSU and are relevant to faculty members involved in retention, tenure, promotion, and similar employment decisions.
4. In order to protect the privacy of students, federal and California laws prohibit certain disclosures of student records.

Faculty members may obtain assistance in gaining awareness and understanding of laws and regulations that may govern their conduct from their department chair (or equivalent unit head) and the Office of Faculty Services.

#### F. Additional References

University policies that relate to academic freedom and faculty responsibilities include:<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> See California Government Code Section 8314, California Education Code Section 89005.5, and *Stanson v. Mott*, 17 Cal.3d 206, 210 (1976). The CSU Office of General Counsel's *Handbook of Election Issues*, dated February 1997, provides general guidance to the legal background on the use of state resources in elections. This handbook is available at the Web site for this policy on Professional Responsibility. It is also available from the SJSU President's Office.

<sup>12</sup> Faculty are encouraged to review University Policies (which are available at <https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/university-policies/> as well as in the Academic Senate Office) to be sure they are fully aware of the most current policies pertaining to their activities as teachers, researchers, mentors,



1. S92-12, Statement on Academic Freedom and Artistic Expression.
2. F12-5, Policy and Procedures for Responding to Allegations of Scientific or Other Misconduct in Funded Research.
3. S99-11, Conflict of Interest Policy For Principal Investigators.
4. F97-6, Policy and Assurance for Humane Care and Use of Animals at San José State University
5. F90-4, Policy for Protection of Human Research Subjects; Ethics; Institutional Review Board (IRB).
6. S94-8, Policy on Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity; Grants; Academic Freedom.
7. S94-5, F95-1 S99-9, Board of Professional Responsibility (BPR)— provides an implementing mechanism for some of the policies described or referenced in this document.
8. S90-5, Student Rights and Responsibilities.

## History

S93-12, Professional Responsibility, superseded F67-17, Academic Freedom and The Common Good (approved February 5, 1968), and S88-9, AAUP Statement on Professional Ethics (approved May 6, 1988). S88-9 superseded S67-10, Professional Ethics (approved May 11, 1967). S94-3 added the explanation on conflicts of interest to S93-12 (originally added as Appendix A) and made slight changes to two footnotes. S95-9 added Appendix B on conflicts of interest for principal investigators. S93-12 was approved as University Policy on May 13, 1993, S94-3 was approved on April 12, 1994, and S95-9 was approved on April 6, 1995.

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## II. Declaring our Support for Academic Freedom and Establishing the Academic Freedom Committee

### Amendment A to University Policies S99-9 and S99-8

#### Legislative History:

**At its meeting of May 8, 2023, the Academic Senate approved the following policy amendments to S99-9 and S99-8 presented by Senator French for the Professional Standards Committee.**

**Action by University President:  
Approved and signed by President  
Cynthia Teniente-Matson on August 21, 2023.**

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and employees and members of the SJSU/CSU community. Any questions about these policies or matters covered by this policy on Professional Responsibility, or relevant federal and state laws, should be directed to the department chair, college dean, Office of Faculty Affairs, or Academic Senate Office, as appropriate.

**Policy Recommendation**  
**Declaring our Support for Academic Freedom and Establishing the Academic Freedom Committee**

Resolved: That this policy be adopted effective immediately, with the Academic Freedom Committee to be established by the beginning of AY 2023-2024.

Resolved: That Section I of S99-8 shall be deleted (as it is incorporated here unchanged.) The title of S99-8 shall be changed from “Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibility” to “Professional Responsibility.”

Resolved: Throughout S99-9 the name of the “Board of Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibility” shall be changed to the “Board of Professional Responsibility.” Items 1, 2, and 3 of its charge (related to the education about Academic Freedom) will be deleted (as they are incorporated here.)

Rationale: Academic Freedom is at the heart of the success of the modern university, but in recent years faculty, students, and others have begun to lose touch with an understanding of this critical concept. The classic statements in defense of academic freedom were articulated at the start of the twentieth century by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) in response to egregious acts in which faculty appointments, research programs, and curricular content were attacked or manipulated for political reasons. Faculty organized and fought hard to secure tenure and other protections, and by the 1950s they won a key court decision that eloquently summarized the need for academic freedom. "Teachers and students must always remain free to inquire, to study and to evaluate, to gain new maturity and understanding; otherwise our civilization will stagnate and die."<sup>13</sup>

Today, however, many faculty and others do not know much about the history of academic freedom, its legal status, or its ultimate purpose. When the term is used it is sometimes perceived incorrectly as an individual privilege rather than as a critically important tool for fulfilling the academy’s scholarly and educational roles. Professional Standards believes it is the responsibility of each new generation of faculty to take on the challenge of renewing the community’s understanding of academic freedom, and has crafted this policy recommendation to fulfill this task.

A generation ago, the Academic Senate combined the Academic Freedom Committee with a new board focused on professional ethics. The motivation was sound—to symbolize the deep interconnection of academic freedom to professional responsibility. We continue to agree with this principle, but experience has taught that the Board of Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibility (BAFPR) has not been a consistently effective committee. Its sweeping responsibilities, extended membership, and restricted qualifications have resulted in a committee that is difficult to fill and which is torn between its educational and its quasi-judicial functions. As a result, the BAFPR has been the subject of review and reform by Professional Standards for

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<sup>13</sup> *Sweezy v. New Hampshire*, 34 U.S. 234, 250 (1957)

4 years, with numerous starts and stops and no resolution to the problems. After extensive consultation, Professional Standards is determined to solve this problem, and this policy recommendation is the first of two important steps.

This policy recommendation removes the educational functions centered on Academic Freedom from BAFPR and gives them to a new Academic Freedom Committee (AFC.) The AFC will be much smaller than the Board and its qualifications for membership less restrictive. (BAFPR consists solely of full Professors elected from each College.) By creating a smaller committee with a sharper focus, Professional Standards hopes to create a vibrant, active committee of experts that can engage in the continual education of the university on academic freedom issues, and provide useful and timely information to faculty, students, and administration when issues related to academic freedom arise.

Other features of this reform are to pull the eloquent AAUP-derived statements on Academic Freedom and Tenure into this policy creating the Academic Freedom Committee, so that the AFC's charge will be connected to its structure. We have added a section on professional responsibility that underlines the interconnection between freedom and responsibility and links to the (retitled) Professional Responsibility policy.

The creation of the AFC will nevertheless leave another reform of the Board of Professional Responsibility to be taken up in a second stage. The most effective way to enforce our campus policy on professional responsibility, given the collective bargaining system and the growing importance of legal codes operating within the academy, has yet to be decided. The existing Board is advisory to Faculty Services and has had mixed success over the years with this function. Furthermore, the statement of professional responsibility is itself in need of revision after more than twenty years of legal developments. But Professional Standards would like to see an effective and functioning AFC in place while our work continues on the (now) separate professional responsibility policy.

Approved: 5/1/23

Vote: 10-0-0

Present: Barrera, French, Gómez, Kazemifar, Maldonado, Monday, Pruthi, Riley, Smith, Wang

Absent: None

**Financial Impact:** There could be some modest travel costs associated with sending members of the Academic Freedom committee to conferences.

**Workload Impact:** The creation of a new committee would represent more work, although necessary work. This is somewhat obviated by the work that could be saved if the committee's actions prevent misunderstandings or incidents arising from disputes over academic freedom.

## 1. Statement of Academic Freedom<sup>14</sup>

### 1.1. In General

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<sup>14</sup> Derived from the *International Statement on Academic Freedom and Tenure*, 1984. Signatories include the American Association of University Professors, the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, and similar groups from the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Canada, Australia, Ireland, and France.

- 1.1.1. The primary mandates of a university—the discovery and dissemination of knowledge and understanding, are absolutely dependent upon academic and intellectual freedom. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Freedom in teaching is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the student in learning and of the faculty<sup>15</sup> in teaching.
  - 1.1.2. Political attacks on academic freedom, including government attempts to exert control over curriculum, restrict the freedom to pursue all avenues of scholarly research, and censor the speech of faculty, have many historical precedents. Such attempts to control teaching and research destroy higher education.
  - 1.1.3. San José State University has a responsibility to society to defend and to maintain these freedoms, and to ensure that those engaged in academic pursuits can effectively execute their responsibilities. SJSU faculty must remain free of the forces of special interests and political interference if they are to fulfill society's expectations and their educational responsibilities.
  - 1.1.4. All members of the university community: students, staff, and all faculty employees, shall have the protections of academic freedom
- 1.2. Academic Freedom as it Relates to Tenure
    - 1.2.1. Tenure is one mechanism specifically created to protect academic freedom, and those faculty who hold the protection of tenure have an obligation to protect the academic freedom of all members of the university community.
    - 1.2.2. Tenure constitutes an important procedural safeguard of academic freedom and professional responsibility and, as such, is essential for the maintenance of intellectual liberty and high standards in education and in scholarship. It is one means by which university faculty members are protected against personal malice or political coercion, and by which it is ensured that those who, following rigorous evaluation, secure continuing employment, can be dismissed only on professional grounds according to due process.
    - 1.2.3. Historically, the indispensability of academic tenure to academic freedom in universities throughout the world has been proven by events in situations where tenure has not existed. We must not forget the lessons of the past but must work to ensure that SJSU continues to fulfill the educational needs of a free society.
  - 1.3. Academic Freedom as it Relates to Professional Responsibility
    - 1.3.1. According to the AAUP, Academic freedom “is a professional right extended to members of the profession and is subject to certain limitations. Academic freedom means that faculty are free to engage in the professionally competent forms of inquiry and teaching that are necessary for the purposes of the university. It does not mean that individual faculty members are free to teach or publish whatever they want without repercussions.” AAUP makes clear that the academic freedom of an individual faculty member is subject to matters of professional responsibility, including those related to 1) the collective; 2) professional ethics; and 3) professional competence. AAUP says more about each category below:

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<sup>15</sup> The faculty of the university include all those who engage in scholarly activities and/or those who directly or indirectly participate in instructional activity. Thus faculty members include professors, lecturers, teaching assistants, research assistants, coaches, counselors, librarians, and all those faculty employees under Unit 3.

**“The Collective:** The faculty who are responsible for a particular course of study may share responsibility for determining courses to be offered or texts to be assigned to students. The shared academic freedom to make this decision trumps the freedom of an individual faculty member to assign a textbook that he or she alone prefers.”

**“Professional Ethics:** A faculty member must act ethically in their teaching and research; for example, by following regulations on human subject research.”

**“Professional Competence:** In order to produce and disseminate the highest quality of knowledge in a given field, academics are regulated by other academics who are in a position to judge the work of their peers. A faculty member is not entitled to teach something that their academic peers judge is invalid--for example, teaching that  $2+2=5$  would not be protected; neither would teaching intelligent design in an evolutionary biology class.<sup>16</sup>

Professional responsibility is thus the natural complement of the academic freedom essential to the university's mission. Through their responsible professional conduct, faculty members promote and protect academic freedom. Because faculty members belong to a profession with the rights of self-government, they also have the obligation to establish standards of professional conduct and procedures to enforce them. These standards are set in the SJSU Statement of Professional Responsibility.<sup>17</sup>

- 1.3.2. Academic freedom is a privilege granted to faculty in return for their obligation to serve the public good, which they do through the advancement of scholarship, the search for truth, and the higher education of our communities. We agree with the AAUP 1915 Declaration that “not only that the profession will earnestly guard those liberties without which it cannot rightly render its distinctive and indispensable service to society, but also that it will with equal earnestness seek to maintain such standards of professional character, and of scientific integrity and competency, as shall make it a fit instrument for that service.”<sup>18</sup>
2. The Academic Freedom Committee is established as a Special Agency.
  - 2.1. Charge of the Academic Freedom Committee (AFC):
    - 2.1.1. AFC shall monitor the state of academic freedom both at San Jose State and in the broader academic environment. In addition, it shall safeguard and promote academic freedom at SJSU, and shall serve as an advisory body on issues arising from the application of academic freedom on our campus.
    - 2.1.2. AFC shall educate and advise on the meaning and scope of academic freedom and its application. To do so, AFC shall familiarize itself with policies, laws, court decisions, and current events concerning academic freedom. As part of this function

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.aaup.org/programs/academic-freedom/faqs-academic-freedom>

<sup>17</sup> S99-8 at the time of this policy recommendation

<sup>18</sup> American Association of University Professors, *1915 Declaration of Principles on Academic Freedom and Academic Tenure*.

it shall maintain contact (and membership if possible) with the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and familiarize itself with relevant AAUP publications. Members of AFC should attend AAUP conferences on academic freedom when possible.

2.1.3. AFC shall work in concert with the Center for Faculty Development to educate and orient new faculty on academic freedom issues, by attending and presenting at events such as faculty orientations.

2.1.4. AFC shall educate all constituencies of the San Jose State Community on our own policies on academic freedom. It shall host at least one academic freedom forum each year, on a topic related to academic freedom and designed to stimulate interest in academic freedom.

### 3. Organization of the AFC

#### 3.1. Membership

3.1.1. Four faculty members, three of whom must be (or have previously been) tenured, chosen university-wide for their expertise and/or interest in academic freedom issues. One of the four faculty may be from among our emeriti faculty. One of the four faculty may be a lecturer or a probationary faculty member. These faculty will serve 2 years terms and may be renewed twice (for a total of six years) before rotating off the committee for a minimum of one term.

3.1.2. One student.

3.1.3. One administrator.

3.1.4. One Staff member (Non-MPP)

3.2. Chair. Each year the AFC shall choose its own Chair from among the tenured (or previously tenured) faculty members of the committee.

#### 3.3. Reporting.

3.3.1. If the AFC has suggestions for policy changes it shall report them to the Professional Standards Committee of the Academic Senate.

3.3.2. The Chair of the AFC shall be permitted to address the Professional Standards Committee and the Academic Senate to report on issues relating to academic freedom.

#### 3.4. Selection.

3.4.1. All candidates for membership shall submit statements discussing their expertise and/or interest in academic freedom issues, and (if faculty) a curriculum vitae.

3.4.2. Faculty candidates for membership shall be screened by the Executive Committee and approved by the Senate.

3.4.3. The Administrative representative shall be designated by the President after consultation with the Executive Committee.

3.4.4. The student representative shall be designated by Associated Students after consultation with the Executive Committee.

3.4.5. Meetings. The AFC should meet at least once every month during the academic year.