

6.4

Academic Freedom

The institution publishes and implements appropriate policies and procedures for preserving and protecting academic freedom.

Judgment

Compliant Non-Compliant Not Applicable

SACSCOC Reviewer Comments

Non-Compliance

The institution's response is in violation of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) policy, "Reports Submitted for SACSCOC Review," by including live links in its response and electronic documentation that is not consistently bookmarked, indexed, and searchable.

The institution publishes and implements appropriate policies and procedures for preserving and protecting academic freedom at an acceptable level. The institution adheres in principle to the American Association of University Professors' "Statement of Academic Freedom." The privilege of academic freedom is protected through the grievance process and extends beyond those with tenure. Publication is via the Faculty Manual, which articulate the Faculty Grievance Policy and Due Process Rights. The Office of the University Ombudsman was established to serve as a neutral and confidential resource for faculty concerns and conflicts and the Faculty Civility Advocate mediates conflicts between faculty. These are consistent with prevailing common practices. All faculty regardless of tenure status are guaranteed protection in their pursuit of excellence in research, teaching, and service, as outlined in the Faculty Manual. An illustrative example of related policy use and implementation could not be found, nor was there provided a valid explanation for this.

Campus Response

The Faculty Senate Grievance committee is the governing body overseeing academic grievance issues including those of academic freedom. However, having checked records detailing the activities of this committee from 2009 through 2019 (see below; not including academic year 2010-11 which is missing documentation), no example of a need to implement our specific academic freedom policy has been found. Examples of implementation are unavailable because no such cases have arisen. The reports do indicate that the processes are in place to oversee academic freedom issues. Any potential complaints about violation of academic freedom were presumably resolved through informal procedures for which records are not maintained.

Faculty Grievance Committee Reports:

- [2009-2010 Faculty Grievance Committee Report](#)
- [2011-2012 Faculty Grievance Committee Report](#)
- [2012-2013 Faculty Grievance Committee Report](#)
- [2013-2014 Faculty Grievance Committee Report](#)
- [2014-2015 Faculty Grievance Committee Report](#)
- [2015-2016 Faculty Grievance Committee Report](#)
- [2016-2017 Faculty Grievance Committee Report](#)
- [2017-2018 Faculty Grievance Committee Report](#)
- [2018-2019 Faculty Grievance Committee Report](#)
- [2019-2020 Faculty Grievance Committee Report](#)

Sources

-  [2009-2010 Faculty Grievance Committee Report](#)
-  [2011-2012 Faculty Grievance Committee Report](#)
-  [2012-2013 Faculty Grievance Committee Report](#)
-  [2013-2014 Faculty Grievance Committee Report](#)

-  2014-2015 Faculty Grievance Committee Report
-  2015-2016 Faculty Grievance Committee Report
-  2016-2017 Faculty Grievance Committee Report
-  2017-2018 Faculty Grievance Committee Report
-  2018-2019 Faculty Grievance Committee Report
-  2019-2020 Faculty Grievance Committee Report
-  6.4 Academic Freedom Off-Site Committee Feedback