



**UNIVERSITY OF THE
COMMONWEALTH
CARIBBEAN**
Fostering Leadership & Innovation

Academic Freedom Policy and Procedure

January 2020

Academic Affairs Division



**UNIVERSITY OF THE
COMMONWEALTH
CARIBBEAN (UCC)**

Fostering Leadership & Innovation

**University of the Commonwealth Caribbean
Policy Approval and Revision Form**



Policy/Procedure Title:	Academic Freedom Policy and Procedure
Policy/Procedure Number:	AAF-01-2022
Date Developed/Revised:	January 2022
Date Approved by Academic Council:	February 25, 2022
Date Approved by University President:	February 25, 2022
Date of Next Revision:	January 2024
Contact:	Quality Assurance Manager
Appendices:	- Faculty Handbook - Adjunct Faculty Manual
Related Policies/Procedures:	
Position(s) Responsible for Adherence to Policy:	Student, Lecturers, Staff, Manager, Human Resource and Development Director and Associate Vice President Academic Affairs
APPROVED BY: UCC Academic Council	APPROVED BY: University President
Name: Dr. Yvonne Dawkins, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs	Name: Professor Dennis J. Gayle, University President
Signature: 	Signature: 
Date: February 25, 2022	Date: February 25, 2022

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Academic Freedom Policy

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Objective

Academic freedom is central to the mission of the university. Knowledge cannot be advanced unless faculty, students and librarians have freedom to study and communicate ideas and facts, without fear of recrimination.

As an institution dedicated to teaching, learning and research, the University is committed to the principle of free expression and exploration of ideas in an atmosphere of mutual respect for the common good. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition.

Scope

It is important that institutions of higher education dedicate themselves to the pursuit of truth and knowledge, the transmission of intellectual skills, and the creation of reliable and valid scholarly works. The promotion of these goals requires academic freedom.

Segregation of Duties by Responsible Authority

Position	Responsibility
HODs	Ensure faculty members have full freedom of research and instruction, subject to adequate fulfillment of other academic duties
Research Coordinators	Assure faculty members the freedom to engage in research, scholarship, or other creative work in order to expand knowledge, to publish or produce research findings, subject to responsible performance of these and other academic duties.
Faculty	Make every effort to create an environment in which intellectual diversity is valued and students have the assurance that they will not be penalized for expressing opinions or beliefs that differ from others' views and learn in an atmosphere of unfettered free inquiry and exposition.

Policy

Academic freedom is the freedom of teachers, students, and academic institutions to teach, study and pursue knowledge and research without unreasonable interference or restriction from law. It affords protection to persons and institutions engaging in academic activities involving teaching and research.

Institutional academic freedom refers to the right of a university to determine its educational

mission free from government intervention or any other interference.

Rights of Students

The rights of student to academic freedom, however, carry with them duties and responsibilities. In the classroom, faculty members should make every effort to create an environment in which intellectual diversity is valued and students have the assurance that they will not be penalized for expressing opinions or beliefs that differ from others' views and learn in an atmosphere of unfettered free inquiry and exposition.

Rights of Teacher in Classroom

Academic freedom also refers to the right of a teacher to teach his or her curriculum without undue interference from university officials.

The teacher shall have full freedom of instruction, subject to adequate fulfillment of other academic duties.

Controversy is a normal aspect of free academic inquiry and teaching, and it is proper to incorporate both the knowledge and the beliefs of the faculty into that which is taught; however, the freedom to teach must be joined by a constant effort to distinguish between knowledge and belief.

Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matters or topics irrelevant to the content of the course, which has no relationship to their subject.

Faculty As Citizen

The University faculty member is a citizen, a member of a learned profession, and an officer of an educational institution.

- When faculty write or speak as citizens, they should avoid appearing to speak for the University.
- When the faculty member speaks or writes as a citizen, he or she should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but the faculty member's special position in the community imposes special obligations.

Faculty should recognize that a professional position in the community involves the obligation to be accurate, to exercise appropriate restraint, and to show respect for the right of others to express their views.

As a person of learning and an educator, a faculty member should remember that the public may judge the profession and institution by the faculty member's utterances. Hence the faculty member should be at all times accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that the faculty member is not speaking for the institution.

Right to Research

Academic freedom is the freedom to engage in research, scholarship, or other creative work in order to expand knowledge, to publish or produce research findings, subject to responsible performance of these and other academic duties.

It includes the liberty to conduct research and draw conclusions rooted in evidence. It defends researchers' right to choose methodologies, draw conclusions and state the contribution of their study, but does not protect against critiquing of their findings and claims.

Academic freedom, accompanied by responsibility, attaches to all aspects of a researcher's professional conduct. The concomitant of this freedom must be a commitment to accuracy and integrity.

Intellectual Debate

Academic freedom also refers to both teachers and students engaging in intellectual debate without fear of censorship or retaliation.

UCC Policy and Procedure- Academic freedom includes the freedom to express views on matters having to do with the university and its policies, and on issues of public interest generally.

Procedure

Academic Freedom Impairment- Cases involving alleged impairment of academic freedom should be referred to the College/School Dean and/or Head of Department and addressed according to its established procedure.

Victimised Student- Students who feel they have been penalized because of expressed opinions or beliefs have the right to file a formal written complaint using the Complaint Process. The complaint will be investigated and a determination will be made as to whether disciplinary action is necessary. If students remain unsatisfied with the outcome of the investigation, they have the right to appeal in writing to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

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