

Instruction

Academic Freedom

Academic freedom may be defined as the right of a qualified scholar to pursue the search for truth in its many forms and to make public methods and findings without coercion from church, state or other external authority.

At the level of teaching, it is the right of a qualified teacher to encourage freedom of discussion of controversial questions in the classroom and to develop in their students a love of knowledge and a desire to research all points of view of a problem. It is recognized that the application of the principle of academic freedom at the common school level involves considerations which are not equally present in the college or university.

The teachers should keep in mind that academic freedom is not a political right guaranteed in the constitution, but rather a necessary condition for the successful practice of the academic profession in a free society.

Educational freedom is not identical to individual freedom. When the teacher teaches, they must not confuse their private views with their public duties. The school should no more be subject to the private partisanship of a teacher than to the organized propaganda of groups outside the school. Long ago, it was settled that teachers should not impose their private religion and their partisan politics on their pupils. Similarly, they have no right either directly or indirectly to insert in the minds of youth their private doctrines or conclusions on current or unsettled economic and social issues.

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