

Model Clause on Academic Freedom

1

The institution¹ serves the common good of society, through searching for, and disseminating, knowledge, and understanding and through fostering independent thinking and expression in academic staff and students. These ends cannot be achieved without academic freedom. All academic staff members have the right to academic freedom.

2

Academic freedom includes the right, without restriction by prescribed doctrine, to freedom to teach and discuss; freedom to carry out research and disseminate and publish the results thereof; freedom to produce and perform creative works; freedom to engage in service²; freedom to express one's opinion about the institution, its administration, and the system in which one works; freedom to acquire, preserve, and provide access to documentary material in all formats; and freedom to participate in professional and representative academic bodies. Academic freedom always entails freedom from institutional censorship.

3

Academic freedom does not require neutrality on the part of the individual. Academic freedom makes intellectual discourse, critique, and commitment possible. All academic staff members have the right to fulfil their functions without reprisal or ~~sup~~repression by the employer, the state, or any other source. **Institutions have a positive obligation to defend the academic freedom rights of members.**

4

All academic staff members have the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion, expression, assembly, and association and the right to liberty and security of the person and freedom of movement. Academic staff members must not be hindered or impeded in exercising their civil rights as individuals, including the right to contribute to social change through free expression of opinion on matters of public interest. Academic staff members must not suffer any institutional penalties because of the exercise of such rights.

5

Academic staff members are entitled to have representatives on and to participate in collegial governing bodies in accordance with their role in the fulfilment of the institution's academic and educational mission. Academic staff members shall constitute at least a majority on committees or collegial governing bodies responsible for academic matters including but not limited to curriculum, assessment procedures and standards, appointment, tenure and promotion.

6

Academic freedom is a right of members of the academic staff, not of the institution. The employer shall not abridge academic freedom on any grounds, including claims of institutional autonomy.

Approved by the CAUT Council, April 2016.
Revised by the Collective Bargaining and Economic Benefits Committee,
August 2018;
Revision approved by the CAUT Executive Committee, September 2018.

Endnotes

1. The term “institution” is meant to include universities and colleges. Replace the term with the appropriate term for your institution.
2. See Policy Statement on Service.

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