

Preserving Academic Freedom

Resolution unanimously endorsed by University of Toledo Faculty Senate, 2.11.25

WHEREAS: Academic freedom protects a community of scholars whose inquiries pursue understanding and the advancement of knowledge;

WHEREAS: Education is a public good. Similar to broad arguments for freedom of speech, academic freedom promotes the common good through a dynamic process of debate and discussion toward the advancement of knowledge, cultivation of understanding, and the pursuit of truth. Political interference in these activities threatens the discovery and dissemination of knowledge.

Whereas: In well-functioning democracies academic freedom is valued and protected and faculty exercise judgment governed by the professional norms of their disciplines both in research and in the classroom;

WHEREAS: Faculty utilize their training and experience to provide an ethical model for students of what it means to be a scholar. They demonstrate: excellence in judgment, methods to rigorously evaluate evidence, make responsible arguments, and communicate ideas. Academic freedom recognizes that faculty have a professional obligation to students to respect them as learners;

WHEREAS: The exercise of academic freedom on campuses prepares students for life-long learning and for participation in broader public deliberations;

WHEREAS: Political interference creates a chilling effect leading faculty to self-censor or avoid controversial topics. This undermines the purpose of a rigorous university education and the mission of promoting the public goods of discovery, engaged discussion, and knowledge creation central to sustaining a robust democracy;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate of the University of Toledo rejects efforts to legislate the content of curriculum in higher education;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate rejects the encroachment of partisan political perspectives on the academic enterprise in higher education in the State of Ohio.