



## UNITED ACADEMICS PROPOSAL

### ARTICLE 7 ACADEMIC FREEDOM

#### Preamble

As stated in its Mission Statement, the University of Oregon “strives to enrich the public that sustains it through the conviction that freedom of thought and expression is the bedrock principle on which university activity is based.” Academic freedom and freedom of speech are necessary conditions to teaching and research and to shared governance as created in the University of Oregon Charter: “The President and professors constitute the faculty of the University, and, as such, shall have the immediate government and discipline of it and the students therein.” This policy establishes a robust view of academic freedom and freedom of speech in order to ensure that faculty can participate in shared governance and in order to facilitate excellence in teaching and research.

#### Section 1. Academic Freedom

The University Administration protects academic freedom, and Officers of Instruction or Research [“faculty members”] shall enjoy all of its benefits and responsibilities. These are defined as:

- (a) the freedom to conduct research and creative work and to publish or otherwise disseminate the results of that work. Within the broad standards of accountability established by their profession and their individual disciplines, faculty members must enjoy the fullest possible freedom in their research and in circulating and publishing their results. This freedom follows immediately from the university’s basic commitment to advancing knowledge and understanding.
- (b) the freedom to teach, both in and outside of the classroom. Faculty members must be able not only to disseminate the results of research, but also to train students to think about these results for themselves, often in an atmosphere of controversy that, so long as it remains in a broad sense educationally relevant, actively assists students in mastering the subject and appreciating its significance.
- (c) the freedom to engage in internal criticism, which encompasses the freedom.
- (d) to address any matter of institutional policy or action whether or not as a member of any agency of institutional governance. Universities promote the common good through broad-based engagement in the scholarly endeavor. Faculty members, because of their education and their institutional knowledge, play an indispensable role as independent participants in university decision-making. By virtue of this role, they are entitled to

1 comment on or criticize university policies or decisions, either individually or through  
2 institutions of faculty governance.

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4 (e) the freedom to participate in public debate, both within and beyond their areas of  
5 expertise, and to address the larger community with regard to any matter, so long as it is  
6 clear that they are not acting or speaking on behalf of the University of Oregon.

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8 (f) the responsibility to faithfully perform professional duties and obligations, to fulfill the  
9 demands of the scholarly enterprise, and to make it clear that the faculty member is not  
10 speaking on behalf of the University of Oregon.

## 11 12 **Section 2. Freedom of Speech**

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14 All University of Oregon employees retain the right to address any matter of institutional policy  
15 or action without fear of institutional discipline or restraint. They also are guaranteed the  
16 protections of freedom of speech with regard to any matter, so long as it is clear that they are not  
17 acting or speaking on behalf of the University of Oregon.

## 18 19 **Section 3. Digital Media**

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21 The principles of academic freedom and freedom of speech apply to traditional forums and  
22 media, as well as to newer electronic media such as digital images, web sites, and social media.