



The Plain-Language Project

Article 5





ARTICLE 5

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

5.1 Florida State University affirms the principles of academic freedom and responsibility, which are rooted in a conception of the University as a community of scholars united in the pursuit of truth and wisdom in an atmosphere of tolerance and freedom.

5.2 Academic Freedom. A graduate assistant, within the context of the curriculum required by the University, shall be free to discuss all relevant matters in the classroom, to explore all avenues of scholarship, research, and creative expression, to speak freely on all matters of University governance, and to speak, write, or act in an atmosphere of freedom and confidence, all without fear of institutional censorship or reprisal, and without regard to whether the expression is verbal, written, or electronic.

5.3 Academic Responsibility implies the honest performance of academic duties and obligations, the commitment to support the responsible exercise of freedom by others, and the candor to make it clear that the individual, while he or she may be freely identified as an employee of the University, is not speaking as a representative of the University in matters of public interest.

5.4 On the part of the Administration, Academic Responsibility implies a commitment to actively foster within the University a climate favorable to responsible exercise of freedom.

Article 5 Academic Freedom

Typical language used to refer to YOUR “freedom” of speech &c. as an academic, i.e., in the context of doing your job.

5.1

5.1 Florida State University affirms the principles of academic freedom and responsibility, which are rooted in a conception of the University as a community of scholars united in the pursuit of truth and wisdom in an atmosphere of tolerance and freedom.

FSU likes free speech. But also likes you to take responsibility for what you say.

Universities are places that try and seek truth and so you need to have free speech to do that and also be tolerant of others.

5.2 Academic Freedom

5.2 Academic Freedom. A graduate assistant, within the context of the curriculum required by the University, shall be free to discuss all relevant matters in the classroom, to explore all avenues of scholarship, research, and creative expression, to speak freely on all matters of University governance, and to speak, write, or act in an atmosphere of freedom and confidence, all without fear of institutional censorship or reprisal, and without regard to whether the expression is verbal, written, or electronic.

Within the context of a class you're teaching or working in (grader, TA, &c.), you have free speech... as long as it's "relevant" to the classroom.

You're free to do scholarship, research and "creative expression."

You are free to talk about the way FSU is run. Speech, writing, and action is free.

FSU will not censor or punish you for this.

"Speech" covers verbal, written, or electronic speech.

5.3

5.3 Academic Responsibility implies the honest performance of academic duties and obligations, the commitment to support the responsible exercise of freedom by others, and the candor to make it clear that the individual, while he or she may be freely identified as an employee of the University, is not speaking as a representative of the University in matters of public interest.

When they say “academic responsibility” in section 5.1, they mean you can’t be a liar or a cheat with regards to your employment.

You need to support OTHERS’ freedom of speech, too.

When you’re making your free speech about “matters of public interest”, you need to be clear that you are NOT speaking on behalf of FSU.

So when you’re teaching material in class, you ARE a representative of FSU.

When you’re supporting a political position out in the world, you are NOT a representative (though still an employee).

5.4

5.4 On the part of the Administration, Academic Responsibility implies a commitment to actively foster within the University a climate favorable to responsible exercise of freedom.

The university's share of "academic responsibility" is to make sure their actions not only don't have a chilling effect on free... anything... but also affirmatively create a freedom-full place of employment.