

Know Your Rights!

Academic Freedom

Academic freedom is the freedom of an individual who is an expert in a specific academic discipline and employed in that capacity by an academic institution to use their substantive academic judgment as a disciplinary expert in determining what to research and how to teach their classes.

The gold standard authority on academic freedom is the **American Association of University Professor's 1940 Statement on Academic Freedom and Tenure**.

- The Collective Bargaining Agreements of both the TT and FTNTT bargaining units incorporate that statement allowing KSUFA to defend the academic freedom of faculty represented by KSUFA through the contractual grievance process.
 - "Faculty members are entitled to freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties. The principles of academic freedom and freedom of inquiry shall be interpreted to include freedom of expression in both traditional print and newly-emerging electronic formats such as the creation of digital images, web sites, or home pages." (TT CBA, Article IV, Section2)
- AAUP's 1940 Statement is incorporated by reference into University Policy 6-17 regarding faculty code of professional ethics and serves as the University's definition of 'academic freedom.'
 - "The faculty of the university subscribes to the principle of the 1940 "Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure" adopted by the American association of university professors. Within the rationale in the AAUP statement, it is emphasized that academic freedom is necessary to the mission of the faculty of a university, since it is eminently in the interest of society that, without fear of retribution, the professor should be free to conduct research and make public its results and to teach his/her subject in the classroom. Professional responsibility is a logical correlative of this freedom." (University Policy Register 6-17.A)
- Additionally, a series of court cases has established a relationship between academic freedom and the First Amendment freedom of expression. See especially, *Sweezy v. New Hampshire*, 354 U.S. 234 (1957) and *Keyishian v. Board of Regents*, 385 U.S. 589 (1967).

If you have been summoned to a meeting with an administrator where you may be asked to defend or explain your research and have a concern about your academic freedom, contact the KSUFA office to request representation by Kent State United Faculty Association (KSUFA). If you have already attended such a meeting, please share with KSUFA the focus and outcome of the meeting.

Contact KSUFA at (330) 673-9118 or office@ksufa.org.

KSUFA • 136 N. Water St., Suite 213, Kent, OH 44240 • office@ksufa.org • www.ksufa.org

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