

From: 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure with 1970 Interpretive Comments. American Association of University Professors. 1012 Fourteenth Street, NW, Suite #500, Washington D.C. 20005.

### **Academic Freedom**—

- A. Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties; but research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution.
- B. Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject. [2]  
Limitations of academic freedom because of religious or other aims of the institution should be clearly stated in writing at the time of appointment. [3]
- C. College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in a community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate they are not speaking for the institution. [4]

### **1970 Interpretive Comments**—

- 2. The intent of this statement is not to discourage what is “controversial.” Controversy is at the heart of the free academic inquiry which the entire statement is designed to foster. The passage serves to underscore the need for teachers to avoid persistently intruding material which has no relation to their subject.
- 3. Most church-related institutions no longer need or desire departure from the principle of academic freedom implied in the 1940 Statement, and we do not now endorse such a departure.
- 4. This paragraph is the subject of an interpretation adopted by the sponsors of the 1940 Statement immediately following its endorsement which reads as follows:

If the administration of a college or university feels that a teacher has not observed the admonitions of paragraph (c) of the section on Academic Freedom and believes that the extramural utterances of the teacher have been such as to raise grave doubts concerning the teacher’s fitness for his or

her position, it may proceed to file charges under paragraph (a) (4) of the section on Academic Tenure. In pressing such charges, the administration should remember that teachers are citizens and should be accorded the freedom of citizens. In such cases the administration must assume full responsibility, and the American Association of University Professors and the Association of American Colleges are free to make an investigation.

Paragraph (c) of the 1940 Statement should also be interpreted in keeping with the 1964 "Committee A Statement on Extramural Utterances" (AAUP Bulletin 51 [1965]: 29), which states *inter alia* : "The controlling principle is that a faculty member's expression of opinion as a citizen cannot constitute grounds for dismissal unless it clearly demonstrates the faculty member's unfitness for his or her position. Extramural utterances rarely bear upon the faculty member's fitness for the position. Moreover, a final decision should take into account the faculty member's entire record as a teacher and scholar."

Paragraph V of the Statement on Professional Ethics also deals with the nature of "special obligations" of the teacher. The paragraph reads as follows:

As members of their community, professors have the rights and obligations of other citizens. Professors measure the urgency of other obligations in the light of their responsibilities to their subject, to their students, to their profession, and to their institution. When they speak or act as private persons they avoid creating the impression of speaking or acting for their college or university. As citizens engaged in a profession that depends upon freedom for its health and integrity, professors have a particular obligation to promote conditions of free inquiry and to further public understanding of academic freedom.

Both the protection of academic freedom and the requirements of academic responsibility apply not only to the full-time probationary as well as to the tenured teacher, but also to all others, such as part-time faculty and teaching assistants, who exercise teaching responsibilities.