

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Protecting academic freedom is the AAUP's core mission. As the 1940 *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* states, "institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual teacher or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition." Academic freedom is the indispensable condition for unfettered teaching and research in institutions of higher education. It is also a requisite for the success of an institution in fulfilling its obligations to its students and to society.

The academic freedom of faculty members consists of four interrelated elements:

- freedom to discuss all relevant matters in the classroom;
- freedom to explore all avenues of scholarship, research, and creative expression and to publish the results of such work;
- freedom from institutional censorship or discipline when speaking or writing as participants in the governance of an educational institution; and
- freedom from institutional censorship or discipline when speaking or writing as citizens.

AAUP Defense of Academic Freedom in Action

When **Professor Johnny Williams** of Trinity College was put on involuntary leave after misleading reports about his social media postings led to a campaign of targeted threats, the administration ultimately acknowledged that the posts were protected by academic freedom. They did so largely because the AAUP intervened to protect the professor's academic freedom to address the larger community with regard to any matter of social, political, economic, or other interest, without institutional discipline or restraint.

Professor Kenneth Storey was dismissed from the University of Tampa after suggesting that Hurricane Harvey was "karma" for the support the Republican Party received from Texans. The university administration rescinded the dismissal notice after receiving a letter from the AAUP reminding them that the professor's comments on Twitter were protected by academic freedom.

Learn more at www.aaup.org/academic-freedom.