

SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY
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Amendment A to University Policies S99-9 and S99-8,
Declaring our Support for Academic Freedom and
Establishing the Academic Freedom Committee

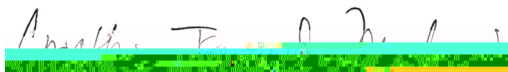
Amends: S99- 9 and S99-8

Legislative History:

At its meeting of May 8, 2023, the Academic Senate approved the following policy amendments to S99-9 and S99-8 presented by Senator French for the Professional Standards Committee.

Action by University President:

Signed (date): _____

Approved by: 

Cynthia Teniente -Matson, President, San José State University

Policy Recommendation
Declaring our Support for Academic Freedom and
Establishing the Academic Freedom Committee

Resolved: That this policy be adopted effective immediately, with the Academic Freedom Committee to be established by the beginning of AY 2023-2024.

Resolved: That Section I of S99-8 shall be deleted (as it is incorporated here unchanged.)
The title of S99

academic freedom were articulated at the start of the twentieth century by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) in response to egregious acts in which faculty appointments, research programs, and curricular content were attacked or manipulated for political reasons. Faculty organized and fought hard to secure tenure and other protections, and by the 1950s they won a key court decision that eloquently summarized the need for academic freedom. "Teachers and students must always remain free to inquire, to study and to evaluate, to gain new maturity and understanding; otherwise our civilization will stagnate and die."¹[[Sweezy v. New Hampshire](#), 34 U.S. 234, 250 (1957)]

Today, however, many faculty and others do not know much about the history of academic freedom, its legal status, or its ultimate purpose. When the term is used it is sometimes perceived incorrectly as an individual privilege rather than as a critically important tool for fulfilling the academy's scholarly and educational roles. Professional Standards believes it is the responsibility of each new generation of faculty to take on the challenge of renewing the community's understanding of academic freedom, and has crafted this policy recommendation to fulfill this task.

A generation ago, the Academic Senate combined the Academic Freedom Committee with a new board focused on professional ethics. The motivation was sound—to symbolize the deep interconnection of academic freedom to professional responsibility. We continuey.8 (l)11.9 (i)29.9 (t)-4.9 (y)17.1 (.)13.3 (W7(r)13.epu (

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Financial Impact: There could be some modest travel costs associated with sending members of the Academic Freedom committee to conferences.

Workload Impact: The creation of a new committee would represent more work, although necessary work. This is somewhat obviated by the work that could be saved if the committee's actions prevent misunderstandings or incidents arising from disputes over academic freedom.

1. Statement of Academic Freedom²

1.1. In General

- 1.1.1. The primary mandates of a university—the discovery and dissemination of knowledge and understanding, are absolutely dependent upon academic and intellectual freedom. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Freedom in teaching is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the student in learning and of the faculty³ in teaching.
- 1.1.2. Political attacks on academic freedom, including government attempts to exert control over curriculum, restrict the freedom to pursue all avenues of scholarly research, and censor the speech of faculty, have many historical precedents. Such attempts to control teaching and research destroy higher education.
- 1.1.3 San José State University has a responsibility to society to defend and to maintain these freedoms, and to ensure that those engaged in academic pursuits can effectively execute their responsibilities. SJSU faculty must remain free of the forces of special interests and political interference if they are to fulfill society's expectations and their educational responsibilities.

1.2. Academic Freedom as it Relates to Tenure

1.2.1. Tenure is one mechanism specifically created to protect acade.5 (c)-1. 4

2.1.4. AFC shall educate all constituencies of the San Jose State Community on our own policies on academic freedom. It shall host at least one academic freedom forum each year, on a topic related to academic freedom and designed to stimulate interest in academic freedom.

- 3.5. Meetings. The AFC should meet at least once every month during the academic year.