



BOV POLICY # 28 (2018) ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Policy Title: Academic Freedom

Policy Type: Board of Visitors

Policy Number: BOV Policy #28 (2026)

Approval Date: May 4, 2018; May 8, 2026

Responsible Office: Faculty Senate

Responsible Executive: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Applies to: University Community

POLICY STATEMENT

The strength of any institution of higher education is deeply rooted within its academic enterprise. Norfolk State University aspires to the ideals of academic freedom and is committed to fostering a supportive community where collaboration, continuous improvement, and professional growth are deeply engrained in who we are as a community and how we operate as a University.

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DEFINITIONS

There are no definitions associated with this policy.

CONTACTS

The University Board of Visitors officially interprets this policy. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs is responsible for obtaining approval for any revisions as required by BOV Policy # 01 (2014) Creating and Maintaining Policies through the appropriate governance structures.



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Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

STAKEHOLDERS

University community, especially teaching faculty

POLICY CONTENTS

Norfolk State University recognizes, appreciates, and supports the concept of academic freedom, and the First Amendment rights of members of the academy. Academic freedom is essential to proper University operation and applies to teaching, research, and creative activities. Such freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of knowledge. Academic freedom in the classroom is essential for the protection of the rights of the teacher in teaching and the rights of the student to freedom in learning. Academic freedom embodies both rights and responsibilities for all elements of the academic community.

The University is guided by the “1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure” of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP):

- 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 personal or controversial matters which have no relation to their subject. Limitations of academic freedom, because of religious or other aims of the institution, should be clearly stated in writing at the time of the appointment.
- C. College or 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 the 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 always be accurate, exercise appropriate restraint, show respect for the opinions of others, and make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution.

EDUCATION AND COMPLIANCE

The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, in collaboration with the Faculty Senate, shall be responsible for designating a person who will train faculty members on the requirements of this policy. Records of training will be maintained in the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.



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To ensure conformity to the requirements of this policy, the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs will monitor for compliance with this policy. Violations of this policy will be reported to the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs as needed.

Noncompliance with this policy will undermine the University efforts to foster the advancement of knowledge through excellence in teaching, research, and creative activities.

PUBLICATION

This policy shall be widely published or distributed to the University community. To ensure timely publication and distribution thereof, the Responsible Office shall make every effort to

- Communicate the policy in writing, electronically or otherwise, to the University Community within 14 days of Board approval;
- Submit the policy for inclusion in the online Policy Library within 14 days of Board approval;
- Post the policy on the Board's Website; and
- Direct appropriate offices to educate and train all stakeholders and appropriate audiences on the policy contents, as necessary.

Failure to satisfy procedural requirements does not invalidate this policy.

REVIEW SCHEDULE

- **Next Scheduled Review:** September 2020; December 1, 2027
- **Approved by:** Board of Visitors
- **Approval Date:** May 4, 2018; May 8, 2026
- **Revision History:** May 8, 2026
- **Supersedes:** None

RELATED DOCUMENTS

There are no related documents associated with this policy.

FORMS

There are no forms associated with this policy and procedures.