

**SOUTHWEST TENNESSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE****SUBJECT: Academic Freedom and Responsibility****EFFECTIVE DATE: March 1, 2004**

Southwest Tennessee Community College recognizes the principle of academic freedom, pursuant to which:

- The faculty member is entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing his or her subject, being careful not to introduce into the teaching controversial matter which has no relation to the subject;
- The faculty member is entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of his/her other academic duties; but research for pecuniary gain must be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution; and
- The faculty member is a citizen, a member of a learned profession, and an officer of an educational institution. When the faculty member speaks or writes as a citizen, he/she should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but his/her special position in the community imposes special obligations. As a man or woman of learning and an educational officer, he/she should remember that the public may judge the profession and the institution by the faculty member's utterances. Hence, a faculty member 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 that he/she does not speak for the institution.
- The principles of academic freedom and responsibility here defined are applicable both to faculty as defined in Section III.D of TBR Policy 5:02:03:00 and to non-tenure track full-time, part-time, or adjunct faculty.

**Source of Policy: Provost****Related Policy: 5:02:03:01/38****Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
President****Responsible Provost/Executive VP for  
Administrator: Academic & Student Affairs****TBR Policy Reference: 5:02:03:00****TBR Guideline Reference: N/A****Date: March 1, 2004**

Academic freedom is essential to fulfill the ultimate objectives of an educational institution - the free search for and exposition of truth - and applies to both teaching and research. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth, and academic freedom in teaching is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the faculty member in teaching and of the student to freedom in learning. Implicit in the principle of academic freedom are the corollary responsibilities of the faculty who enjoy that freedom. Incompetence, indolence, intellectual dishonesty, serious moral dereliction, arbitrary and capricious disregard of standards of professional conduct - these and other grounds as set forth in Section O may constitute adequate cause for dismissal or other disciplinary sanctions against faculty members subject to the provisions of Article III of the TBR Policy on Academic Tenure (5:02:03:00). The right to academic freedom imposes upon the faculty an equal obligation to take appropriate professional action against faculty members who are derelict in discharging their professional responsibilities. The faculty member has an obligation to participate in tenure and promotion review of colleagues as specified in institutional policy. Thus, academic freedom and academic responsibility are interdependent, and academic tenure is adopted as a means to protect the former while promoting the latter. While academic tenure is essential for the protection of academic freedom, all faculty members, tenured or non-tenured, have an equal right to academic freedom and bear the same academic responsibilities implicit in that freedom.