

University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Proposal 17-94

Policy on Academic Freedom

Academic freedom is the right of all faculty members to speak freely as they teach, debate issues of university governance, undertake professional activities, conduct scholarship and research, present the results of such scholarship and research, and create and present works in the visual and performing arts. When faculty exercise their rights as private citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline.

Academic freedom is a fundamental and long standing tradition at institutions of higher learning, and a basic right of all faculty at Michigan Technological University. This right must be understood in the context of prevailing professional and legal statements and institutional requirements.

The Board of Control of Michigan Technological University is committed to maintaining Michigan Technological University as an institution where faculty are free to pursue scholarship in an open and creative environment. The rights of the faculty members to undertake scholarly approaches to their disciplines in the classroom, in the laboratory, and in publications are guaranteed. An academic community must be dedicated to excellence in teaching and scholarship; and both of these goals suffer when the freedom to pursue either in a fully open manner is compromised.

Academic freedom carries with it certain responsibilities, including the continuing search for and distribution of knowledge, the commitment to pursuing accuracy and avoiding misrepresentation, consideration of the opinions and circumstances of others, and support of high standards of ethical and professional behavior.

The system of tenure should be designed to be compatible with the concept of academic freedom for faculty. In the event of a conflict between the policy on academic freedom and the tenure policy, the policy on academic freedom takes precedence. Moreover, the tenure policy shall be construed to promote academic freedom.

Adopted by Senate: October 5, 1994

Approved by President (with modifications): December 13, 1994

Revised with Proposal 30-95

Became Senate Policy 106.1