Academic Freedom

The University of California is committed to upholding and preserving principles of academic freedom. These principles reflect the University's fundamental mission, which is to discover knowledge and to disseminate it to its students and to society at large. The principles of academic freedom protect freedom of inquiry and research, freedom of teaching, and freedom of expression and publication. These freedoms enable the University to advance knowledge and to transmit it effectively to its students and to the public. The University also seeks to foster in its students a mature independence of mind, and this purpose cannot be achieved unless students and faculty are free within the classroom to express the widest range of viewpoints in accord with the standards of scholarly inquiry and professional ethics. The exercise of academic freedom entails correlative duties of professional care when teaching, conducting research, or otherwise acting as a member of the faculty. These duties are set forth in the Faculty Code of Conduct (APM - 015).

Academic freedom requires that teaching and scholarship be assessed by reference to the professional standards that sustain the University's pursuit and achievement of knowledge. The substance and nature of these standards properly lie within the expertise and authority of the faculty as a body. The competence of the faculty to apply these standards of assessment is recognized in the Standing Orders of The Regents, which establish a system of shared governance between the Administration and the Academic Senate. Academic freedom requires that the Academic Senate be given primary responsibility for applying academic standards, subject to appropriate review by the Administration, and that the Academic Senate exercise its responsibility in full compliance with applicable standards of professional care.*

Members of the faculty are entitled as University employees to the full protections of the Constitution of the United States and of the Constitution of the State of California. These protections are in addition to whatever rights, privileges, and responsibilities attach to the academic freedom of university faculty.

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* The original language of APM - 010, which was drafted in 1934, associated academic freedom with scholarship that gave "play to intellect rather than to passion." It conceived scholarship as "dispassionate" and as concerned only with "the logic of the facts." The revised version of APM - 010 holds that academic freedom depends upon the quality of scholarship, which is to be assessed by the content of scholarship, not by the motivations that led to its production. The revision of APM - 010 therefore does not distinguish between "interested" and "disinterested" scholarship; it differentiates instead between competent and incompetent scholarship. Although competent scholarship requires an open mind, this does not mean that faculty are unprofessional if they reach definite conclusions. It means rather that faculty must always stand ready to revise their conclusions in the light of new evidence or further discussion. Although competent scholarship requires the exercise of reason, this does not mean that faculty are unprofessional if they are committed to a definite point of view. It means rather that faculty must form their point of view by applying professional standards of inquiry rather than by succumbing to external and illegitimate incentives such as monetary gain or political coercion. Competent scholarship can and frequently does communicate salient viewpoints about important and controversial questions.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICY REGARDING ACADEMIC APPOINTEES
Academic Freedom

APM - 010
APPENDIX A

Office of the President
September 29, 2003

CHANCELLORS
LABORATORY DIRECTORS
VICE PRESIDENT – AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Dear Colleagues:

Revised Academic Personnel Policy 010, Academic Freedom

Enclosed is revised Academic Personnel Policy 010, Academic Freedom, which is effective immediately. This new statement on academic freedom for faculty supersedes the previous APM - 010.

The previous statement on academic freedom was first issued by President Robert G. Sproul in 1934 as part of a series of University Regulations later incorporated into University policy as APM - 010. After extensive consultation with faculty and other members of the University community, I am pleased to issue this revised policy. The policy is based on the traditional cornerstones of academic freedom – freedom of inquiry and research, freedom of teaching, and freedom of expression and publication. The policy establishes that faculty have primary responsibility for articulating the professional standards by which academic freedom may be sustained. I would especially like to thank Professor Robert C. Post, who is a member of the Law School faculty at Berkeley and a distinguished scholar on First Amendment law, for his thoughtful advice. I would also like to thank the Academic Senate for its comprehensive review of the proposal.

This new policy does not seek to change in any way the authority of the Board of Regents to govern the University of California, or the responsibility of the Administration to perform its appropriate role in governance. The policy is intended to be read in conjunction with APM - 015 (Faculty Code of Conduct) and with The Regents' 1970 policy on academic freedom. Although this new policy applies to the University's faculty, its issuance does nothing to diminish the rights and responsibilities enjoyed by other academic appointees. A discussion of the background leading to this revised policy is presented in a paper entitled "Academic Freedom and the Research University" appended to this letter.

Sincerely,

Richard C. Atkinson
President

Enclosures

cc: Members, President's Cabinet
Academic Council Chair Pitts
Associate Vice President Boyette
Assistant Vice President Switkes
Special Assistant Gardner
Principal Officers of the Regents

*Note: The Regents' 1970 policy on academic freedom and the paper entitled "Academic Freedom and the Research University" may be found online at http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/coordrev/policy/9-29-03.html.