

Morehead State University – Policies and Other Documents Related to Academic Freedom

I. Faculty Senate Constitution

- A. Article Three, Section 2: "The Faculty Senate will recommend formulation or modification of policies and regulations concerning academic excellence, academic freedom, professional ethics and faculty welfare. . . ."
- B. Article Three, Section 3: "The Faculty Senate shall serve as the parent body of all University Standing and Advisory Committees that deal with the areas outlined in Article Three, Section 2."
- C. Article Five, Section 1: "The function of Faculty Senate Committees is to prepare materials for presentation to the Faculty Senate. Each of these committees shall gather data and make studies, advise, and make recommendations to the Faculty Senate in the form of written or oral reports. . . ."
- D. Article Five, Section 3.a.: "Standing Committees (Sections 4-8 below) of the Faculty Senate should schedule two regular meetings a month during the regular academic year. Meetings shall be held at times when all members are available to attend."
- E. Article Five, Section 7(d): "The Professional Policies Committee is concerned with policies, regulations and practices that affect faculty status, working conditions, advancement and evaluation. Specific areas of concern include: . . . (d) Procedures to insure academic freedom and resolve faculty grievances. . . ."

II. Faculty Handbook

- A. Chapter 4, Section 4.1: "The Faculty Senate, organized in 1984, is the official representative body of the faculty of the University. **It is the responsibility of the Faculty Senate to share in the governance of the University in matters pertaining to academic excellence, academic freedom, professional ethics, and faculty welfare.** The Senate reports to the faculty and the president."
- B. Chapter 6, Section 6.3.1: Minimum Guidelines For Faculty Evaluation Process ("FEP")
 - 1. Although the term "academic freedom" does not appear in these guidelines, one of the guidelines' significant goals is to ensure a fair, comprehensive, and non-arbitrary process for the evaluation of faculty, and Section 6.3.1 emphasizes that "[m]uch of the data collected for the FEP may also be applicable to decisions regarding promotion and tenure."
 - 2. By providing for successive levels of review, and for the opportunity for the faculty member to respond to statements made in the review process, the guidelines implicitly protect a professor's academic freedom.

III. Policies

A. **PAC-14: Academic Freedom and Responsibility (See PAC-14 – Annotated)**

- 1. The stated source of PAC-14 is the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, adopted November 9, 1971)
- 2. Academic freedom for faculty members "is the right . . . freely to study, discuss,

investigate, teach, conduct research, [or] publish as appropriate to their . . . roles and responsibilities." Faculty members "are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful to present the various scholarly views related to their subject and to avoid introducing into their teaching controversial or other matter which has no relation to their subject. Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results therefrom, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties.

B. PAC-12: Professional Ethics (See PAC-12 – Annotated)

1. The core provisions of this policy are essentially verbatim from the AAUP Statement of Professional Ethics. However, as indicated on the annotated version of PAC-12 (attached), there are a few instances in which PAC-12 omits substantive language from the AAUP Statement or includes substantive language not found in the current AAUP Statement. Perhaps the most significant omissions are the AAUP Statement's prohibitions against harassment or discrimination against students or colleagues. Because PAC-12 was adopted in 1985, and because the AAUP Statement was subsequently revised in 1987 and 2009, it is likely that the differences between the AAUP Statement and PAC-12 are attributable to the AAUP's revisions.

**C. Policy: PAC-2
Subject: Promotion Review**

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VI. Academic Freedom

Faculty and administration will observe the conditions on academic freedom and responsibility for teaching and research as outlined in PAC-14.

**D. Policy: PAC-27
Subject: Tenure Review**

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VIII. Academic Freedom

Faculty and administration will observe the conditions on academic freedom and responsibility for teaching and research as outlined in PAC-14.

**E. Policy PAC-18
Subject: Faculty Rights and Responsibilities**

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The Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities established by these procedures may review petitions from all faculty members and librarians (described under Eligibility above) in any situation in which a faculty member or librarian asserts that he/she has suffered a substantial injustice resulting from a violation of academic freedom, professional ethics, procedural fairness, or due process.

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Upon receiving a petition, the Committee will make a preliminary determination as to the extent of its review of the matter. The Committee will reserve the right to dismiss without prejudice a complaint that it judges without merit or where it appears that other remedies should be sought before coming to the Committee.

The Committee may decide to have an information review or to establish a Hearing Board, in order to bring about a satisfactory settlement.

A Hearing Board will be established only on the vote of a majority of membership of the Committee upon a determination that a prima facie basis for the complaint has been shown and may not reasonably be dealt with through an informal resolution process.

The burden of proof in establishing a prima facie case will be on the complaining party.

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The Committee shall not consider the substantive academic judgment aspects of such matters as promotion, tenure, compensation, and evaluation of performance. In such matters as these, academic freedom, professional ethics, procedural fairness, or due process may be reviewed.

IV. Miscellaneous

A. February 15, 2007 MSU Faculty Senate Resolution Concerning Kentucky House Bill 158 (re: "Academic Bill of Rights")

WHEREAS, Morehead State University is committed to the fair and equitable treatment of its students, faculty and instructors and the protection of academic freedom; and

WHEREAS, Morehead State University already has effective mechanisms in place to assure that there will be the fair and equitable treatment of its students, faculty and instructors and for the protection of academic freedom; and

WHEREAS, Morehead State University considers itself solely responsible for ensuring the fair and equitable treatment of all students, faculty and instructors and the protection of academic freedom; and

WHEREAS, the imposition of a statewide Academic Bill of Rights as proposed in Kentucky House Bill 158 would usurp the authority and responsibility of Morehead State University to define and ensure the fair and equitable treatment of its students, faculty and instructors; be it so

RESOLVED, that the Faculty Senate of Morehead State University is opposed to the passage of the Academic Bill of Rights as contained in Kentucky House Bill 158.

1. *See also* HB 158 (separate handout)

B. General Education Reform at Morehead State University

1. **General Education Curriculum and Courses Distribution Proposal**, Submitted by the Faculty General Education Advisory Committee (FGEAC), Approved by the Faculty Senate (7 May 2009):

It is generally agreed that in this era of increasing specialization and emphasis on vocational preparation, it is essential that colleges and universities remain committed to providing a General Education. Morehead State University

(MSU) remains committed to the idea that a university education is more than preparation for a career. It must also provide a General Education – a foundation of knowledge and skills vital for any life students choose. Such preparation will provide students the attributes needed to participate intelligently and responsibly in the discourses that shape the communities in which they live. General Education is more than the acquisition of information or skills for daily life; it transcends the merely factual to raise and engage evaluative and philosophical questions. General Education submits the fundamental principles and suppositions of a body of knowledge to inquiry and discussion. It challenges students to uncover and examine the assumptions under which they operate. General Education aims to form in students a questioning spirit that will continue through their college career and their life as a whole and provide the grounds for development of the kind of people who can secure their own well-being while contributing to their communities, their professions, and the world in which they live.

2. **General Education Reform FAQ:**

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Why do we need to reform Gen Ed?

The current MSU Gen Ed program is anchored by goals (see Essential and Important Goals of the current General Education Program), rather than measurable learner outcomes, and the present Gen Ed distribution of courses are not aligned with these goals in such a way as to insure student exposure to the goals (students can avoid 6 out of 9 goals and "successfully" graduate).

The current program (beyond the core) consists of a cafeteria-style list of course choices distributed over various academic disciplines. It lacks coherency and fails to articulate a clear vision of a general education.

There is no systematic plan for continuous assessment and improvement at the program level and the assessment at the course level is varied and not generally used for continuous improvement initiatives beyond the efforts of an individual instructor.

The limited assessment data that has been collected at a program level is cross-sectional rather than longitudinal in nature, and hence is of little use in determining the "value added" by the MSU Gen Ed program. However, that data does not indicate that MSU students demonstrate acceptable proficiencies in those skills essential for 21st century.

Best practices such as integrative learning, diversity initiatives, community-based learning/service learning, learning communities, first year programs, and faculty development for improved General Education teaching and learning are not integrated into our present General Education curriculum.

3. MSU's Gen Ed Program seeks to improve (among other things) both the academic programs and the measurability of learner outcomes.