

Policy on Academic Freedom in Research and Public Discourse

Effective Date: July 1, 2022

Review Date: July 30, 2022

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to affirm Urdaneta City University's (UCU) commitment to academic freedom, enabling faculty and researchers to choose their research areas freely and share their expertise publicly. UCU values the pursuit of knowledge and innovation and recognizes the importance of protecting the intellectual and expressive rights of its academic community.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all faculty members, researchers, and scholars at UCU. It provides guidelines for supporting academic freedom in research selection, public discourse, and teaching.

3. Policy Statement

Urdaneta City University upholds the principle of academic freedom as fundamental to fostering a vibrant and diverse intellectual environment. Faculty and researchers at UCU have the right to choose research areas that align with their expertise and interests and to disseminate their findings publicly, provided they adhere to ethical standards and UCU's core values.

4. Key Principles

4.1 Freedom to Choose Research Areas

- Faculty and researchers have the freedom to select their own research topics without undue interference or restriction, as long as these areas comply with established academic standards and are conducted ethically align to research agenda of the university.
- UCU encourages interdisciplinary research, innovation, and exploration into emerging fields, recognizing that a wide range of research interests strengthens the academic community and benefits society.

4.2 Freedom to Teach and Share Research Publicly

- UCU faculty and researchers have the right to teach, speak, and publish publicly about their research areas. This includes sharing findings through lectures, publications, conferences, and public media, both locally and internationally.
- Faculty members are encouraged to share their knowledge in ways that are respectful, professional, and consistent with UCU's mission and values.

4.3 Commitment to Integrity and Responsibility

- Researchers are expected to maintain integrity, transparency, and objectivity in their work, ensuring that their research practices comply with ethical guidelines and the university's research standards.
- Public expressions or discussions of research findings must be based on sound methodologies and accurate data. Researchers should communicate their findings responsibly, avoiding misrepresentation of data or sensationalism.

4.4 Protection from Retaliation

- UCU is committed to protecting faculty and researchers from retaliation, discrimination, or any adverse actions resulting from their choice of research topics or the public sharing of their findings, as long as these activities are conducted within the bounds of professional standards and academic responsibility.

5. Procedures

5.1 Research Proposal Approval

- Faculty and researchers are encouraged to propose research topics to their department heads, who will review them for alignment with UCU's academic standards and ethical guidelines.
- Once a research topic is approved, faculty and researchers are free to pursue their studies without interference, within the bounds of available resources and institutional priorities.

5.2 Dissemination of Research Findings

- Researchers may present their findings at academic conferences, publish in journals, and engage in public discussions, provided they follow UCU's communication guidelines and clearly differentiate their personal views from those of the university when applicable.
- Faculty and researchers are encouraged to consult with the Office of Communications when preparing for public engagement to ensure their message aligns with the university's policies on public representation.

5.3 Resolving Conflicts

- If a faculty member or researcher believes that their academic freedom has been unduly restricted, they may submit a formal complaint to the Academic Freedom Review Committee.
- The Committee will review cases promptly and impartially to protect academic freedom while balancing institutional priorities and standards.

6. Responsibilities

- **Faculty and Researchers:** Select research topics responsibly, adhere to ethical guidelines, and ensure that public dissemination of findings is conducted professionally.
- **Department Heads:** Provide support for faculty research, facilitate approval processes, and encourage scholarly engagement in a manner that aligns with UCU's mission.
- **Office of Communications:** Assist faculty and researchers in publicizing research findings and provide guidance on responsible public communication.
- **Academic Freedom Review Committee:** Address concerns related to potential infringements on academic freedom and mediate conflicts if they arise.

7. Review and Compliance

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it continues to support academic freedom in line with evolving academic standards and societal needs. Faculty and researchers are expected to familiarize themselves with this policy and adhere to its principles to sustain a free, ethical, and intellectually enriching environment at UCU.

This policy ensures UCU faculty and researchers can freely explore, teach, and discuss their fields of study, fostering a culture of intellectual freedom and responsibility.