

**1.4 The institution publicly states its commitment to academic freedom for faculty, staff, and students, and acts accordingly. This commitment affirms that those in the academy are free to share their convictions and responsible conclusions with their colleagues and students in their teaching and in their writing.**

*Guideline: The institution has published or has readily available policies on academic freedom. For those institutions that strive to instill specific beliefs and world views, policies clearly state conditions, and ensure these conditions are consistent with academic freedom. Due process procedures are disseminated, demonstrating that faculty and students are protected in their quest for truth.*

**Evidence:**

Sonoma State University defines [academic freedom](#) as "...the unrestricted search for knowledge and truth and its free exposition in the scholarly community." It is recognized that the faculty exercise of academic freedom entails [professional responsibility](#) with respect to the subject matter, the students, the institution, the profession, and the wider community. The [Academic Freedom](#) Committee, a subcommittee of the Faculty Standards and Affairs Committee of the Academic Senate, is charged with raising awareness of the importance of academic freedom, educating on the issues associated with the exercise of academic freedom, and updating policies and procedures related to specific aspects of academic freedom.

The university considers the scope of academic freedom to include the [rights and responsibilities](#) of students. Sonoma State has well-articulated policies on students' rights with respect to access to the university, educational practice, academic advising, and FERPA (the Family Educational Rights and Practice Act), which delineates students' privacy rights with respect to their educational records. Key student rights include freedom of inquiry, expression, and information, which specifies that "Students are permitted the fullest expression of beliefs through any means that are orderly and do not violate the rights of others." The university's statement on student rights and responsibilities also describes rights regarding publication, freedom of association, and student contributions to university governance and the curriculum. Students' rights with respect to access to the university, instructional practices, academic advising, and FERPA provisions are described in the judicial affairs website. This site also describes the student right to freedom of inquiry, expression, and

information, rights to publication, and the right to freedom of association. Students' roles in contributing to university governance and curriculum are outlined briefly, and this section also provides information on student grievance procedures, grade appeals, student employment, financial aid appeals, and the right to due process in disciplinary matters. As part of student rights, SSU's [Non-Discrimination Policy](#) states the university's commitment to providing an environment free from discrimination and/or sexual harassment.

Student responsibilities with respect to a number of areas are described in the next section of the judicial affairs site. This section describes the standards of conduct expected of students on campus and in the classroom, describes cheating and plagiarism policies, and outline student responsibilities with respect to academic advising. The site also describes student responsibilities to meet financial aid standards of satisfactory academic progress, provides information on the Student Employee Guide, and outlines relevant policies on the use of university facilities, and debts owed the university. As part of the Student Rights and Responsibilities document, Sonoma State University has developed a "Philosophy Statement on Alcohol and Other Drugs."