



## Board of Governors Rule

Faculty  
Academic Freedom; Academic &  
Professional Responsibilities  
Responsible Unit: Office of the Provost  
Adopted: April 20, 2018  
Revision History: Prior BOG Policy 2  
(Originally effective February 8, 2008)  
Review Date: April 2021

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### **BOG FACULTY RULE 4.1**

#### **ACADEMIC FREEDOM; ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

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#### **SECTION 1: PURPOSE & SCOPE**

- 1.1 This Rule sets forth the understanding that the Faculty at the University are entitled to academic freedom, but expected to maintain certain academic and professional responsibilities.
- 1.2 This Rule applies to all Faculty Members at West Virginia University, including West Virginia University Institute of Technology and Potomac State College of West Virginia University.

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#### **SECTION 2: ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

- 2.1 Academic freedom at the University is necessary to enable the institution to perform its societal obligation as established by the West Virginia Legislature. The Board recognizes that the vigilant protection of constitutional freedoms is nowhere more vital than in the institution and campuses under its jurisdiction.
- 2.2 Each Faculty Member and student shall remain free to inquire, study, evaluate, discuss, investigate, teach, conduct research, and publish.
  - 2.2.1 Each Faculty Member shall be entitled to full freedom to conduct research and to publish the results of such research, subject to the appropriate performance of other academic duties, which may include but are not limited to designated instruction, research, extension service, and other professional duties.
  - 2.2.2 Each Faculty Member is entitled to freedom in the classroom regarding discussion of the subject being taught. In addition, when Faculty Members speak or write as private citizens outside the institution and declare such private status, they shall be free from institutional censorship or discipline.

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**SECTION 3: ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 3.1 The concept of academic freedom is accompanied by an equally important concept of academic responsibility.
- 3.1.1 Each Faculty Member at West Virginia University is a citizen, a member of a learned profession, and a representative of an educational institution. As such, each Faculty Member, together with all other members of the academic community, has the responsibility for protecting, defending, and promoting individual academic freedom for all members of the community.
- 3.1.2 Each Faculty Member has the responsibility of contributing to institutional, campus and departmental missions in teaching, research, and service, as defined by institutional policy.
- 3.1.3 Each Faculty Member is responsible also as a teacher to strive to speak with accuracy and with respect for the similar rights and responsibilities of others. In speaking only as an individual or for a limited group, the Faculty Member should not imply or claim to be a spokesperson for the University.
- 3.2 In addition to meeting the primary responsibilities of addressing institutional missions in teaching, research, and service according to one's campus, all faculty have an obligation to foster the quality, viability, and necessity of their programs. The financial stability of a program and recruitment of an adequate number of students depend in part on the faculty. The common goal of quality must be nurtured and responsibility for it shared by all. Integrity, objectivity, and service to the purposes and missions of the institution are expected.
- 3.3 All Faculty Members are responsible for remaining current in their disciplines. Faculty interests and skills change, disciplines evolve, and new professions or fields of study emerge. All are encouraged to explore opportunities for further developing a versatile range of knowledge and skills that are important to the institution. Through individual initiative and faculty development programs, Faculty Members are encouraged to grow in competency in their own disciplines and strengthen their interests in related fields.
- 3.4 As members of an academic community, Faculty Members also are expected to participate in decisions concerning programs and in program review processes.
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**SECTION 4: DEFINITIONS.**

- 4.1 “Faculty” and “Faculty Member” are defined in BOG Faculty R. 4.2 – Promotion and Tenure.
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**SECTION 5: DELEGATION.**

- 5.1 The Board of Governors delegates to the President the authority to adopt additional academic affairs internal policies and procedures to effectuate the implementation of this Board of Governors Rule or in furtherance of any other authority that the Board of Governors has specifically delegated to the President pursuant to this Rule. Any actions taken pursuant to this delegation must be consistent with the guidelines provided by this Rule.
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**SECTION 6: AUTHORITY.**

- 6.1 W. Va. Code § 18B-1-6 and § 18B-8-7.
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**SECTION 7: SUPERSEDING PROVISIONS.**

- 7.1 This Rule supersedes and replaces Higher Education Policy Commission Series 9 – Academic Freedom, Professional Responsibility, Promotion and Tenure, and any other Rule of the Higher Education Policy Commission which relates to the subject matter contained within this Rule. This Rule also repeals and supersedes WVU BOG Policy 2 – Academic Freedom, Professional Responsibility, Promotion, and Tenure adopted February 8, 2002, and any other internal academic affairs policy or procedure which relates to the subject matter contained within this Rule.