



**Policy 3:02:04:00**

**Subject: Student Rights and Freedoms**

**I. PREAMBLE**

Academic institutions exist for the transmission of knowledge, the pursuit of truth, the development of students, and the general well-being of society. Free inquiry and free expression are indispensable to the attainment of these goals. As members of the academic community, students should be encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Institutional procedures for achieving these purposes may vary from campus to campus, but the minimal standards of academic freedom of students outlined below are essential to any community of scholars. Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The freedom to learn depends upon appropriate opportunities and conditions in the classroom, on the campus, and in the larger community<sup>1</sup>. Students should exercise their freedom with responsibility. The responsibility to secure and to respect general conditions conducive to the freedom to learn is shared by all members of the academic community. Tennessee Board of Regents institutions have developed policies and procedures which provide and safeguard this freedom. The purpose of this statement is to enumerate the essential provisions for students' freedom to learn.

**II. FREEDOM OF ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION**

The admissions policies of each Tennessee Board of Regents Institution are a matter of institutional choice, provided that each institution makes clear the characteristics and expectations of students which it considers relevant to success in the institution's program. Under no circumstances should a student be barred from admission to a particular institution on the basis of race. Thus, within the limits of its facilities, each institution should be open to all students who are qualified according to its admissions standards. The facilities and services of a TBR institution should be open to all of its enrolled students.

**III. IN THE CLASSROOM**

The professor in the classroom and in conference should encourage free discussion, inquiry, and expression. Student performance should be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards.

1. Protection of Freedom of Expression Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.

2. Protection Against Improper Academic Evaluation Students should have protection through orderly procedures against prejudiced or capricious academic evaluation. At the same time, they are responsible for maintaining standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled.
3. Protection Against Improper Disclosure Certain information about students is protected from public disclosure by Federal and state laws. Protection against improper disclosure is a serious professional obligation. Judgments of ability and character may be provided under appropriate circumstances.

*Adapted from AAUP Statement of RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS OF STUDENTS. Source: TBR Board Meeting December 2, 2005*