

AZERBAIJAN STATE OIL AND
INDUSTRY UNIVERSITY



Academic freedom policy



SECTION 1 - Introduction

Academic freedom is the cornerstone of intellectual inquiry and the advancement of knowledge within institutions of higher education. It is the bedrock principle that ensures scholars, researchers, and educators can pursue truth, engage in critical discourse, and express their ideas without fear of censorship or reprisal. At its core, academic freedom encompasses the rights of individuals within the academic community to explore diverse perspectives, challenge prevailing beliefs, and contribute to the collective pursuit of understanding.

ASOIU is committed to upholding and protecting academic freedom as a fundamental value essential to the fulfillment of its mission. As an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the cultivation of critical thinking skills, ASOIU recognizes that academic freedom is vital for fostering a vibrant intellectual environment where ideas can be freely exchanged, debated, and rigorously examined.

This Academic Freedom Policy serves to outline ASOIU's commitment to promoting and safeguarding academic freedom for all members of its academic community, including faculty, students, and researchers. It reaffirms our dedication to creating an atmosphere that encourages intellectual curiosity, respects diverse viewpoints, and upholds the principles of free inquiry and expression.

In accordance with this policy, ASOIU seeks to provide a framework that:

1. Upholding the rights and responsibilities associated with academic freedom for faculty, students, and researchers.
2. Clarifying the scope and limitations of academic freedom within the context of our institutional values and standards.
3. Providing transparent mechanisms for resolving disputes or conflicts related to academic freedom in a fair and equitable manner.
4. Cultivating an inclusive culture of open inquiry, rigorous debate, and intellectual diversity that stimulates innovation and fosters excellence.

By adhering to these principles, ASOIU reaffirms its commitment to fostering an environment where academic freedom thrives, knowledge flourishes, and the pursuit of truth remains paramount.

SECTION 2 - Objective

Academic freedom plays a vital role in the university's mission. Progress in knowledge relies on the ability of faculty, students, and librarians to explore and exchange ideas and facts without the threat of punishment or backlash.

SECTION 3 - Scope

Institutions of higher education must prioritize the pursuit of truth and knowledge, the transmission of intellectual skills, and the creation of trustworthy scholarly works. Achieving these objectives necessitates upholding academic freedom.

SECTION 4 - Policy

Academic freedom encompasses the right of teachers, students, and academic institutions to conduct teaching, learning, and research activities without unjustified interference or restrictions imposed by legal authorities. It serves to protect individuals and organizations engaged in academic endeavors, including teaching and research.

Institutional academic freedom denotes the university's entitlement to define its educational goals autonomously, without interference or influence from the government or any other external sources.

SECTION 5 - Rights of Students

Students' rights to academic freedom entail corresponding duties and responsibilities. In the classroom, faculty members should endeavor to establish an environment where intellectual diversity is respected. Students should feel assured that they won't face consequences for expressing opinions or beliefs that diverge from others' perspectives, fostering an atmosphere conducive to unrestricted free inquiry and discourse.

SECTION 6 - Rights of Teachers in Classroom

Academic freedom also extends to the right of teachers to deliver their curriculum without undue interference from university officials. Teachers should feel full freedom of instruction, provided they fulfill their other academic duties adequately.

Controversy is a natural aspect of academic inquiry and teaching, and it is appropriate to incorporate both the expertise and personal beliefs of faculty members into their teaching. However, it is essential to maintain a constant effort to distinguish between factual knowledge and personal belief. While teachers have the liberty to discuss their subject matter in the classroom, they should be careful not to introduce controversial topics or irrelevant matters unrelated to the course content. It is crucial to ensure that classroom discussions remain focused on the subject matter at hand.

SECTION 7 - Faculty as Citizen

A university faculty member embodies multiple roles: they are both a citizen, a member of a specialized profession, and an integral part of the educational institution.

- When faculty express their views as citizens, it's important for them to avoid giving the impression that they are speaking on behalf of the entire university.

- While speaking or writing as citizens, faculty members should be shielded from any form of institutional censorship or punishment. However, their unique position within the academic community entails certain responsibilities.

- Faculty members must understand that their professional standing comes with obligations to ensure accuracy, exercise appropriate restraint, and respect the rights of others to express their opinions.

- As individuals who possess knowledge and serve as educators, faculty members should be mindful that their public statements can reflect upon both their profession and the institution they represent. Therefore, they should consistently strive for accuracy, exercise restraint, respect differing viewpoints, and make it clear that their opinions are personal and not necessarily representative of the institution.

SECTION 8 - Right to Research

Academic freedom encompasses the liberty to engage in research, scholarship, or creative endeavors aimed at advancing knowledge, and to disseminate research findings responsibly alongside other academic responsibilities.

This freedom entails the ability to conduct research based on evidence and draw conclusions, while also allowing for critique of one's findings and assertions.

With academic freedom comes a responsibility to uphold professional standards in all aspects of a researcher's conduct. This entails a commitment to accuracy and integrity to ensure the integrity of academic work.

SECTION 9 - Intellectual Debate

Academic freedom also extends to both educators and students, allowing them to participate in intellectual discourse without the fear of censorship or reprisal. This means they have the liberty to express and exchange ideas freely, fostering an environment conducive to open debate and the pursuit of knowledge.

SECTION 10 - ASOIU Policy and Procedure

Academic Freedom Impairment-Academic freedom involves the right to express opinions regarding university matters and policies, as well as broader societal issues of public relevance.

Victimised Student-Students who believe they have been unfairly penalized due to their expressed opinions or beliefs are entitled to submit a formal written complaint through the Complaint Process. The complaint will be thoroughly investigated, and a decision will be reached regarding whether disciplinary measures are warranted. If students are dissatisfied with the investigation's outcome, they retain the right to appeal in writing to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

