

## **Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center Statement on Academic Freedom**

PREFACE: DLIFLC serves as the nation's largest foreign language teaching and resource center. The mission of the Institute is to provide culturally-based foreign language education, training, evaluation, research and sustainment for Department of Defense (DoD) personnel in order to ensure the success of the Defense Language Program and enhance the security of the nation. Within the context of the mission, the Institute upholds the value of academic freedom by encouraging its faculty to pursue their academic interests in second language acquisition through teaching, research, presentations and publication.

**Individual and Institutional Academic Freedom:** Academic freedom at DLIFLC is based on two complementary but slightly divergent concepts of academic freedom. Taken together, these concepts embrace the intent of both the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), with its focus on the concerns of individual faculty members, and the U.S. Supreme Court, with its focus on both individual and institutional concerns.

One of these concepts of academic freedom is expressed in the AAUP 1940 Statement on Academic Freedom and Tenure. This document, rooted in a 1915 declaration by the AAUP, divides academic freedom into three parts: (1) freedom of research and publication of results; (2) freedom of classroom teaching; and (3) freedom from institutional censorship when the issue at hand concerns faculty members' right to "speak or write as citizens."

The other of these concepts of academic freedom was first stated in 1957 by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Sweezy vs. New Hampshire*. The Court specified "the four essential freedoms of a university—to determine for itself on academic grounds who may teach, what may be taught, how it shall be taught, and who may be admitted to study." In this statement, which has been referenced by the Court in subsequent rulings, the Justices established the rights of academic institutions to fulfill their missions.

These divergent concepts of academic freedom illustrate the tension that is inherent between the desire of faculty members to be free of administrative restraints and the need of the institution to accomplish its mission. This duality of competing freedoms places responsibilities on both the faculty and the institution. For an academic community to properly function, all members of the academic community must be willing to accept both their rights as members of the community and their obligations and responsibilities to that community.

The Institute's leadership believe that an organizational climate openly committed to candid communication, mutual trust and confidence, teamwork, and collegiality is vital to a healthy and creative learning environment. The faculty and staff are encouraged to engage in empirical research and classroom-based experimentation to ensure excellence in their teaching and research. The Institute's leadership also encourages the faculty to present their findings at professional conferences and to publish in professional literature within the foreign language discipline in accordance with applicable DoD and Army regulations to include DoD Directive 5230.09, paragraph 4.e.(e) and Joint Ethics Regulation DoD Directive 5500.07-R 2-207,. In accordance with Joint Ethics Regulation paragraphs 2-207 and 3-307, the findings presented at professional conferences and in professional literature must contain the following disclaimer:

The views expressed are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy of the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, the Department of Army, the Department of Defense, or the US Government.

The unique mission of DLIFLC requires its graduates to acquire the knowledge, skills, and abilities described in the Final Learning Objectives. Because all students must understand the range of linguistic variation and cultural diversity that exists within the languages being taught, the faculty is organized into teaching teams that consist of individuals with wide ranges of backgrounds and specialties. These teaching teams have the responsibility to teach the core curriculum provided by the Institution; they also have the freedom according to teacher performance standards to supplement it with additional materials which they believe could better meet the education and training objectives.

**Academic Responsibilities:** Academic freedom cannot exist without academic responsibilities on the part of both the Institute and its faculty.

The Institute's leadership realizes that the Institute is responsible not only to the students and the American public, but to the faculty as well. The leadership and faculty should work collaboratively with their colleagues in their department, school and institution as well as relevant administration in fulfilling the Institution's mission. Therefore, the Institute solicits the faculty's advice on curriculum, assessment, and other academic matters through the internal organizational structure as well as through the Faculty Advisory Councils (FACs) at the school, division, and directorate level and through the Academic Senate (AS) at the Institute level. The FACs are the academic fora through which the faculty provides input on schools', divisions' and directorates' academic matters such as course content, testing and faculty's motivation and well-being.

The AS is a DLIFLC-wide, elected academic forum in which the faculty may address Institute-wide academic policies and procedures as well as provide input on finalists for senior academic positions when the Institute fills those positions through a call for candidates.

Faculty members are obligated to exercise their academic freedom responsibly. As recognized in both the AAUP Statement and the rulings of the Supreme Court, the exercise of academic freedom takes place within generally accepted societal norms. Therefore, extremist, sexist, racist, or religious viewpoints will not be advocated or defended. Furthermore, any Institute publications that include controversial statements [drawn from authentic materials] should not be construed as representing the opinions of the writers, the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center, or the Department of Defense.

**Summary:** At DLIFLC, individual academic freedom is based on an understanding of the value of free inquiry, tempered by recognition of the Institute's unique mission and its position in American society. Therefore, the Institute's leadership encourages the faculty to research and experiment, share their findings with others and exercise good judgment when presenting potentially controversial topics in the classroom, and use teaching methodologies that support the attainment of the mission-defining Final Learning Objectives. Adherence to these principles will allow the Institute to accomplish its goals while still allowing ample opportunities for the faculty's professional expression and development.

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