

**National Louis University Policy on the Protection of Academic Freedom
FP: 122**

**Approved: Faculty Senate
Approved: Board of Trustees**

**Date: June 4, 2021
Date: June 16, 2021**

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 1, 2021

Note: The Approval of this policy will sunset the March 2007 version of FP119 Policy for Faculty of Conduct.

PURPOSE:

National Louis University is committed to providing a teaching and learning environment that promotes critical thinking, intellectual discussions, and open civil discourse. Faculty members may inquire freely into academic matters and responsibly communicate considered findings in appropriate University classes related to the subject or, as an individual, in publications of the faculty member's choice. Faculty shall have the freedom to study and communicate ideas and facts, including those that are inconvenient to political groups or authorities, without fear of retribution. Faculty are members of the broader University community and serve first and foremost as role models for colleagues and students. It is the University's view that academic freedom is accompanied by responsibility, so when faculty write or speak as individuals, they are stating a personal opinion and not communicating on behalf of the University. A professional position in the community involves the obligation to be accurate, to exercise appropriate restraint, and to show respect for the rights of others to express their views. As a citizen, the faculty member may freely pursue individual interests so long as they do not intrude upon University duties or negatively impact the reputation of the University.

SCOPE:

- I. This policy covers all NLU full time and adjunct faculty.
- II. This policy defines academic freedom as the following:
 - A. The right of faculty members to engage in research, dissemination of findings, and intellectual debate without fear of censorship or retaliation.
 - B. The right of faculty members to remain true to their pedagogical philosophy and intellectual commitments. Faculty members shall be granted latitude in deciding how best to teach the content of the courses and achieve the learning outcomes in accordance with program and college guidelines, contemporary practice, and what is in the best interest of student learning.
 - C. The right of faculty members to express their views while engaged in academic pursuits— in speech, writing, and through electronic communication, both on and off campus — without fear of sanction, unless the manner of expression infringes upon the rights of others or those views demonstrate that the faculty member is incompetent, or dishonest with regard to their discipline or fields of expertise.

- D. Academic freedom encompasses both the individual and institutional right to maintain academic standards. Faculty members have the responsibility to evaluate students' work and assign grades to students, so long as the grades are within the course-published policy, not capricious, nor unjustly punitive.

PROCEDURE:

Faculty members have the right to seek redress or request a hearing if they believe their rights have been violated. Reference FP-111: Policy on "Faculty Appeals" for further information.