

BLACK HILLS STATE UNIVERSITY
Policy and Procedure Manual

SUBJECT: Academic Freedom and Responsibility

NUMBER: 2:4

Office: Office of Academic Affairs

Source: [BHSU Faculty Handbook](#); [SDBOR Policy 1:11](#)

1. Purpose

This policy implements [SDBOR Policy 1:11](#) and sets forth the process for academic freedom and responsibility at BHSU.

2. Policy

- a. Academic freedom includes the right to study, discuss, investigate, teach and publish. Academic freedom applies to both teaching and research. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth.
 - i. Academic freedom in its teaching aspect is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the teacher in teaching and of students to freedom in learning. It includes the freedom to perform one's professional duties and to present differing and sometimes controversial points of view, free from reprisal.
 - ii. The faculty member is entitled to freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the performing of other assigned academic duties.
 - iii. Faculty members are entitled to freedom in the classroom in the discussion of their subject. They have the freedom to include the presentation of various scholarly views.
 - iv. The concept of freedom should be accompanied by an equally demanding concept of responsibility. When faculty members speak or write as citizens, they must be free from institutional censorship or discipline. They should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others and should indicate that they are not speaking for the institution.

- b. To secure student freedom in learning, faculty members in the classroom and in seminars should encourage free and orderly discussion, inquiry and expression of the course subject matter.
 - i. 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.
 - ii. Students are responsible for maintaining standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled.

3. Procedures

- a. BHSU has established the following academic appeals procedure to permit review of student allegations that an academic evaluation was tainted by prejudiced or capricious consideration of student opinions or conduct unrelated to academic standards. These procedures shall prohibit retaliation against persons who initiate appeals or who participate in the review of appeals. All parties will adhere to the provisions for confidentiality required in such a process.
 - i. Step 1 -- The student should first attempt to resolve the problem with the instructor involved.
 - ii. Step 2 -- If the problem is not resolved by the action taken in Step 1, the grievant must present a written grievance to the school chair, who has authority to dispose of the grievance. The grievance must be filed within 10 working days of the date on which the incident, situation, or circumstance occurred. Upon receiving the grievance, the school chair will investigate the matter in a thorough and appropriate manner and respond to the grievant within 10 working days.
 - iii. Step 3 -- If the grievance is not resolved at Step 2, the grievant may formally grieve to the college dean. The Dean of the College will conduct an appropriate and thorough investigation of the alleged incident, situation, or circumstance, and prepare a decision on the grievance within 15 working days of the date of receipt of the Step 3 grievance. The grievant may be notified in person or by certified mail regarding this decision.

- iv. Step 4 -- If the grievance is not resolved at Step 3, the grievant may formally grieve to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs within 10 working days of the notification to the student as to the decision rendered in the previous step. The Provost/VPAA will conduct an appropriate and thorough investigation of the alleged incident, situation, or circumstance. Within 20 working days after the date of the receipt of the Step 4 grievance, the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs shall notify the grievant in person or by certified mail regarding his/her decision.

4. Responsible Administrator

The Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, or designee, is responsible for the annual and ad hoc review of this policy. The University President is responsible for approval of this policy.

SOURCE: Approved by President Laurie Nichols on 10/26/2020.