

## **POLICY ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

Academic freedom is defined as: the freedom to express opinions and ideas without restraint or coercion by the University or by an outside body, and the freedom to pursue unfettered research within the guidelines of the University's policies and of the culture that the university exists in.

The American University of Science & Technology (AUST) believes that the practice of responsible academic freedom promotes the academic process and enables the development of academic capabilities. Moreover, AUST believes that free inquiry is essential to the development of ideas and research, for it will reflect positively on the actual teaching and learning process and on the outcome of research.

### **More Specifically:**

- a. Faculty members are entitled to freedom of discussion within the limits of the syllabus. Although they are encouraged to train and guide students as to how to discuss and best deal with different viewpoints, they must be careful not to introduce controversial matters that may be potentially divisive, especially if such matters do not belong to the subject matter being taught.
- b. Faculty members are entitled to freedom of research and publication. The University should develop procedures that will encourage free research, and should ensure that faculty members are free to publish their findings as long as the research and findings do not run against the accepted cultural and institutional norms. *The point here is not to limit or direct research and publications but rather to remind faculty members that there may be legal and social implications for freedom of pursuit if that freedom is misused.*
- c. University faculty members are members of their communities and citizens or residents of the country that they live in; they are, as well, learned members of the institution and of their profession. Because it is difficult to clearly separate their various associations, faculty members may have, at times, to practice utmost care in their utterances and speeches.

- d. When the faculty members speak as citizens, they should speak with complete freedom but their positions in society and as university professors may impose certain obligations.

As scholars they should realize that the public may not differentiate between their individual right to speak and freely express their opinions and their association with AUST, or their membership in their profession. Hence, they should strive to exercise proper restraint, should be accurate at all times, and should always make it clear that they do not represent the institutional position when they are presenting their personal views.

- e. Faculty and students should enjoy an atmosphere of freedom and mutual respect when conducting classroom discussions or research. The University's community, in general, should reflect the proper practice of freedom of speech and expression inside and outside the classroom.