

ACADEMIC SENATE
of
THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Item 6

AS-2649-04/FA
March 11-12, 2004

Academic Freedom and Free Speech Rights

- RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate of the California State University (CSU) reaffirm its commitment to upholding and preserving the principles of academic freedom: the right of faculty to teach, conduct research or other scholarship, and publish free of external constraints other than those normally denoted by the scholarly standards of a discipline; and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate CSU call upon the campuses to foster the free speech rights embedded in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and to ensure that guests on any campus have full opportunity to the appropriate exercise of these rights; and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate CSU call on the university community to ensure that the campuses be open forums for free expression of ideas and diverse views in the framework of scholarly inquiry and professional ethics; and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate CSU encourage the local campus senates to develop or review campus policies for the protection of freedom of inquiry, research, expression, and teaching both inside the classroom and beyond; and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate CSU call for review and, if necessary, repeal, of any CSU or campus policy that would restrict academic freedom under justifications such as "security" or "a balanced approach" to controversial issues.

RATIONALE: In recent years, in the name of security, some universities have developed policies that place restrictions on academic freedom. There have been attempts to quell discussion of contentious issues under the guise of a need for a "balanced" approach to controversial issues. Academic freedom is the pillar of a university's fundamental mission of discovery and advancement of knowledge and its dissemination to students and the public. Restrictions on freedom to teach, conduct research, express points of view, and publish create obstacles in fulfilling the academic mission of the university. Only when universities protect academic freedom and foster the free exchange of ideas can they effectively fulfill their mission of providing high quality education to the students and to the public.

APPROVED – May 6-7, 2004