2.04 Intellectual Diversity Policy

Policy 2.04
Volume 2: Academic Affairs
Chapter 04: Intellectual Diversity Policy
Responsible Office: Academic Affairs
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Policy Statement

Georgia Health Sciences University is committed to nurturing intellectual diversity on the campus to ensure the robust nature of scientific discovery. At times, faculty will express personal opinions but should create an atmosphere for students to freely retain their own beliefs and treat with respect other opinions appropriately expressed. Students should not be assessed, rewarded or penalized according to whether they share their faculty member’s opinion. The student must be provided an avenue to resolve any allegation that the aforementioned rights were prohibited.

Reason For Policy

The intent of an intellectual diversity policy is to protect students from the undue influence of an authoritative figure, such as a faculty member, from intimidating, coercing or predominating the personal opinions, belief systems and the like that are not an established and verifiable element of the curriculum. Students should not be penalized for not espousing a faculty member’s personal opinions and beliefs that may be transmitted in the classroom. This policy affirms the right to retain opinions and beliefs while balancing this right against unlimited freedom of expression in the classroom setting. The policy does not prevent freedom of speech in the classroom and ensures that course grades will be based on competency outcome measures described for the established curriculum.

Entities Affected By This Policy

All divisions, departments, and colleges of Georgia Health Sciences University are covered by this policy.

Who Should Read This Policy

All students, faculty, and academic administrators of all divisions, departments, and colleges of Georgia Health Sciences University should be familiar with this policy.

Contacts

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<tr>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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<tbody>
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Related Documents


Overview

The American Council on Education recently published a statement on Academic Rights and Responsibilities. This document suggested the freedom for intellectual discourse is a right and responsibility for individual members of a campus community. Individual campuses must provide meaning and definition to these concepts within the context of the disciplinary standards and institutional mission. The University System of Georgia Board of Regents has requested its institutions to protect intellectual diversity through development of policy that addresses these described rights and responsibilities.

Georgia Health Sciences University is committed to nurturing intellectual diversity on the campus to ensure the robust nature of scientific discovery. Faculty must deliver the current scholarship to achieve the prescribed student learning outcomes within the curriculum. At times, faculty will express personal opinions and should create an atmosphere for students to freely retain their own beliefs and treat with respect other opinions appropriately expressed. Faculty bear the onus of responsibility to manage the class setting and are under no obligation to ensure all opinions are expressed and receive equal class time. Faculty members may determine some opinions or subjects might be discussed elsewhere on campus rather than in the individual classroom. Students should not be assessed, rewarded or penalized according to whether they share their faculty member's opinion.

Georgia Health Sciences University recognizes that certain opinions may generate a high level of emotional discord and not be easily resolved nor result in mutual understanding of the differential opinion. The student must be provided an avenue to resolve any allegation that the aforementioned rights were prohibited.

Procedure

If a student feels he/she has been denied intellectual freedom by a faculty member, as described in this policy, the student should first discuss the issue with the respective faculty member. If the student and faculty member cannot amicably resolve the matter (or the student feels he/she cannot approach the faculty member about the grievance), the student should then contact the appropriate senior administrator in the program (e.g., department chair, section chief) to resolve the dispute. If the student and senior program administrator are unable to resolve the dispute, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Dean of the respective college. If the initial dispute is with the senior program administrator, the student should directly contact the Dean of the college.

The Dean should resolve the issue by utilizing the college’s existing policies on handling student grievances and make a determination on behalf of the colleges. 1 If the student is not satisfied with the Dean’s determination, the student should appeal the decision in writing to the Director of Campus Life Services. The Director of Campus Life Services should make a determination as to whether due process was provided the student at the program and college levels.

If appropriate due process was deemed provided at the college/program level, the student may appeal to the Office of the President at which time the following may occur:

1. The Campus Review Body may be convened for further hearing or review, or
2. The President may consider the appeal and make a formal decision.

If the Director of Campus Life determines that appropriate due process was not provided the student, the Director shall so notify the student. Within seven (7) days of receipt of this notice, the student may make a written request to the Director for a hearing before the Campus Review Board. The Director shall notify the Campus Review Board of the student’s request and all steps subsequently taken shall be in accordance with the Academic Regulations governing the Campus Review Body.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities each party has in connection with Academic, Research, and Student Affairs Policy 2.04, Intellectual Diversity Policy, are:
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<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Action Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Attempt to resolve dispute directly with the respective faculty member. If the matter cannot be resolved amicably, the student should submit the complaint to respective senior program administrator (e.g., department chair, program chief). If the dispute is directly with the senior program administrator, the student should report the dispute directly to the Dean of the respective college.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior program administrator</td>
<td>Attempt to resolve the dispute. If unable to resolve the dispute, forward the matter to the Dean of the respective college.</td>
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<td>Dean of the respective college</td>
<td>Resolves the disputed matter.</td>
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<td>Student</td>
<td>If the student is not satisfied with the Dean’s resolution of the matter, the student may submit a written appeal of the decision to the Director of Campus Life Services. May appeal the decision to the Office of the President.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Director of Campus Life Services</td>
<td>Determine if due process was provided the student at program and college levels.</td>
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<td>President</td>
<td>May convene the Campus Review Body for further hearing or can consider the appeal and make a formal decision.</td>
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