

2025 OT/OTAAUP Negotiations
OT-AAUP Proposal
Presented Apr 18, 2025

Black text – original

Orange text – OTAAUP suggested additions

~~Orange strikethrough—OTAAUP suggested deletions~~

Language both parties have agreed to

Article ~~2H~~: Academic Freedom

Academic freedom and freedom of speech are necessary conditions to teaching, research, scholarship, and service. Academic freedom ensures that bargaining unit members have the freedom to teach, conduct research, engage in internal university discussion, and participate in public debate. In discharging their duties, bargaining unit members must treat students, staff, colleagues, and the public fairly and with respect.

Academic freedom carries with it certain responsibilities, such as the faithful performance of professional duties and obligations, the recognition of the demands of the scholarly enterprise, and the candor to make it clear that when one is speaking on matters of public interest, one is not speaking for the institution. Oregon Tech affirms its continued commitment to the protection of academic freedom with changes in the political and technological landscape.

Section 1. Bargaining unit members shall have the freedom to **both** teach inside the classroom and **perform** other required instructional activities such as internships, externships, laboratories, and field trips. Bargaining unit members must teach students to think critically and interpret information for themselves. Such training often occurs in an atmosphere of controversy that, so long as it remains educationally relevant, actively assists students in their pursuit of knowledge.

Selection of instructional materials, definition of course content, and assessment of student performance in a class should be left to bargaining unit members' discretion so long as they are consistent with **the course subject, learning objectives**, departmental practices, Oregon Tech's mission, the Oregon Tech catalog of courses, and programmatic and institutional accreditation requirements. ~~Bargaining unit members' freedom to teach is not separable from students' freedom to learn. As students have the right to learn the subject of the course, bargaining unit members have an obligation to teach the subject of the course. Bargaining unit members should not introduce matter into their teaching and student assessment strategies which have no relation to course subject. As subject matter experts, bargaining unit members should utilize academic and professional judgement in introducing topics that are relevant to their course learning objectives. They should be careful not to persistently introduce controversial matters in the classroom which have no relation to their subject.~~

Under normal circumstances, bargaining unit members have the academic freedom to evaluate the academic performance of students enrolled in courses they teach and ~~under normal circumstances~~, to judge the grades ~~earned~~ **awarded** to those students. A student's grade may be changed following a student's appeal through Academic Grievance Procedures (**OIT-16-010**). A student's grade cannot be changed by any person other than the bargaining unit member, ~~or the~~ Department Chair, College

Dean or Provost in consultation with the bargaining unit member. If a grade is changed, notification will be sent by the registrar's office to the bargaining unit member and Department Chair unless the grade change is initiated by the bargaining unit member.

Section 2. Bargaining unit members shall have the freedom to conduct research and scholarship, and to publish, display, or otherwise disseminate the results of that work to students, the public, and others in their profession. While Oregon Tech will not dictate the nature or topic of research or scholarly work, all such work must comply with Oregon Tech policy, procedures, research or scholarly agreements and applicable federal agency guidelines on research misconduct. Oregon Tech retains the right to investigate and respond to allegations of misconduct in preparation and publication of scholarly and creative work.

Section 3. To the extent legally protected, bargaining unit members shall have the freedom and are encouraged to participate in the system of shared academic governance, and contribute to the academic functioning of their academic unit, college, department, program, and the University without fear of censorship, reprisal, or discipline from Oregon Tech.

Section 4. To the extent legally protected, and consistent with Oregon Tech's campus speech and posting policies, bargaining unit members have the protections of freedom of speech, as derived from the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America and Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution of the State of Oregon. When bargaining unit members speak or write as members of the public, they shall indicate that they are doing so in their individual capacity, not for or on behalf of the program, Department, College, or Oregon Tech. They may identify their Oregon Tech affiliation so long as no University sponsorship or endorsement is stated or implied. Bargaining unit members should at all times strive to be accurate, exercise appropriate restraint, and show respect for the opinions of others.