Article XX. Academic Freedom

Section 1. The University recognizes the paramount importance of academic freedom in an institution of higher education and reaffirms its continuing commitment to the principles of academic freedom and its protections as described in the University of Connecticut By-Laws under Article XIII, attached hereto as Appendix XX.

Section 2. GAs are entitled to academic freedom. Academic freedom is the freedom to present and discuss all relevant matters in and beyond the classroom, to explore all avenues of scholarship, research, and creative expression, and to speak or write without any censorship, threat, restraint, or discipline by the University in the performance of one's teaching, research, publishing, and other assigned duties.

Section 3. GAs shall have the right to express themselves as members of society or as representatives of their fields of instruction, study, or research, including the right to address any matter of institutional governance, policy, or action.

The Union reserves the right to modify, subtract, delete or add to any of these proposals at any time. In some cases, whether or not explicitly noted, the Union's proposals are merely clarifications of existing rights and/or practices and should not be taken as admissions that the Union does not already possess such rights or that the practices do not exist.

Appendix XX

throughout the University. Should the primary campus cease to exist or a tenured faculty member's program be terminated at the primary campus, the faculty member would be assigned to another campus with that program.

B. Functions

Departments are organized in terms of subject matter areas. They bear definite cross-relationships, but their organization into distinct administrative units is intended to assure that the attention of small groups of faculty members will be centered on teaching, research, clinical activities, and/or service in these areas.

The functions of each department are to:

1. Develop an educational program designed to meet the needs of the students in the various schools/colleges and of other individuals and groups served by the teaching, research, clinical, and/or service programs.

2. Evaluate and improve its educational programs.

3. Recommend to the faculty of its school/college changes intended to improve the work of the department.

4. Secure the safety and proper inventory of all University property assigned to it.

5. Integrate its program with the general program of the University and to foster effective coordination of effort.

C. Officers

Each department shall have a department head who shall represent their department and who shall report to the dean of the school/college within which the department is organized; UConn Health shall have department chairs. Department heads shall not serve more than two consecutive terms unless the majority of their department recommends otherwise; UConn Health department chairs do not have term limits.

D. Meetings

Meetings of the department may be called by the head or chair of the department, the dean of the school/college within which the department is organized, or the Provost. Each department shall hold meetings as needed.

ARTICLE XIII – The University Staff

A. The President shall appoint individuals reporting to them. All other members of the faculty and professional staff shall be appointed by the Provost, the Vice Presidents and other Executive Officers, or their designees. Tenure shall only be granted by the Board of Trustees or as delegated to the Board of Directors.

B. The Provost shall recommend to the Board of Trustees the categories of the professional staff to which the regulations concerning academic tenure apply. The Provost shall consult with the University Senate before making such recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

Academic freedom applies to all members of the faculty and professional staff of the university.

1. All members of the faculty, whether tenured or not, are entitled to academic freedom set forth in the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure formulated by the Association of American Colleges and the American Association of University Professors. The faculty member is entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of his/her other academic duties, but research for monetary return should adhere to University policies.

2. The faculty member is entitled to freedom in the classroom in treating his/her subject and in conducting a class. The faculty members should not contravene the free speech and academic freedom of other members of the professional staff, nor impede faculty, other members of the professional staff, or students, in their central tasks of teaching, research, and learning.

3. The faculty member is a citizen, a member of a learned profession, and an officer of an educational institution. When the faculty member speaks or writes as a citizen, he/she should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but the faculty member's special position in the community imposes special obligations. As a person of learning and an educational officer, he/she should remember that the public may judge the faculty member's profession and the University by his/her utterances. Hence, he/she should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that he/she does not speak for the institution.

4. Membership in the academic community imposes on students, faculty members, professional staff, and trustees an obligation to respect the dignity of others, to acknowledge their right to express differing opinions, and to foster and defend intellectual honesty, freedom of inquiry and instruction, and free expression on and off the campus. The expression of dissent and the attempt to produce change, therefore, may not be carried out in ways which injure individuals, damage institutional facilities, or disrupt classes. Speakers on campus must not only be protected from violence, but given an opportunity to be heard. Those who seek to call attention to grievances must not do so in ways that significantly impede the functions of the institution.

   Students are entitled to an atmosphere conducive to learning and to even-handed treatment in all aspects of the teacher-student relationship. Faculty members may not refuse to enroll or teach students on the grounds of their beliefs or the possible uses to which they may put the knowledge to be gained in a course. The student should not be forced by the authority inherent in the instructional role to make particular personal choices as to political action or the student's own part in society. Evaluation of students and the award of credit must be based on academic performance professionally judged and not on matters irrelevant to that performance, whether personality, race, religion, degree of political activism, or personal beliefs.

It is a teacher's mastery of their subject and scholarship which entitle them to the classroom and to freedom in the presentation of their own subject. Thus, it is improper for an instructor persistently to introduce material that has no relation to their subject or to fail to present the subject matter of the course as announced to the students and as approved by the faculty in their collective responsibility for the curriculum.

Because academic freedom has traditionally included the teacher's full freedom as a citizen, most faculty members face no insoluble conflicts between the claims of politics, social action, and conscience, on the one hand, and the claims and expectations of their students, colleagues, and institutions, on the other. If such conflicts become acute and the teacher's attention to their obligations as a citizen and moral agent precludes the fulfillment of substantial academic obligations, the teacher cannot escape the responsibility of that choice, but should either request a leave of absence or resign their academic position.

5. The University, in fulfilling an essential function as a forum for the free expression of ideas, shall endeavor to preserve and facilitate the full enjoyment of constitutionally protected civil liberties.

   The highest standards shall be sought in the protection of all forms of freedom of thought, expression, association, and peaceful assembly. In the exercise of these civil liberties the members of the professional staff are obliged to protect the same rights of others and to bear in mind their respective obligations to their profession and to the University.

6. Members of the professional staff shall have equal opportunity in their employment regardless of gender, race, religion, national origin, disability, or other legally-recognized protected class.

C. Academic Appointment and Tenure

Academic tenure does not confer upon any staff member the right to continued assignment to administrative responsibilities.

At the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees when the Provost makes recommendations for the promotion of faculty members and for the award of academic tenure, the Provost may also recommend to the Board of Trustees any changes to the categories of the professional staff to which the regulations concerning academic tenure apply. The Provost shall consult with the University Senate before making such recommendation to the Board of Trustees. No professional staff member who has not attained tenure by vote of the Board of Trustees or the Board of Directors, as set forth herein, shall have a claim that they have tenure.

1. The terms and conditions of every appointment to the faculty will be confirmed in writing and an appointment letter will be provided to the faculty member. Any subsequent extensions or modifications of an appointment and any special understandings or any notices incumbent upon either party to provide, will be confirmed in writing and a copy will be given to the faculty member.