

Students for Academic Freedom



Handbook

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with Ryan Call and Lee Kaplan

SAF Organizational Handbook:

Dear Students,

It's my great pleasure to welcome you to Students for Academic Freedom. As the National Campus Director, I'll be your key point of contact at SAF and will be available to work personally with you throughout the upcoming school year as you form your SAF club on campus and begin to address the lack of academic freedom and intellectual diversity at your school.

This booklet has been prepared to help you set up a Students for Academic Freedom Club on your campus. In establishing your club you will be immediately linked to like-minded students who are pursuing similar agendas on more than 100 college campuses.

Students for Academic Freedom is a movement dedicated to the ideas that 1) a university is an educational institution not a political party; 2) that its resources and authority should be used for learning and the pursuit of knowledge, not to indoctrinate students in a political ideology; and 3) that the principles of academic freedom and a good education require that students have access to a diversity of viewpoints in courses, required reading texts and in campus activities programs.

To further these principles, Students for Academic Freedom is seeking to get your university to adopt the Student Bill of Rights (see Appendix) as official university policy.¹

In order to secure passage of this Bill and to promote intellectual diversity on campus, it is important to document and protest class-

¹Students for Academic Freedom is also sponsoring the Academic Bill of Rights which includes two additional provisions. These forbid universities from hiring or firing faculty on the basis of their political opinions. These rights are presently guaranteed by most universities. To emphasize the lack of such guarantees for students, we have created a separate Student Bill of Rights, which is specific to students. Both bills are available for comparison at www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org.

room indoctrination and abuses of academic freedom. SAF will supply you with complaint forms to aid in this task and will help to publicize abuses by posting them on our website at www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org. We will also help you get media exposure for grievances that are not addressed by your school.

This organizational handbook will assist you in creating a successful and innovative SAF chapter on your campus. It covers every step of the process, from registration and recruitment through projects and publicity. We've also included an appendix in the back with the text of the Student Bill of Rights, sample recruitment posters, complaint forms, and other documents you can copy and use. These documents are also available online or via email so that you can personalize them for your club and campus.

Thank you for working with us on our campaign to promote intellectual diversity and academic freedom in higher education. Please don't hesitate to contact our national office in Washington, DC at any time with questions or ideas. You can reach me at 202-969-2467 or at Sara@studentsforacademicfreedom.org

Best Regards,
Sara Dogan
National Campus Director
Students for Academic Freedom

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Chapter I: Creating Your SAF Chapter

A. Registering Your Chapter With SAF

The first thing to do when starting an SAF chapter is to contact our Washington office to register your new chapter with us. You can do this either by emailing or faxing us the registration form in the appendix to this booklet (also available by emailing Sara Dogan at sara@studentsforacademicfreedom.org) or by calling our national office at 202-969-2467. All you'll need to register is some basic contact information, such as your school and permanent addresses, phone numbers, email address, and so on.

If you would like to start a campus chapter, but are not yet sure who will lead your club, you can still register with us. You will then serve as the interim chapter leader and SAF contact. Please notify us as soon as you find someone else to replace you, so that we can add their contact information to the website and our files.

Once your club is registered, we'll add your school to the list on our webpage and will list you as the contact person there. Your contact information will not be listed, but if students or alumni from your school inquire about how to reach you, we may put them in touch with you. Once you establish a website for your chapter, we will be happy to list a link to that website as well.

B. Registering Your Chapter

The next step is to register your club with your school administration. Some schools require a semester's advance notice to register. If this is the case, proceed with your club activities during the present term while you wait for your registration to be accepted.

Registering a chapter with your school can be a time-consuming process, but there are several reasons why we think this step is important. First, by registering your chapter you will be able to apply for funding from your school and will be able to use class-

room facilities for your meetings and events. Many universities have used the excuse that a club is not registered as a reason to shut down protests and silence dissent from groups whose message administrators find objectionable. Don't give your university a chance to use this excuse for censorship.

Secondly, your SAF club will be a non-partisan organization. The education of all students suffers when there is a lack of intellectual diversity and academic freedom and when minority viewpoints are stifled because professors forget their professional obligation to teach all students and not just those who share their political prejudices. Insist that your school fund your SAF chapter at the same level as other non-partisan student organizations.

Even if your school says that you have to wait until next semester to register the club, don't let that deter you from getting started. You can still hold meetings and be an official SAF chapter recognized by our national office even if you have not yet been recognized by your college.

C. Finding a Faculty Advisor

As part of submitting a club registration to your school, you may be asked to select a faculty advisor. Even if your school does not require this step, we highly recommend that you seek out one or more faculty members who support the mission of SAF and can serve as advisors to your group.

An advisor can play a very important role for you, serving as your advocate and helping you to navigate the complex terrain of academia. An advisor will help you to judge what are true abuses of academic freedom and will help to prevent false accusations. Our agenda is not to stifle the expression of diverse viewpoints, but to promote such expression. We want to protect students from harassment for their political views. We do not want to make the same mistake ourselves with regard to professors. Please contact our national office if you are having trouble finding an advisor.

We're in touch with many professors at schools across the country and may be able to connect you to faculty who are willing to help out.

D. Recruiting Members

The next step in organizing your club is to recruit members and set a time for meetings. There are several different ways to recruit members for your chapter.

First, if you are already a member of a campus organization, talk to members of your club and see if they would like to join your SAF chapter. It is easiest to recruit members from a pool of like-minded friends or acquaintances.

You might also try attending the meetings of other groups on campus and asking to make a brief presentation about the goals of SAF to see if they would be interested in joining. Stress that SAF is a non-partisan group and explain how intellectual diversity in the classroom benefits all students. Think about which constituencies of students are routinely harassed for their beliefs on campus and seek them out as allies in this movement.

Setting up tables on campus is also a great way to raise awareness about your new chapter. Campuses have different rules and regulations, and you may need to register your chapter with your school before you are allowed to table. We will be happy to provide you with as much literature as you need—the *Students for Academic Freedom* pamphlets, the Academic Bill of Rights and other materials. Just contact Sara Dogan in the National Office at Sara@studentsforacademicfreedom.org with your mailing address and the number of brochures you would like to receive, and we'll send them right out to you. Make sure you have pen and paper ready to take down names, emails and phone numbers from interested students, or use the form provided in the appendix to this handbook. For more advice about tabling, see Chapter V, section B.

If your school holds an annual or once-a-semester student activities bazaar or club fair, take advantage of this fact. You may find that many students on campus, even if they are not actively involved in political organizations, also feel stifled by the lack of academic diversity on campus, and are willing to build a coalition with you on this issue.

E. Holding a First Meeting

Once you have a few prospective members, pick a date and time on which to have a first meeting. Make sure to email all your prospective members the day before the meeting and if possible call them the day of the meeting to remind them. It may help attendance to set the SAF meeting time either directly before or after the meeting times of other already-established campus groups that you are involved with.

For the first few meetings of each term, place posters advertising SAF and the club's meeting time and location around campus so students that may not be aware of the organization will have a chance to join. We have several ideas for flyers in the appendix to this handbook and will help you place a recruitment ad in your school paper. Make your posters stand out as much as possible. Printing flyers on bright colored paper such as lime green or orange will help draw people's attention. If your campus allows it, you might also consider using sidewalk chalk to write notices of upcoming meetings or events in high-traffic areas on campus.

At this first meeting, start by introducing students to the concept of Students for Academic Freedom. Explain that we are trying to promote intellectual diversity in higher education and to stop violations of academic freedom including the silencing unpopular views. Make sure to mention that we are a non-partisan organization and oppose classroom indoctrination from both the left and the right. Hand out copies of our materials including the little red handbooks and the Academic Bill of Rights.

Ask each student to briefly introduce themselves and to describe any violations of academic freedom that they have personally experienced. Begin a discussion of how to combat specific abuses and ask students to document their experiences in the classroom by filling out a complaint form using the paper or online form. Share with the group the range of projects that SAF suggests and discuss how to bring about the adoption of the Student Bill of Rights by your student legislature, faculty senate, campus administration and/or state legislature.

Before the meeting ends, decide on a regular meeting time and try to develop at least a tentative plan for action for the coming semester.

F. Creating An Email List

Once you have several members, it's a good idea to create a group email list-serve. Most schools offer a way to do this, or you can set up such a group at no cost through Yahoo. This will facilitate the process of sending out emails about meetings times and will also enable you to chat about the abuses of academic freedom you experience in class on a day-to-day basis. Please also email the national office with the names and addresses of your club members plus club offices (if any) so that we can add them to our national SAF mailing list.

G. Chapter Continuity

It is the nature of a college community never to be static. Students graduate every four years and move on to other challenges. Many will take semesters off or spend a year traveling abroad. This constant upheaval makes it very difficult for student organizations, especially those without strong historical traditions, to survive beyond the college careers of their founders.

There are a number of practical steps you can take to give your new SAF chapter a life beyond your time at school. The first and

most important step is to appoint or elect your most dependable and enthusiastic members to offices within the organization. We don't have a set list of offices that we ask you to fill, but let common sense prevail to see what is needed. Possible offices include a president or chairman, vice-president, a secretary, a treasurer, a coalitions director, a media liaison, and an activities coordinator. In addition, many campuses require that each student organization file bylaws with the student government or student activities office as a prerequisite to recognition. They should not be lengthy or elaborate, and sample bylaws have been included in the appendix to this manual.

Once you have filled these offices and adopted simple bylaws, delegate responsibility for some SAF tasks to these students. It's important that they learn to feel comfortable making decisions so that they will be able to lead the organization after you graduate. Encourage your officers to suggest ideas and a course of action, and make sure that they understand how much work is necessary to keep the organization running. If your school has particular bureaucratic hurdles to overcome (for example, reserving classrooms or getting a permit for a protest) make sure that your officers know how to handle these situations.

Another way to help ensure chapter continuity is to occasionally hold social events outside of club meetings. If club members get to know one another and become friendly outside of the context of SAF, their friendships will help to hold the organization together. These gatherings don't have to be formal or expensive. Invite everyone to meet for dinner in a university dining hall or host a movie night (consider showing an SAF-related movie such as PCU). You can also contact local social/business/political groups such as the Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, Lion's Club, Republican Women's Club, etc, and ask if your group can attend a luncheon. Let the community know you are there.

Seek out the help of faculty and alumni in forming an Advisory Board for your club (see Section I below). This is probably the

most important step in seeing that there will be continuity for your efforts to ensure that the principles of academic freedom prevail at your school.

Make sure to keep the National Office informed about who your officers are—we'll want to see that they get our email updates and want them to feel comfortable contacting our office directly with any questions or issues.

H. Funding

Once you register your club with your school, you should be able to apply for funding from your university. Remember that SAF is a non-partisan club and insist on funding parity with other student organizations.

Even if it takes a while to get funding from your university (sometimes up to a year) there are many SAF-related projects that you can accomplish at minimal cost. For example, organize a debate between two professors on campus to illustrate the point that intellectual diversity contributes to a good discussion of issues. Or initiate a postering or flyering campaign on campus related to a specific abuse of academic freedom. These activities and many others will be covered in chapter IV of this handbook.

I. Forming an Advisory Board

Once you have found a faculty advisor and have established your club, try to expand your circle a bit further and seek out other faculty members, alumni, or school regents who can serve as an advisory board for your club. These advisors can assist you both intellectually and financially, and can help you decide which projects are best to undertake. If you become engaged in a conflict with your campus administration, this board can also be an invaluable source of support.

J. Creating a Website

A website is a fantastic resource for reaching out to your university community and for disseminating information about the situation on your campus. Students for Academic Freedom is pleased to be able to offer you space within our site to create a website for your club. Contact Sara Dogan in the national office and we will assist you in creating an individual website for your school at www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org/NAMEOFYOURSCHOOL.

Alternatively, you can create your own website from scratch and link it to us at www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org. We can also include a link to your chapter's site along with your contact info, directing traffic there. Many schools provide free web space for student organizations or you can sign up for a free website at Yahoo's Geocities or other sites.

K. Contact With The National Office

It's very important to stay in touch with the national office, even if it means just sending us a quick email every two weeks to keep us updated on your progress. Our success rests on our ability to make connections among students, alumni, faculty, and legislators, and thus it's important for us to keep track of the particular issues of contention on your campus and what is being done about them. If you change your email address, phone number, or mailing address, please contact us with your new information.

A coordinator from SAF will be in touch at least once a month to inquire how things are going and see where we can offer assistance. Please feel free to call the National Office at any time if you have any questions or issues that you feel should be brought to our attention. We're always glad to hear suggestions for improving our organization and website.

Please also notify us if you introduce the Student Bill of Rights as a resolution of your student government or if you succeed in pass-

ing it. This is a major accomplishment and deserves recognition. We will keep a tally of all schools that pass the Student Bill of Rights on our website, and can help you draft appropriate press releases to publicize this important accomplishment.

Finally, please make sure to send us copies of the complaint forms that you collect from your chapter members or other students at your school. You can use the online submission form at www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org, or you can email them to Sara Dogan at Sara@studentsforacademicfreedom.org or fax them to 202-408-0632. It's essential that we have this data on hand to combat critics who claim that the Student Bill of Rights is unnecessary.

L. Materials

SAF is happy to provide copies of all of its booklets and materials to you free of charge. Please just contact Sara Dogan in the National Office at 202-969-2467 or at Sara@studentsforacademicfreedom.org and we can send a shipment right out to you.

Chapter II: Overview of Mission and Strategy

A. Mission Statement:

Students for Academic Freedom is a national coalition of independent campus groups dedicated to restoring academic freedom and educational values to America's institutions of higher learning.

Students for Academic Freedom is exclusively dedicated to the following goals:

- To promote intellectual diversity on campus.
- To defend the right of students to be treated with respect by faculty and administrators, regardless of their political or religious beliefs.
- To promote fairness, civility and inclusion in student affairs.
- To secure the adoption of the Academic Bill of Rights as official university policy, and the Student Bill of Rights as a resolution in student governments.

For a thorough treatment of our mission, please see the red Students for Academic Freedom booklet, pages 4-12.

B. The Student Bill of Rights

The first three principles (listed above) on which Students for Academic Freedom is based can only be guaranteed if they are adopted as official university policy and if the university community is made aware of them. Our mission must therefore include a fourth tenet—that we work to have these principles included in university codes and adopted by student governments.

The Student Bill of Rights is a codified substantiation of these rights which should be guaranteed to all students. You can read this document either in the appendix to this handbook or on our website at www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org.

The Student Bill of Rights codifies the principles of free speech and free inquiry in academia that were introduced by the American Association of University Professors many decades ago. In many instances however, the rights have not been spelled out by the AAUP, particularly as regards student rights, and their enforcement has been lax or non-existent. The Student Bill of Rights is an effort to rectify these omissions.

Many universities already have policies designed to protect the academic freedom rights of professors. This has been used as an argument for why the Student Bill of Rights is not needed at a particular school. We have closely examined the existing protections at various schools and have found this objection to be baseless. Existing school policies cover the academic freedom rights of professors, since they are based on the definition of academic freedom as defined by the American Association of University Professors, but they rarely mention let alone guarantee similar rights to students.

Secondly, we have found that one of the best ways to start a discussion about the need for greater intellectual diversity and academic freedom on campus is to introduce the Student Bill of Rights as a resolution in student governments.

C. Adopting The Student Bill of Rights

We recommend that all our student groups propose the Student Bill of Rights as a policy for student governments to adopt, as a step towards its adoption by university administrations.

While your student government decisions may not have binding legal authority, passing a resolution still serves a very important purpose. When a student body passes the Student Bill of Rights, it serves as notification to the campus administration that students are insisting that the University protect their academic freedom. Administrators will be forced to confront their failure to guarantee free speech and free thought on campus, and this will open the

pathway for the eventual adoption or incorporation of the Academic Bill of Rights into official university policy. For more information about meeting with administrators, please see Chapter IV, section 2, letter E.

We urge you to be forthright from the beginning that you took the text for your resolution from the SAF website. Some of our SAF leaders have been accused of plagiarism by their student governments for failing to attribute material to our organization. These charges are ridiculous, but they can cause delays in the adoption of the resolution. We encourage you to use the exact wording of the Student Bill of Rights in proposing your resolution. But be open about the source of your resolution and direct any inquiries to our website. It is unfortunate that you must take such precautions, but it is better to face your political adversaries openly than to be stuck defending yourself from false accusations.

When you bring this resolution before your student government, be sure to demand that the Student Bill of Rights be included in your course catalogue and on your university website and otherwise distributed throughout your campus. If students are unaware of their rights, they cannot demand that they be respected.

For more information on pursuing the adoption of the Student Bill of Rights, please see Chapter IV, section 2, letter C.

Chapter III: Abuses of Academic Freedom

What Is An Abuse of Academic Freedom?

If you've read this far, you're probably already convinced that the intrusion of politics into the classroom is a problem on most college campuses. Students for Academic Freedom supports the free speech rights of professors and believes that faculty members should be able to determine the content of their courses. These rights, however, do not provide a license to use the classroom as a political soapbox, or provide an excuse for a professor to ridicule or otherwise demean particular religious or cultural views a student may hold. Nor do they supersede professors' obligations to uphold professional educational standards. These include fairness to all students. They include the responsibility to make students aware of the spectrum of scholarly viewpoints on any given subject. They include the responsibility to counsel students and to encourage their intellectual development. Treating students as political adversaries is counter-productive to this task. These professional standards are recognized by the American Association of University Professors and have been since 1915.

In 1915, the American Association of University Professors issued its first report on Academic Freedom and Tenure. The premise of this report was that human knowledge is a never-ending pursuit of the truth; that there is no humanly accessible truth that is not in principle open to challenge; and that no party or intellectual faction can be assumed to have a monopoly on wisdom. Therefore, learning is most likely to thrive in an environment of intellectual diversity that protects and fosters independence of thought and speech.

A second report, issued by the AAUP in 1940 declared: Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, *but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject.* (emphasis added)

In other words, political lectures, however brief, that have no relation to the subject matter of a course are violations of students' academic rights.

In a 1970 clarification and re-endorsement of this principle, the AAUP said: The intent of this statement is not to discourage what is 'controversial.' Controversy is at the heart of the free academic inquiry, which the entire statement is designed to foster. *The passage serves to underscore the need for teachers to avoid persistently intruding material which has no relation to their subject.* (emphasis added)

According to the AAUP's professional guidelines, professors have an obligation to present their students with a diverse range of scholarly opinions on the subjects that they teach and should not deviate from their lesson plan to bring up controversial matters that have no bearing on the subjects. Violations of this professional conduct code include:

a. Assigning required readings or texts covering only one side of controversial issues

(e.g., texts that are only pro- or anti-affirmative action)

b. Introducing controversial material that has no relation to the subject of the course (ex: making remarks on political issues in a math or science class; lecturing on the war in a class that is not about the war or about international relations)

c. Compelling students to express a certain point of view in assignments

(e.g., at a college in Colorado a professor assigned students in a mid-term evaluation to explain why George W. Bush is a war criminal.)

d. Mocking national political or religious figures in a one-sided manner (e.g., singling out only liberals for ridicule, or only conservatives)

e. Conducting political activities in class

(e.g., recruiting students to attend political demonstrations or providing extra credit for political activism-type assignments)

f. Grading a students' political or religious beliefs

(e.g., grading a student more leniently when they agree with the professor's viewpoint on matters of opinion)

If you witness one or more of these abuses in the classroom, document the incident in as much detail as possible. Write down the date, class and name of the professor, the context in which the abuse took place, and if possible include exact quotes from the professor. Simply scribble these down on your class notes—you can transcribe them to an official complaint form later. Take a look around you to see which other students were present to hear the remarks and write down their names as possible witnesses (see Chapter IV, section 1 on filling out bias complaint forms). It is a good idea to run these complaints by your faculty advisor before making them public. These are matters of judgment and we don't want to infringe the academic freedom of professors by making complaints that are unjustified.

It's generally a good idea not to immediately go to your professor when you hear one remark that you believe is out-of-line. In addition to checking with your faculty advisor, accumulate a list of incidents or quotes, write these up along with the dates when they occurred, and then confront your professor with the full list of inappropriate comments. If you feel that the situation has not been resolved, take the list to head of the department or to the Dean of Students or the President of the college (See Chapter IV, section 2, letter E on meeting with administrators). Please make sure to notify the National Office about your experiences and to forward us a copy of any complaint forms or lists.

B. Other Forms of Abuse on Campus:

While political indoctrination in the classroom is perhaps the most

easily recognizable form of viewpoint discrimination on campus, many other forms of unprofessional conduct can exist. Below is a list of abuses of academic freedom which are prevalent on college campuses. As with inappropriate behavior in the classroom, make an effort to document and publicize these abuses wherever you find them.

C. Using University Funds to Hold One-sided Partisan Teach-ins or Conferences

Whenever you hear about a conference or event to be held on campus, take a few minutes to look over the itinerary. Are the speakers all members of the same political party or do they adhere to the same narrow perspective? For example, if the conference is on environmental issues, do all the panelists believe global warming will cause a worldwide catastrophe or do some take a more skeptical view?

Pay special attention to conferences held by university departments or sponsored by the university or faculty as a whole. Student organizations do not have an obligation to represent the full range of scholarly viewpoints on a given topic, but your University does.

If you discover that a one-sided conference is being held on your campus, gather together all the facts about the event and put together a press release to distribute to campus and local media (see Chapter V, section C on how to write a press release). If the conference has not already taken place, have a member of your chapter attend and take notes or tape-record the event if possible. Use the material you collect to prove that the conference excluded significant scholarly viewpoints on the topic it purported to address.

D. Inviting Speakers to Campus from One Side of the Political Spectrum

Another common source of viewpoint discrimination on college campuses lies in the choice of individual speakers invited to campus by the university or by university-funded activities programs. Campus commencement speakers are one easy-to-research example of this phenomenon. Make a list of the commencement speakers from the last 10 or 20 years (this should be easy to find by contacting the appropriate university office) and categorize the speakers by their political affiliations where appropriate (many speakers are scientists and public servants who are not overtly political). If you find that only a small minority of the speakers belong to one political persuasion, you have a strong case that bias is evident in the selection process.

Similarly, you can make a list of other prominent speakers invited to campus and funded by the University. Many of these individuals can command honorariums of \$5,000, \$10,000 or more. Dollar-for-dollar, is the university spending a disparate amount on speakers from one political or ideological persuasion?

E. Student Organization Registration and Funding Issues

Public colleges are legally bound not to discriminate politically in funding student groups. Many private colleges also have rules against such discrimination. Despite these guarantees, many student organizations representing minority viewpoints continue to have difficulties getting registered and obtaining funding for their chapters. Some schools force student organizations to adopt bizarre non-discrimination clauses that would force, for example, the Christian club to allow non-Christians to serve as leaders in the organization. Others simply (and illegally) do not provide equal funding for supplies or speakers to groups with certain political viewpoints. Recently, administrators at Roger Williams University froze the funding of a conservative campus newspaper because they found the viewpoints expressed to be offensive.

If you suspect that this is the case at your college, you can ask to view the student activities budget for your school, which is a matter of public record. Document any discrepancies and issue a press release or publish an article announcing your findings.

F. Freedom of Speech—or Not?

Students' free speech rights are protected by the First Amendment at all public universities and many private universities have specific policies dealing with students' free speech rights. Nevertheless, many colleges and universities maintain unconstitutional speech codes or use seldom-enforced bureaucratic regulations to silence viewpoints which they find offensive .

A case-in-point occurred in the fall of 2003 when several universities including Southern Methodist, the University of Washington, and the University of California-Irvine shut down student-run Affirmative Action Bake Sales (a form of protest against racial preference policies) claiming that the sales violated an anti-discrimination code or were offensive to minorities. This censorship violates the Constitutional free speech rights of students and the provisions of the Student Bill of Rights, and is contrary to the atmosphere of free inquiry and learning that should thrive on college campuses.

Even if your university can come up with a regulation to justify censoring a certain type of speech, this is no guarantee that censorship is not at work. If the university cancels a protest over its offensive or discriminatory content, see if you can dig up examples of similar events that were allowed to proceed—especially university-sanctioned events that presented politically-correct views. If the university issues your group a warning for chalking slogans on campus walkways, find out whether other groups were forced to abide by university rules. If a regulation isn't enforced equally, then the university has no business enforcing it at all.

Chapter IV: Taking Action to Fight Academic Freedom Abuses on Campus

Once you've begun to recognize the different kinds of abuse on your campus, the next step is to take this information and use it to your advantage to improve the atmosphere of academic freedom at your institution. This section is designed to help you document incidents of abuse for public consumption, and use them as evidence to get your school to acknowledge that students' academic freedoms are not adequately protected. Once this lack of protection has been established, you can make a strong case that your university should adopt the Student Bill of Rights, and that your state legislature should consider a bill based on this document.

Section 1: Collecting Complaints

A. The Complaint Form

As our campaign for academic freedom develops, we have come to realize that the most important asset in this battle for student rights are stories of abusive behavior that students document. If we fail to document such incidents, opponents of the Student Bill of Rights will maintain that no violations exist and that the Bill is unnecessary.

To facilitate this process, SAF has created a complaint form (available in the appendix to this handbook and also in an online version on our website at www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org). The form has spaces for students to fill out the name of the professor in question, the title of the class, etc, and then lists several common categories of classroom abuse (for more on these categories, see Chapter III, section A). Pass out these forms to fellow students at study sessions, or set up a table in a public venue on campus and ask students to fill out the surveys. If students want to report positive experiences in the classroom, that's fine as well. You can also include the complaint form on the back of flyers about SAF with information on how to file complaints.

If you wish, you can create your own version of the complaint form asking specific questions about the hot-button topics on campus. For example, Did your professor make a politically-biased comment in class about the war in Iraq? Was this a class where such comments would be academically appropriate? Were his comments respectful of those with differing views or did you feel that you would be penalized for disagreeing? What specifically made you uncomfortable?

Remind students that they have the option of reporting the complaint anonymously. They may omit any identifying information that they wish, although the more specific the complaint, the more useful it will be as evidence.

B. Distributing Complaint Forms on Campus

Your first target audience for distribution of complaint forms should be the students in your SAF chapter and in other campus clubs that deal with political issues such as the College Republicans or College Democrats. Pay a visit to the meetings of these clubs (if you are not already a member) and distribute complaint forms. Ask students to fill them out before they leave, or it is likely that they will forget to return them to you. Wherever possible, suggest that students use the online complaint form at www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org. There is a box on the form that students can check off so that a copy of the form will be sent back to the students submitting the complaint. Please also fax or email any other complaint forms that you receive to our office.

If there is a mailing list available for these clubs, send out a brief, focused email introducing SAF and explaining that your chapter is investigating abuses of academic freedom in an attempt to make the classroom fair for all students. The most important part of this email is explaining the different forms that classroom abuse can take, as students won't always recognize it for what it is. This is especially true when it happens once or more per day, every day,

for years. Emphasize that respondents can talk about the violations of academic freedom suffered by anyone—themselves, friends, people in classes, or even stories or tips they have (including which professors are notoriously partisan).

C. Types of Classroom Abuses

Classroom abuses include, but are not limited to:

Partisan comments, presentations or materials unrelated to the subject of the class. Personal opinions on religion, politics, and other sensitive topics should be prefaced by the disclaimer that the views are the professor's own, and disagreement in any form will be both encouraged and respected.

Reading lists, class lectures, or coverage of issues that do not make students aware of the existence of intellectually significant dissenting views, even if only one such view is presented.

Abusive or disrespectful treatment of dissenting student comments. The professor should never treat students rudely, ignore them, or refuse to call on them because of their opinions.

Politicized grading and class assessments. Students should not fear that their grades will be lowered if they disagree with the professor on a matter of political or religious opinion.

Also see Chapter III, Section A.

D. Collecting Complaints by Phone

An email soliciting stories of academic abuse may not elicit a sufficient response. A more reliable but also more time-consuming method is to call the students on the email list, both to ask them whether they got the email, and whether it sparked any memory of abuse witnessed personally or by others.

The biggest hurdle to the email approach is persuading busy people to sit down (even for five minutes) to type out a coherent narrative of the incident. By calling students directly, you are much more likely to get results. Most students are extremely busy, and while they would resist spending five minutes on typing a story, they'll happily spend five minutes talking with a canvasser about problems they've had.

Even better, the phone canvas can be done in association with any number of clerical chores—anything from updating a club member list to publicizing an upcoming event. Since you've got them on the phone for the clerical task, take another few minutes to accomplish something even more crucial. In situations where SAF is borrowing another group's contact list, offering to update the group's database is a good way of returning the favor. Don't forget to remind students on the call that you want to keep hearing from them about any new problems, and offer easily remembered contact information for that contingency.

You will of course get better with time at soliciting and recording abuse incidents through this interview process. But from the very start, we recommend following the complaint form (included in the appendix and also available at the SAF website). If you commonly hear of types of abuse that are not mentioned on the form, please send this feedback to the Washington office. Remember that when recording an incident, it is always better to have too much detail than not enough. Basic questions would include:

What was the incident?

What was the background or context of the incident?

What campus regulation was broken by the incident?

What did the student initially do about the incident?

If the student complained to the professor, what was the resolution?

If the student complained to the administration, what was the resolution?

E. Focusing On Specific Professors and Departments

As you complete this process, you may begin to get a sense of which professors are particularly partisan in their teaching. If you know that a student is taking a class with one of these professors, make sure to ask whether they have encountered abusive actions in the classroom. Some departments are known for their ideological and partisan leanings. These include Cultural Studies, American Studies, English Literature, Women's Studies, African-American (or Black) Studies, Chicano/Latino/Hispanic Studies, Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender Studies, American-Indian Studies, and Asian-American Studies. Fertile ground is also found in the Political Science, Sociology and History departments, although to a lesser degree than the departments mentioned above.

If you have received numerous complaints about a particular professor, consider sitting in on their class for a session or two. Bring a hand-held tape recorder if possible and take notes about the context and situation of classroom interactions. Notes are essential for understanding later what you are hearing on the tapes, or recording comments or dialogue probably not picked up by the tape recorder. If possible, recruit a student who is taking the class for credit to help you.

F. Tabling with Complaint Forms

Once you have collected complaint forms from students in specific clubs, it's time to reach out to a broader campus audience. Set up a table in a public location on campus, and distribute complaint forms to students who pass by. This effort will also serve to introduce the student body to SAF and can help you recruit more members. (For more ideas about tabling, please see Chapter V, section 1 of this handbook.) You can also print up double-sided flyers with copies of the complaint form on one side and a flyer advertising SAF on the other. Make sure to include information about where students can return the forms. Please make sure to forward copies of all complaints to Sara Dogan in the Washington office.

Section 2: Other Methods of Documenting and Combating Abuses

A. Producing a Booklet of Abuses or a Course Guide for Students

Once you've amassed a sizeable number of complaint forms, consider reproducing these accounts in a readable booklet or manuscript that you can pass out to students and administrators or post on your website. It's easy to ignore individual accounts of abuse in the classroom, but much harder to dismiss multiple accounts, especially when they concern the same department or faculty member. A booklet like this will also be a valuable resource when it comes time to meet with administrators or legislators.

A variation on this idea is to produce a Course Guide for students that lists the courses you suggest that they take and that they avoid based on the professor's tendency to adhere to the principles of academic freedom, specifically to teach and not to indoctrinate. One advantage of this strategy is that it helps you to deflect the criticism that your chapter's mission is entirely negative in scope. You can use your course guide to applaud professors who show fairness to all students regardless of their political views, while warning the student body about those who fail to do so. Abuses of academic freedom can come from both ends of the political spectrum.

B. Hosting Speakers and Debates:

Another positive method of defending academic freedom on campus is to host speakers through your SAF chapter whose views ordinarily wouldn't be heard on campus. If you feel that conservative perspectives are absent from the dialogue at your university, invite a conservative speaker to give a lecture. Or if you feel that liberal speakers are rarely heard, invite someone from that political persuasion. Where possible, find speakers to speak specifically on the topic of academic freedom.

SAF unfortunately cannot provide funds to host campus speakers, but you should be able to apply for funding from your university. If they refuse to fund your speaker of choice, issue a press release noting the other speakers that the university has funded and questioning why they have refused your request to increase the scope of intellectual diversity on campus.

Consider hosting a debate on a particular topic featuring lecturers from several different perspectives. Try to get clubs other than SAF to co-sponsor this event with you. Debates are always a great draw for crowds, since students who support both positions will turn out, as well as students who are undecided and are interested in the topic.

Don't think that an event must necessarily feature a prestigious speaker to be successful (though of course it doesn't hurt). Chances are, you won't have the resources, financial or otherwise, to host more than one or two big-name speakers each term. Sit down with your SAF members and make a list of topics on which you would like to hear presentations, or which you feel would make for good debates. Then consider which faculty members or other local citizens would be able to speak on those topics. These individuals will usually be willing to speak at no charge, and a debate between two contentious faculty members on an interesting topic is sure to be a good draw.

C. Passing the Student Bill of Rights in Your Student Government

The importance of having your student government pass the Student Bill of Rights (SBOR) should be readily apparent. While passing the SBOR in your student government may be a symbolic act (since it will probably lack an enforcement mechanism with official university backing), symbolic acts in this campaign are very important. Passage of the SBOR notifies the administration of your school that students are concerned about their right to academic freedom and that the SBOR is the preferred form of student rights that the students' representatives wish it to take.

Your administration has the power to make the specific changes to the student and faculty codes or adopt the SBOR in full if it so chooses, and it cannot afford to ignore student opinion. Passage of the SBOR thus builds momentum behind this drive for student rights.

Due to the varied structures of student governments across the country, which range from UCLA's 13-member council to the more common (and massive) 50-person or more senates found at many schools, this tutorial on passing the SBOR will by necessity be somewhat unspecific. What follows are general guidelines that are important regardless of the particular structure of your student legislature.

As a general advisory, your attempt to have the SBOR passed at your school should be the culmination of multiple projects, rather than the first project, of your SAF chapter. The initial steps before trying to pass the SBOR should include many of the projects mentioned in this guide, especially the collection of complaint forms and the identification and documentation of school-wide abuses of academic freedom. In short, have all your ammunition ready to go before starting the project—because proof will be the first thing opponents in student government will ask for. Scrambling to collect documentation and proof of a problem only after you are challenged is unwise and self-defeating. Only when you have amassed the evidence, should you begin the process described below.

First, you must know your school. If you don't know the structure, rules, and procedure for your school's student government, now is the time to learn it yourself, or learn from someone who does. A good start is reading your student government's constitution and bylaws. Learning the ins and outs of your student government is a very valuable investment of several hours, because the tricks you learn, the inside information and insight you gain, will be useful over and over again.

Having learned the basic structure and functions of your student government, the next step is to figure out how a document like the SBOR would be passed by your student government. At some schools, this is done through a resolution, at others it is put forward in a formal bill. You will usually need at least one sponsor for bringing a bill or resolution forward for the vote.

The search for a sponsor for the bill or resolution should actually be part of a larger effort that your club members have already made to reach out to and convince all students—and especially student government representatives—that there is a problem on the campus, and that the SBOR is the solution—or at least a major step toward a solution. Club members talking to student government figures—and only the most experienced, most motivated members should engage in this important task—should be able to determine by feedback in personal meetings which officers are most likely to support a resolution or bill to pass the SBOR. These face-to-face meetings, which will likely be necessary at most schools, should also be an ideal way of determining the odds of passing the SBOR—who is friendly, who is neutral, and who is opposed. This is why simply saying find a friendly student government officer is completely inadequate. If you have done your homework and put in the necessary time, the obvious sponsors for the bill or resolution should already be obvious.

The push for SBOR on your campus may fall to you, the SAF leader, by default. In many if not most cases, there are very few students competent enough to lead a major legislative drive on their campuses without being blocked by any number of obstacles. That said, if you are fortunate enough to have an SAF chapter with multiple motivated students, the leadership of the campaign, at least with the media and face-to-face negotiations, should fall to the student who is the most unknown quantity—a sharp student who cannot simply be dismissed as a political minority or a pushy activist.

Opponents of the SBOR will attempt to make the issue about who is proposing the bill, rather than the substance of the bill. In short, attacks on the bill are likely to be strictly *ad hominem*. Since this is almost guaranteed to happen, you must not give them any more ammunition than you absolutely must. Forming coalitions with other student groups will help this. Choosing a personable advocate is advisable, someone who can get along with people he or she disagrees with. Try to choose a student who can serve as both a deal-maker and a consensus-builder. The SBOR should be given a chance to sell itself—and that is why having the chairman of the College Republicans or the College Democrats leading the campaign is much less preferable than a fresh face not already associated with partisan, and perhaps divisive, politics.

The selling of the SBOR occurs both before and during the student government session in which it is being considered. Remember at all times that hard-core opposition will rarely be swayed by even the best arguments—but appeals to fairness, academic freedom, and other important values will go a long way in convincing the fence-sitters that the SBOR is necessary. Of course, the more shocking and convincing your documentation of professor and administrative abuses at your school, the greater your chances of convincing fair-minded student government officers of the necessity of the SBOR.

On the other hand, your best shot at gaining supporters for the Bill is to know the problem, be able to document and illustrate it in normal conversation, and to argue effectively that the SBOR is the appropriate solution. That is why reading this guide—all of it—and keeping up on the latest developments in the SAF campaign are absolutely essential to your chances of success.

At or around the same time that you are putting forward your big push for student government and student body support of the SBOR, it will be helpful to have an incident which illustrates the need for this legislation. Sometimes, an incident is thrust upon a group, as in cases where a big scandal erupts over a particular

instance of censorship on campus, but it is likely that you may need to plan the release of a report or story to serve as an incident for this purpose. The best report you can release is a comprehensive collection of complaints about abuses of academic freedom.

An equally important step is to recruit non-partisan groups and groups from a wide political spectrum to support your efforts. This will provide valuable armor against the ad hominem attacks of opponents. That is why a coalition—led by your SAF chapter—is so valuable. The more input and support you gain from these groups, the better, but even if you get no more than a verbal or written endorsement from the group, you are already better off. When SAF, the College Republicans, College Democrats, College Libertarians, and other politically-minded clubs all come together in support of a single bill, the effect is far greater than if SAF is pushing the SBOR's passage by itself. Aside from evidence-gathering, coalition-building with student groups and government officers is the most important step you can take to push the SBOR through your student government.

D. Comparing the Academic Bill of Rights to Your School's Current Protections

In the multi-step process of trying to have the Student Bill of Rights passed by your student government, it is helpful to compare existing policies at your school to the protections afforded by the Bill. Having made these comparisons at many schools, we are confident that you will find the existing protections—if any—sorely inadequate. Such comparisons will make a strong case for the adoption of the Student Bill of Rights.

Your analysis will primarily draw on two documents from your school—your Faculty Handbook (or similarly named document that lays out, among other policies, academic freedom), and your school's Student Conduct Code (or again, a similarly named document that lays out student rights and responsibilities).

Use a text search for keywords describing the provision in question. For example, the first point of the ABOR deals with employer non-discrimination. Out of all the provisions, this is the one most often covered—since it is federal law that employers can't discriminate. However, note the exact language of your school's code versus that of the ABOR. More often than not, you'll find that the ABOR is broader in the protection it affords. For example, your school is unlikely to offer employment protection on the basis of political beliefs.

E. Meeting With University Administrators And Trustees

You shouldn't underestimate the power and influence that you can have as a student pushing for change with university administrators and trustees. The first and perhaps most important thing to remember is that you have no reason to be intimidated by the administrative bureaucracy. The university exists to provide you with a quality education—something that you, the paying customer, are often not getting.

Educate yourself, and get prepared. First, find out who you should talk to. If you are looking to address a classroom abuse, you should probably start with the department chair. But don't be afraid to move to the very top of the administrative ladder if you aren't seeing any progress in a relatively short amount of time. If you are looking to address inequities in the funding of campus speakers, or revise the student handbook or university-wide policy to incorporate the Student Bill of Rights, you should probably start with the Dean of Student Affairs or the Dean of Academic Affairs, but also be prepared to move swiftly to the top of the food chain—the university president or chancellor.

University presidents are basically fund-raisers. They do not want their income flow to be disturbed by embarrassing incidents on their campus, like the exclusion of certain books from the curriculum, or professors using their classrooms as political soapboxes. There is enormous power in this knowledge. Use it.

Before you meet with an administrator, however, you need to do your homework. Find out what existing policies are in place or which mechanisms exist at your school to report instances of abuse. Check student handbooks, on the college website, or ask your student affairs office for a copy of the official school policy. Compare it with the principles in the Student Bill of Rights so you can intelligently describe what needs to be changed. Get a list of recent student government expenditures for the past couple of years so you can point to the inequities in funding between political groups or campus speakers, obtain reading lists from courses or departments, compile student complaint forms that document specific behaviors or statements by a professor in class, etc. to help you make your case. Vague generalities about abuses are hard for administrators to respond to. The more specific you are the more likely you are to get a positive result.

Build coalitions. As with student governments, it is much easier for a university president or administrator to brush aside the concerns of a single student, or even a single student group like SAF. It is far more difficult for them to ignore a coalition of student groups who are united in their concern. Imagine the different response you would get if you could go to your university chancellor with the head of the College Republicans, the College Democrats, the campus ACLU group, the campus Jewish group, and the campus Christian groups to demand that the Student Bill of Rights be adopted as school policy. Sure, this requires significant advance work to get the leaders of other campus groups on board beforehand, but the payoff will be worth it. Remember that university administrators often see their job in political terms—they want to keep as many constituencies happy as possible, with the least amount of opposition. If you can make it appear to the university administration that the changes you want made are reasonable, and that it would make the vast majority of students and student groups happy, it will be much easier to get their support.

Adopt a collaborative approach. You may be initially inclined to see your interactions with college administrators as adversarial. Although there will often be times when you have to pick a fight with the university administration, getting the university president or college dean to meet with you to discuss your concerns about abuses of academic freedom or regarding the adoption of the Student Bill of Rights should not be one of them. You should always try to frame the issue in terms of how it will benefit all students and improve the quality of education overall.

Utilize pressure points. If your university president or college dean refuses to make time to meet with you, or if after multiple meetings it seems as though he or she is just offering lip-service to addressing your concerns, consider applying more explicit leverage to the problem by using university trustees, the media, and, in the case of state schools, elected officials who are sympathetic to your cause.

First, find out who your university trustees and development committee members are. If you are at a public school, research which state legislators sit on your state's education committee. Once you have compiled these lists, seek out allies from these organizations in the campaign for the Academic Bill of Rights. If the administration refuses to take immediate action on a complaint or continually throws up roadblocks when you ask them to discuss adopting the Academic Bill of Rights, rely on these individuals and their influence to motivate immediate action.

Likewise, if your state is host to non-profit organizations or think tanks that are sympathetic to your concerns about academia, make sure to notify them every time a complaint is not quickly resolved. They can issue their own press releases and publish articles on your behalf.

F. Meeting with legislators and testifying before legislative committees

Chapter V: Getting Publicity

A. Papering your Campus

It sounds deceptively easy, but one of the best ways to make your presence as an SAF chapter known on campus is to paper the campus with 8.5x11 paper flyers. This strategy takes a little leg-work (literally) but it's also an inexpensive and effective way to broadcast your message.

When designing and placing your flyers, make them as conspicuous as possible. Try using bright colors, bold fonts, and catchy logos. We have several sample posters in the appendix that you are encouraged to modify to fit your own campus, or you can be creative and design your own.

These flyers can serve many different purposes. If you're just getting started, you can use flyers to announce the creation of an SAF chapter on campus and to publicize meeting times. Or you can post flyers in response to a particular incident on campus. These flyers can also double as complaint forms if you put the complaint form on the back.

It is best to post flyers on a regular basis, at least once a week, as old flyers are often torn down or covered by other announcements. There's no reason why this should take you a long time—one person can probably cover your campus in less than an hour. Or encourage your club members to bring flyers with them on their normal classroom routes and stop for a moment to tack them up on the way. Unless your campus is very strict about where you can hang flyers, try to place them in locations where they are sure to be noticed—in dining halls, classroom buildings, dormitories, even inside restrooms if you can get away with it.

B. Tabling on Campus

Tabling on campus is also a great way to announce the creation of

your SAF chapter and to draw attention to particular initiatives. Campuses have different rules and regulations, and you may need to register your chapter with your school before you are allowed to table.

The materials that you will need to table on campus are very simple. First, you'll need to have a fold-up or portable table, which many schools provide. You should also bring an assortment of SAF materials (which our National Office can provide free of charge), pens and paper for writing down students' contact information (it's best if you create a sign-up form in advance with columns for name, phone number, and email addresses, or use the one in the appendix to this handbook), and flyers that students can take advertising the time of your next meeting or the particular event you are promoting.

When deciding where to set up your table, pick an area of campus with the most foot-traffic. Outside a busy classroom building or a dining hall or inside the campuses' student center or quadrangle are good bets. Student stores are always busy traffic areas.

Create a large banner or sign on poster board to draw attention to your table. These don't have to be professionally done—the important thing is that they attract interest. Another trick of the trade is to provide an incentive in the form of candy for stopping by your table. This doesn't have to be expensive—a small bowl of Hershey's kisses or hard candy will do it. Students will be drawn to your table for the candy and you can use this opportunity to discuss SAF with them.

While tabling can be done to recruit students and to announce meeting times, it can also be part of much more extensive SAF projects and campaigns. For instance, you can table to collect signatures of students who support the Student Bill of Rights, or to pass out leaflets condemning a particular abuse of academic freedom on your campus. Another good idea is to conduct a survey asking students whether they feel that their professors generally

hold the same political views as them and whether they feel comfortable speaking out in class. Tabulate the results and submit them as an article to your campus newspaper. Tabling can also be a means to getting students to fill out SAF's academic freedom violations complaint forms to report abuses on their campus (for more about complaint forms see Chapter IV, section 1).

The most important thing is to appear friendly and approachable. Tabling provides an opportunity to reach students who are ordinarily outside your circle of associations. Don't squander this opportunity by being unfriendly to those who disagree with your point of view. Instead, welcome them to engage in a civil discussion of the issues with you. Such exchanges will help prepare you to answer questions and respond to criticism in the future and will likely draw other interested bystanders into the conversation.

Tabling Advice:

The best time for tabling is the first and second weeks of school between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., Monday through Friday, at student club fairs, during registration and orientation, and during fraternity/sorority rush weeks. If you wait too long into the semester, students are often too busy with other student organizations, midterms, and are less likely to be willing to get involved.

Position your table in the stream of heavy traffic so that people have no choice but to run into it. Depending on the weather or your campus policies, often the best location is outside in the center of the quad, or out in front of the main student union. If you have sufficient manpower, consider setting up multiple recruitment tables on different sides of the campus on the same day to cover more territory, each staffed by a couple of SAF representatives.

Get rid of any chairs around your table! Chairs encourage people to sit, and SAF recruitment table workers should remain standing—ideally out in front of the table to intercept students as they walk by.

Membership forms, sign-up sheets, petitions and pens should be located at the front of the table, where they can be easily reached by students signing up. Have extra forms handy so you can sign up multiple students at once. Place *small* stacks of literature and recruitment paraphernalia on the table, but keep bulk quantities in boxes placed beneath. Position literature and signs neatly. Dress neatly but casually, in keeping with campus standards.

Running the Table:

Actively Solicit! This is the key to the success of the table operation. The people working the table must get out and actively solicit people. There are several rules that should be followed to do it right:

Pick out the prospect. Maintain eye contact and smile as he or she approaches the table, and **physically block his path.**

Ask him to join Students for Academic Freedom. Gain his attention—look him in the eyes, and be sure to smile. Offer an SAF recruitment flyer or brochure and introduce yourself. Hi, I'm Sammy Student. Would you like to join the Students for Academic Freedom? This forces him to make a decision.

If asked, "What is Students for Academic Freedom?" Keep your answer short, and be ready to recite it enthusiastically at a moment's notice:

Students for Academic Freedom is a nation-wide coalition of students who are committed to academic freedom and intellectual diversity. Many of us feel like our classes and professors are too one-sided in presenting the issues, and some students even feel like they are singled out because of their religious or political beliefs—and we want that to change. Why don't you sign up for our e-mail list right now, and plan on coming to our first meeting on Thursday to get more information about our club?

Do not waste time by arguing with a single individual who opposes SAF. You will sign up large numbers only in proportion to the number of people you ask. If you spend five minutes arguing with a particular student, fifty others will walk by. The purpose of the table is not to change people's minds. Your goal is to identify and recruit students who are willing to get involved and help you do SAF activities.

Lead your new recruit to the membership table and have the student sign up by filling out the membership form. Make sure they completely fill out their name, phone number, e-mail address, and full school mailing address, including their dorm room.

Remind the student about your first meeting and get a commitment from him or her to be there. Give your new recruit a flyer advertising your first meeting at this time, and ask him directly if he will be there. Ask if he is interested in serving as an officer or fulfilling specific needs of the club.

Ask those recruits who are most enthusiastic to stay and help you at the table signing up new members. Pay special attention to those who stay and help. They are your top prospects for your leadership team!

C. How to Write a Press Release

Writing a press release about any major events with your club sounds so obvious it's hardly worth mentioning. But surprisingly few student groups actually take care of this very important step. Putting out a press release vastly increases the chance that local and even national news outlets will pick up your story and establishes you as an active, professional group to be reckoned with. Think of it this way: you hold a protest, news conference, or event in order to get noticed and make a difference. Without a press release summarizing your achievements for the broader media, much of this effort is wasted.

As with any form of writing, the specifics of writing a press release are not set in stone, but there are a few conventions that you should follow. For further clarification on these details, please see the sample press release provided in the appendix.

1. Begin your press release with the words “FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE.” This notation should be used if the release is to be read and evaluated for further work immediately.

2. Contact Info: State the contact person’s name, position, email address, and phone number. This information should always be at top of your press release, right-justified. Make sure that the person who is listed here feels comfortable speaking with the media.

3. Headline: An eye-catching headline is as important as anything else about your press release. If it doesn’t state your case in that first line or two, you will be ignored at larger publications and puts you onto the backburner even at smaller ones. The headline should sum up the essential issue (you’re protesting something, you’ve released a report) as well as putting an element of outrage and controversy into it. The people assigned to skim press releases are likely to give a college dust-up a fair shake, since people are always interested in this topic.

4. Dateline: Make sure you list the date when your press release was issued. This is especially important in situations where a lot of news is being released quickly. Reporters will want to know how dated your information is or whether you precede or follow information from other sources.

5. Opening paragraph: Just like high school English composition class, your first sentence must be your topic sentence. Make it interesting, and get directly to the point, hopefully in no more than two sentences. You are trying to answer the question: What happened that deserves notice from the press? It is usually fatal to try publicizing an event more than two weeks past, although updates to a developing story are always an excellent idea. Don’t be afraid

to send out three or four press releases over the span of a particularly long story—although exercising prudence in the likelihood of a story to develop further in a day or two can sometimes make for a particularly noteworthy release.

6. Quotes: Make sure to include quotes from members of your group commenting on the situation. You'd be surprised at how often canned quotes like these make it into articles so be sure to keep them short and eloquent.

7. End-sign: The news business has a little practice of ending a press release with the mark -30- (without the quote marks) as an indication of an ended press release. Only in very rare occasions does a press release run to a second page, and since you're not the President of the United States of America, just don't do it.

Now, look back over your release—does it fully and accurately explain the situation? You want to state your case strongly, but you should also be careful not to exaggerate or stretch the truth about your claims. Remember, the release is supposed to get reporters assigned to a story, so that they'll call *you*. It should give a taste of the facts/controversy—enough for the assignment desk to decide whether or not to put a reporter on it—but no more. That said, the press release should fully explain what is happening and why it is newsworthy—just don't overload it.

D. Who Should Receive Your Press Release?

Even before you have an event to publicize, you should draw up a media list of individuals and organizations to send your press releases to. You won't want to waste time on this when you've got a story brewing or an event to announce. This list will be partly dependent on your own personal contacts but when forming your list you should keep in mind the categories listed below:

University Personnel: Your school president, dean of student affairs, SAF faculty advisor, other faculty members who support SAF.

Student Government: Keeping your student government informed of your activities and findings is very important as you try to push the Student Bill of Rights through your student government.

Campus Newspaper Editors: Make sure to put the editor-in-chief and other top newspaper staff on your list so that your activities get written up on campus.

State and Local Newspapers: Call your state and local newspapers and ask for the names and contact information of reporters and editors who cover higher education. If you have time, call up these folks to introduce yourself and let them know that you expect to be generating stories on campus.

Local Radio Stations: Call the office phone number for your local talk radio stations and find out where you can send press releases, and whose name to put on them.

Outside Organizations: This includes Students for Academic Freedom and other organizations which you feel will be likely to support your efforts. Some suggestions include the Foundation for Individual Rights in Higher Education (FIRE), Young Americas Foundation, and the Leadership Institute.

National Newspapers and Reporters: Of course it's a long shot that you'll find yourself in the New York Times or sitting across from Bill O'Reilly, but it's always worth a shot. Track down the contact information for assistants and editors who handle education issues and send out your press release to their attention.

State Legislators and Politicians: If you're already in touch with these folks, you should definitely put any state legislators or other politicians in your state who support SAF on your list. If not, you can still track down email addresses for some of your state reps (these may be available on your state government website) and add them to the list.

SAF Members: Make sure that your fellow SAF members get all your releases. It's important to keep them informed, even if they don't attend every meeting.

E. Getting Published:

Your campus newspaper is another great source of free publicity on campus. Many college papers are desperate for content to fill their pages, and will gladly accept an article you write about Students for Academic Freedom. If your campus paper is hesitant to publish full-length submissions about SAF, write a letter-to-the-editor instead, demanding that they give you a chance to make your case. You can also write opinion pieces for smaller issues-oriented campus publications.

There's no need to wait until you have a big story to try and get an article published. Many of our chapters have submitted opinion pieces simply announcing that SAF has arrived on campus and underscoring the importance of intellectual diversity in higher education and promoting the Student Bill of Rights. Think of this sort of article as free ad space. It will take you a little effort to write and submit a piece, but the payoff in publicity will be worth it.

By the same token, if a big issue has developed on your campus and the local media is ignoring your press releases, try submitting a letter-to-the-editor of your local newspaper. It may be that the paper has no one to assign to your story, but is still interested in publishing your take on the situation.

F. Local Radio:

Appearing as a guest on your local talk radio station is probably easier than you think. Unlike television hosts that have only 45 minutes or an hour to fill, many radio shows stretch for three hours or more. As was mentioned in the section on press releases, it's not difficult to find out the names and contact info of your

local talk radio hosts so that you can send them press releases to increase your chances of being able to appear on a show.

Appearing on a local radio program is also great practice for eventually being interviewed by more prominent hosts, or for further public speaking. Start by trying to find hosts who you think will support SAF, and once you feel comfortable speaking on the air, graduate to shows with a wider audience where you may be asked more difficult questions. For advice and talking points, please contact Sara Dogan in the National Office.

Conclusion:

This handbook is designed to guide you in setting up your Students for Academic Freedom chapter and to suggest the ways in which you can promote academic freedom on campus. While we've tried to be thorough in suggesting strategies for your campus campaign, every college campus is different and we urge you to be innovative in discovering what methods of detecting academic freedom violations and generating support for the Academic and Student Bills of Rights will work at your particular school.

Students for Academic Freedom is a student movement and our strategy must constantly be evolving in response to the demands of the moment and to the success or failure of past endeavors. If you find that our suggestions aren't bringing about the expected results, or you've discovered new strategies that appear to work better, please contact our office to share your findings. We are always open to new suggestions and are eager to listen to your innovations.

As students, you have access to the inner workings of your campus and the accompanying resources in a way that SAF's full-time coordinators can never achieve. Take advantage of this unique position and use it to your full potential.

Students for Academic Freedom has the potential to transform higher education in America and enrich the educational opportunities for all students. But its ultimate success depends on you.

Best Regards,
Sara Dogan
National Campus Director
Students for Academic Freedom

Appendix

Appendix A: Academic Bill of Rights

I. The Mission of the University.

The central purposes of a University are the pursuit of truth, the discovery of new knowledge through scholarship and research, the study and reasoned criticism of intellectual and cultural traditions, the teaching and general development of students to help them become creative individuals and productive citizens of a pluralistic democracy, and the transmission of knowledge and learning to a society at large. Free inquiry and free speech within the academic community are indispensable to the achievement of these goals. The freedom to teach and to learn depend upon the creation of appropriate conditions and opportunities on the campus as a whole as well as in the classrooms and lecture halls. These purposes reflect the values—pluralism, diversity, opportunity, critical intelligence, openness and fairness—that are the cornerstones of American society.

II. Academic Freedom

1. The Concept . Academic freedom and intellectual diversity are values indispensable to the American university. From its first formulation in the *General Report of the Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure* of the American Association of University Professors, the concept of academic freedom has been premised on the idea that human knowledge is a never-ending pursuit of the truth, that there is no humanly accessible truth that is not in principle open to challenge, and that no party or intellectual faction has a monopoly on wisdom. Therefore, academic freedom is most likely to thrive in an environment of intellectual diversity that protects and fosters independence of thought and speech. In the words of the *General Report*, it is vital to protect as the first condition of progress, [a] complete

and unlimited freedom to *pursue* inquiry and publish its results. Because free inquiry and its fruits are crucial to the democratic enterprise itself, academic freedom is a national value as well. In a historic 1967 decision (*Keyishian v. Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York*) the Supreme Court of the United States overturned a New York State loyalty provision for teachers with these words: Our Nation is deeply committed to safeguarding academic freedom, [a] transcendent value to all of us and not merely to the teachers concerned. In *Sweezy v. New Hampshire*, (1957) the Court observed that the essentiality of freedom in the community of American universities [was] almost self-evident.

2. The Practice . Academic freedom consists in protecting the intellectual independence of professors, researchers and students in the pursuit of knowledge and the expression of ideas from interference by legislators or authorities within the institution itself. This means that no political, ideological or religious orthodoxy will be imposed on professors and researchers through the hiring or tenure or termination process, or through any other administrative means by the academic institution. Nor shall legislatures impose any such orthodoxy through their control of the university budget.

This protection includes students. From the first statement on academic freedom, it has been recognized that intellectual independence means the protection of students—as well as faculty—from the imposition of any orthodoxy of a political, religious or ideological nature. The 1915 *General Report* admonished faculty to avoid taking unfair advantage of the student's immaturity by indoctrinating him with the teacher's own opinions before the student has had an opportunity fairly to examine other opinions upon the matters in question, and before he has sufficient knowledge and ripeness of judgment to be entitled to form any definitive opinion of his own. In 1967, the AAUP's *Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students* reinforced and amplified this injunction by affirming the inseparability of the freedom to teach and freedom to learn. In the words of the report, Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course

of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion.

Therefore, to secure the intellectual independence of faculty and students and to protect the principle of intellectual diversity, the following principles and procedures shall be observed.

These principles fully apply only to public universities and to private universities that present themselves as bound by the canons of academic freedom. Private institutions choosing to restrict academic freedom on the basis of creed have an obligation to be as explicit as is possible about the scope and nature of these restrictions.

■ All faculty shall be hired, fired, promoted and granted tenure on the basis of their competence and appropriate knowledge in the field of their expertise and, in the humanities, the social sciences, and the arts, with a view toward fostering a plurality of methodologies and perspectives. No faculty shall be hired or fired or denied promotion or tenure on the basis of his or her political or religious beliefs.

■ No faculty member will be excluded from tenure, search and hiring committees on the basis of their political or religious beliefs.

■ Students will be graded solely on the basis of their reasoned answers and appropriate knowledge of the subjects and disciplines they study, not on the basis of their political or religious beliefs.

■ Curricula and reading lists in the humanities and social sciences should reflect the uncertainty and unsettled character of all human knowledge in these areas by providing students with dissenting sources and viewpoints where appropriate. While teachers are and should be free to pursue their own findings and perspectives in presenting their views, they should consider and make their students aware of other viewpoints. Academic disciplines should welcome a diversity of approaches to unsettled questions.

- Exposing students to the spectrum of significant scholarly viewpoints on the subjects examined in their courses is a major responsibility of faculty. Faculty will not use their courses for the purpose of political, ideological, religious or anti-religious indoctrination.
- Selection of speakers, allocation of funds for speakers programs and other student activities will observe the principles of academic freedom and promote intellectual pluralism.
- An environment conducive to the civil exchange of ideas being an essential component of a free university, the obstruction of invited campus speakers, destruction of campus literature or other effort to obstruct this exchange will not be tolerated.
- Knowledge advances when individual scholars are left free to reach their own conclusions about which methods, facts, and theories have been validated by research. Academic institutions and professional societies formed to advance knowledge within an area of research, maintain the integrity of the research process, and organize the professional lives of related researchers serve as indispensable venues within which scholars circulate research findings and debate their interpretation. To perform these functions adequately, academic institutions and professional societies should maintain a posture of organizational neutrality with respect to the substantive disagreements that divide researchers on questions within, or outside, their fields of inquiry.

Op. cit., p. 50

Appendix B: Student Bill of Rights

The Student Bill of Rights

I. The Mission of the University.

The central purposes of a University are the pursuit of truth, the discovery of new knowledge through scholarship and research,

the study and reasoned criticism of intellectual and cultural traditions, the teaching and general development of students to help them become creative individuals and productive citizens of a pluralistic democracy, and the transmission of knowledge and learning to a society at large. Free inquiry and free speech within the academic community are indispensable to the achievement of these goals. The freedom to teach and to learn depend upon the creation of appropriate conditions and opportunities on the campus as a whole as well as in the classrooms and lecture halls. These purposes reflect the values—pluralism, diversity, opportunity, critical intelligence, openness and fairness—that are the cornerstones of American society.

II. Academic Freedom

1. The Concept. Academic freedom and intellectual diversity are values indispensable to the American university. From its first formulation in the General Report of the Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure of the American Association of University Professors, the concept of academic freedom has been premised on the idea that human knowledge is a never-ending pursuit of the truth, that there is no humanly accessible truth that is not in principle open to challenge, and that no party or intellectual faction has a monopoly on wisdom. Therefore, academic freedom is most likely to thrive in an environment of intellectual diversity that protects and fosters independence of thought and speech. In the words of the General Report, it is vital to protect as the first condition of progress, [a] complete and unlimited freedom to pursue inquiry and publish its results.

Because free inquiry and its fruits are crucial to the democratic enterprise itself, academic freedom is a national value as well. In a historic 1967 decision (*Keyishian v. Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York*) the Supreme Court of the United States overturned a New York State loyalty provision for teachers with these words: Our Nation is deeply committed to safeguarding academic freedom, [a] transcendent value to all of us and not merely to the teachers concerned. In *Sweezy v. New Hampshire*, (1957) the Court

observed that the essentiality of freedom in the community of American universities [was] almost self-evident.

2. The Practice. Academic freedom consists in protecting the intellectual independence of professors, researchers and students in the pursuit of knowledge and the expression of ideas from interference by legislators or authorities within the institution itself. This means that no political, ideological or religious orthodoxy will be imposed on professors, researchers and students through the hiring or tenure or termination process, or through the grading system or through the control of the classroom or any other administrative means. Nor shall legislatures impose any such orthodoxy through their control of the university budget.

From its very first statement on academic freedom, the university community has recognized the vulnerability of students in particular to political and ideological abuses of the university as an institution. The 1915 General Report admonished faculty to avoid taking unfair advantage of the student's immaturity by indoctrinating him with the teacher's own opinions before the student has had an opportunity fairly to examine other opinions upon the matters in question, and before he has sufficient knowledge and ripeness of judgment to be entitled to form any definitive opinion of his own.

In The 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, the American Association of University Professors declared: Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject. In a 1970 clarification and re-endorsement of this principle, the AAUP said: The intent of this statement is not to discourage what is 'controversial.' Controversy is at the heart of the free academic inquiry, which the entire statement is designed to foster. The passage serves to underscore the need for teachers to avoid persistently intruding material which has no relation to their subject. (1970 Interpretative Comments, endorsed by the 56th annual association meeting as association policy.)

In 1967, the AAUP's Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students affirmed the inseparability of the freedom to teach and freedom to learn. In the words of the report, Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion.

Professors are hired to teach all students, not just students who share their political, religious and philosophical beliefs. It is essential therefore, that professors and lecturers not force their opinions about philosophy, politics and other contestable issues on students in the classroom and in all academic environments. This is a cardinal principle of academic freedom laid down by the American Association of University Professors.

In an academic environment professors are in a unique position of authority vis- -vis their students. The use of academic incentives and disincentives to advance a partisan or sectarian view creates an environment of indoctrination which is unprofessional and contrary to the educational mission. It is a violation of students' academic freedom. The creation of closed, political fiefdoms in colleges, programs or departments, is the opposite of academic freedom, and does not deserve public subsidy or private educational support.

Therefore, to ensure the integrity of the educational process and to protect the principle of intellectual diversity, the following principles and procedures shall be observed. These principles fully apply only to public universities and to private universities that present themselves as bound by the canons of academic freedom. Private institutions choosing to restrict academic freedom on the basis of creed have an obligation to be as explicit as is possible about the scope and nature of these restrictions.

1. Students will be graded solely on the basis of their reasoned answers and appropriate knowledge of the subjects and disciplines they study, not on the basis of their political or religious beliefs.
2. Curricula and reading lists in the humanities and social sciences should reflect the uncertainty and unsettled character of all human

knowledge in these areas by providing students with dissenting sources and viewpoints where appropriate. While teachers are and should be free to pursue their own findings and perspectives in presenting their views, they should consider and make their students aware of other viewpoints. Academic disciplines should welcome a diversity of approaches to unsettled questions.

3. Exposing students to the spectrum of significant scholarly viewpoints on the subjects examined in their courses is a major responsibility of faculty. Faculty will not use their courses for the purpose of political, ideological, religious or anti-religious indoctrination.

4. Selection of speakers, allocation of funds for speakers programs and other student activities will observe the principles of academic freedom and promote intellectual pluralism.

5. An environment conducive to the civil exchange of ideas being an essential component of a free university, the obstruction of invited campus speakers, destruction of campus literature or other effort to obstruct this exchange will not be tolerated.

6. Knowledge advances when individual scholars are left free to reach their own conclusions about which methods, facts, and theories have been validated by research. Academic institutions and professional societies formed to advance knowledge within an area of research, maintain the integrity of the research process, and organize the professional lives of related researchers serve as indispensable venues within which scholars circulate research findings and debate their interpretation. To perform these functions adequately, academic institutions and professional societies should maintain a posture of organizational neutrality with respect to the substantive disagreements that divide researchers on questions within, or outside, their fields of inquiry.

Appendix C

**Students for Academic Freedom
Chapter Registration Form**

School: _____ Date: _____
Name: _____ Dorm Phone: _____
Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____
Expected Graduation Date: _____

School Address: _____ Home Address: _____

How did you hear about Students for Academic Freedom?

Why do you think a club is needed on your campus?

What types of projects are you interested in undertaking? (circle all that apply)

- a. Interviewing students about their experiences of partisanship in the classroom
- b. Examining course syllabi and textbooks for political agendas
- c. Passing the Student Bill of Rights in your student government
- d. Researching past commencement speakers on your campus
- e. Compiling a student guide to faculty and courses
- f. Examining the student activities budget for inequities
- g. Hosting speakers and debates on campus
- h. Other: _____

Thank you for registering as a Students for Academic Freedom Chapter. To submit this form, please contact the National Campus Director Sara Dogan at 202-969-2467 or at Sara@studentsforacademicfreedom.org of fax it to 202-408-0632.

Appendix D

Students for Academic Freedom
Academic Freedom Violations Complaint Form

Name: _____ Date: _____
Phone number: _____ Email : _____
Class: _____ Professor: _____
Subject: _____ College: _____

Please keep this complaint anonymous _____ You can post this under my name _____

Nature of Complaint: a. Required readings or texts covering only one side of issues
b. Gratuitously singled out political or religious beliefs for ridicule
c. Introduced controversial material that has no relation to the subject
d. Forced students to express a certain point of view in assignments
e. Mocked national political or religious figures
f. Conducted political activities in class (ex: recruiting for demonstrations)
g. Allowed students political or religious beliefs to influence grading
h. Used university funds to hold one-sided partisan teach-ins or conferences
h. Other: _____

Description of Complaint: (please be as detailed as possible, including quotes from your professor where applicable): _____

Action Taken: _____

Response from Professor or Administrator (If Any): _____

To report complaints to the National Office, please contact Sara Russo at 202-969-2467 or at Sara@studentsforacademicfreedom.org or fax form to 202-408-0632.

Appendix E: Sample Chapter Bylaws

Article I. Name and Affiliation

SECTION 1. The name of this organization shall be the [University Name] Students for Academic Freedom, hereinafter referred to as SAF.

SECTION 2. The [University Name] Students for Academic Freedom (SAF) shall be a recognized campus affiliate of the national Students for Academic Freedom organization.

Article II. Purpose

SECTION 1. To promote intellectual diversity on campus.

SECTION 2. To defend the right of students to be treated with respect by faculty and administrators, regardless of their political or religious beliefs.

SECTION 3. To promote fairness, civility and inclusion in student affairs.

SECTION 4. To secure the adoption or incorporation and enforcement of the Academic Bill of Rights as official university policy, and the Student Bill of Rights as a resolution of student government.

Article III. Officers

SECTION 1. The officers comprising the Executive Board of SAF shall be President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

SECTION 2. All officers shall be elected annually at a regular SAF meeting, to be announced not less than two weeks in advance.

SECTION 3. Officers shall be elected by a majority of those present and voting.

SECTION 4. Vacancies occurring among the officers shall be filled by the election of the Executive Board at the first meeting following the occurrence of the vacancy. A person elected to a fill a vacancy shall serve as officer until the next annual election.

Article IV. Membership, Faculty Advisor and Advisory Board

SECTION 1. Any person affiliated or associated with the [University Name] community may apply for membership, including but not limited to undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, staff, and community members. Membership application information may be obtained from the Secretary or the President.

SECTION 2. The Executive Board is authorized to approve the selection of a SAF Faculty Advisor, in accordance with university policy.

SECTION 3. The Executive Board is authorized to organize a SAF Advisory Board made up of faculty, university administrators, and/or community members for the purpose of supporting and assisting SAF in fulfilling its goals and objectives.

Article V. Parliamentary Authority

SECTION 1. The parliamentary rules contained in the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall govern SAF in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws.

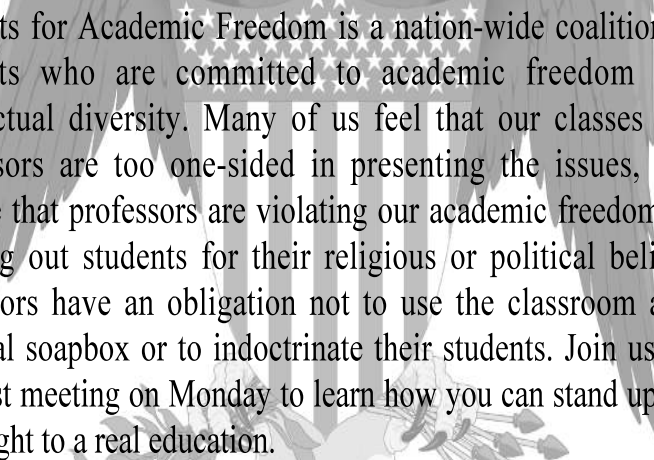
Is Your Professor Using The Classroom As A Political Soapbox?

Join Students for Academic Freedom

First Meeting: Monday, January 19

Time: 6pm

Location: College Hall, Room 101



Students for Academic Freedom is a nation-wide coalition of students who are committed to academic freedom and intellectual diversity. Many of us feel that our classes and professors are too one-sided in presenting the issues, and believe that professors are violating our academic freedom by singling out students for their religious or political beliefs. Educators have an obligation not to use the classroom as a political soapbox or to indoctrinate their students. Join us for our first meeting on Monday to learn how you can stand up for your right to a real education.

**You can't get a good education if they're
only telling you half the story**

For more information, visit www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org
or contact Sammy Student at name@school.edu.

GOT SAF?

STUDENTS FOR ACADEMIC FREEDOM



Are you being treated unfairly by faculty and staff because of your political or religious beliefs?

- WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE ON YOUR CAMPUS?
- WANT TO DEFEND STUDENTS RIGHTS?
- WANT TO PROMOTE FAIRNESS, CIVILITY, AND INCLUSION IN STUDENT AFFAIRS?

*Join SAF today! Make a difference! Speak your mind!
Only you can make a change!*

Visit

www.studentsforacademicfreedom.org,
sign up today by visiting the SAF table at
the MSU or contact Adriana Jawel at
anairda25@msn.com

Appendix G

Students for Academic Freedom



Sign-up to learn more today!

Name:

Year:

Phone:

Email:

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for students to provide their contact information.

Appendix H

Contact: Gabriel White
Hass Senator, ASUSU
Phone (435) 512-7889
1357 N. 400 E. #7C
Logan, UT 84341

**For Immediate
Release**

Press Release

Associated Students of Utah State University Executive Council passes the Academic Bill of Rights

In a vote of 9-5, with one member abstaining, ASUSU takes a historic step towards preserving academic freedom

Logan, UT, Tuesday, November 11, 2003: The Associated Students of Utah State University Executive Council voted 9 to 5 with one abstention to approve a resolution entitled The Academic Bill of Rights . According to Gabriel White, Senator for the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences and the sponsor of the legislation, Academic freedom is something that we have always valued here at Utah State University. It is important that we as students stand up to the bias on campus. The resolution has as its goal to support intellectual diversity on USU Campus. Some of the provisions of the legislation include:

- Faculty will not use their courses for the purpose of political, ideological, religious or non-religious indoctrination.
- Selection of speakers, allocation of funds for speakers programs and other student activities will observe the principles of academic freedom and promote intellectual pluralism.
- Curricula and reading lists in the humanities and social sciences should reflect the uncertainty and unsettled character of all human knowledge in these areas by providing students with dissenting sources and viewpoints where appropriate, and that instructors should consider and make their students aware of other viewpoints.
- Institutions who profess academic freedom should eschew ideological, political, or religious litmus tests in grading, or during hiring, firing, or tenure decision processes, and legislators should avoid such impositions through their control of the university budget.

For Release 9 a.m. EDT, September 23, 1998

Is your Professor Using the Classroom as a Political Soapbox? This Is a Violation of Your Academic Rights.

The use of classrooms for political indoctrination is a violation of students' academic freedom.

*The 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure** declares: "Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject." (This clause was reaffirmed in 1970.)

If you are not taking a course whose subject is the war in Iraq, your professor should not be making statements about the war in class. Or about George Bush, if the class is not on contemporary American presidents, presidential administrations or some similar subject.

We do not expect our doctors to impose their political opinions on us when we go to them for treatment. We should likewise not be assaulted by the political prejudices of professors when we pay them for an education.

If your professor is abusing his or her teaching privilege or is confused about the professional obligations of an educator please contact us.

Students for Academic Freedom • Contact information: Sara Dogan (202) 969-2467

WWW.STUDENTSFORACADEMICFREEDOM.ORG

*An official statement of the American Association Of UniversityProfessors.

