

K.S.R. College of Engineering
(Autonomous Institution)
Tiruchengode – 637 215



Institutional Policy

**Vol. XV: Academic Freedom
and Academic Rights
Policy Manual**

Academic Freedom and Academic Rights Policy Document

The Academic Freedom and Academic Rights document is prepared to make all faculty and students working/studying at K.S.R College of Engineering aware of rules and regulations of the institute. The policy is effective from July, 2013. It is expected that faculty and students strictly adhere to the rules and regulations spelled out in this document. The Management reserves the right to change/modify the policy as and when necessary and apply their discretion in specific cases.

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**K.S.R. College of Engineering,
Tiruchengode – 637 215.
(An Autonomous Institution)**

A. VISION AND MISSION OF THE INSTITUTION

Vision:

We envision to achieve status as an excellent Educational Institution in the global knowledge hub, making self-learners, experts, ethical and responsible engineers, technologists, scientists, managers, administrators and entrepreneurs who will significantly contribute to research and environment friendly sustainable growth of the nation and the world.

Mission:

IM 1: To inculcate in the students self-learning abilities that enable them to become competitive and considerate engineers, technologists, scientists, managers, administrators and entrepreneurs by diligently imparting the best of education, nurturing environmental and social needs.

IM 2: To foster and maintain mutually beneficial partnership with global industries and Institutions through knowledge sharing, collaborative research and innovation.



**K.S.R. COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING (AUTONOMOUS)
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**Part – 1 ACADEMIC FREEDOM POLICY AND ACADEMIC RIGHTS POLICY
MANUAL**

B. Objective:

Academic freedom is vital to the Institution's goal. Knowledge cannot advance unless academics, students, and librarians are free to research and disseminate ideas and facts without fear of repercussions.

As a teaching, learning, and research institution, the institution is dedicated to the ideal of free speech and idea development in an environment of mutual respect for the common good. The unfettered pursuit and free presentation of truth are essential to the common welfare..

C. Scope:

Higher education institutions should make a commitment to pursuing knowledge and truth, imparting intellectual talents, and producing academic works that are reputable and legitimate. The promotion of these goals requires academic freedom. Improve the reputation of the Institution as an academic research institution and a member of society by supporting and encouraging novel research activities which lead to provide noble intellectual assets to the Institution.

D. Segregation of Duties by Responsible Authority:

Position	Responsibility
HODs	Ensure faculty members have full freedom of research and instruction, subject to adequate fulfilment of other academic duties
Research Coordinators	Assure faculty members the freedom to engage in research, scholarship, or other creative work in order to expand knowledge, to publish or produce research findings, subject to responsible performance of these and other academic duties.
Faculty	Make every effort to create an environment in which



	intellectual diversity is valued and students have the assurance that they will not be penalized for expressing opinions or beliefs that differ from others' views and learn in an atmosphere of unfettered free inquiry and exposition.
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E. Policy:

Academic freedom is the ability to teach, learn, and pursue knowledge and research without unwarranted interference or legal limits. This right extends to academic institutions, instructors, and students alike. It offers protection to people and institutions engaged in academic research and education.

Institutional academic freedom is the capacity of an institution to determine its own educational objectives free from intervention from the state or other parties.

F. Rights of Students:

- The rights of student to academic freedom, however, carry with them duties and responsibilities. Teachers should do everything in their power to foster an environment in the classroom where students are free to express their opinions and beliefs in a way that differs from everyone else's, where intellectual diversity is respected, and where learning occurs in an atmosphere of unrestricted free inquiry and exposition.

G. Rights of Teacher in Classroom:

The right of a teacher to teach their curriculum without excessive interference from administrators of the institution is often referred to as academic freedom.

As long as other academic obligations are met to a sufficient degree, the instructor will have complete autonomy over their lessons.

Free academic inquiry and teaching are often characterized by controversy. It is appropriate to integrate faculty member's knowledge and ideas into the curriculum,



but this freedom of instruction must be accompanied by a persistent attempt to make the distinction between knowledge and conviction.

Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matters or topics irrelevant to the content of the course, which has no relationship to their subject.

H. Faculty as Citizen:

The Institution faculty member is a citizen, a member of a learned profession, and an officer of an educational institution.

- When faculty write or speak as citizens, they should avoid appearing to speak for the Institution.
- When the faculty member speaks or writes as a citizen, he or she should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but the faculty member's special position in the community imposes special obligations.

Academics ought to understand that holding a professional position in the community entails certain responsibilities, such as accuracy, appropriate restraint, and respect for the freedom of others to voice their opinions.

A faculty member should be aware that, in their capacity as educators and learners, the public may draw conclusions about their profession and institution based only on their statements. Therefore, the faculty member should always speak with accuracy, use appropriate restraint, respect others' viewpoints, and do all in their power to make it clear that they are not speaking on behalf of the university.



I. Right to Research:

Academic freedom is the freedom to engage in research, scholarship, or other creative work in order to expand knowledge, to publish or produce research findings, subject to responsible performance of these and other academic duties.

It includes the freedom to do out research and make defensible judgments. It does not shield researchers from criticism of their findings and assertions, but it does safeguard their ability to select methodology, reach conclusions, and articulate the significance of their research.

Academic freedom applies to every facet of a researcher's professional behaviour, and it comes with responsibility. Accuracy and honesty must be a priority in addition to this freedom.

J. Intellectual Debate:

In addition, academic freedom is the ability for educators and learners to disagree intellectually without worrying about reprisals or censorship.

L. GU Policy and Procedure: Academic freedom includes the freedom to express views on matters having to do with the Institution and its policies, and on issues of public interest generally.

M. Procedure:

Academic Freedom Impairment- Cases involving alleged violations of academic freedom should be referred to the College/School Dean and/or Head of Department and handled in accordance with its established procedure.

Victimized Student- Students who believe they have been penalized for their expressed thoughts or beliefs have the ability to file a formal written complaint



through the Complaint Process. The complaint will be investigated, and it will be determined whether disciplinary action is warranted. If students are still dissatisfied with the investigation's findings, they can file a written appeal with the Dean of Academic Affairs.

Part – 2 Academic Rights

1. THE RIGHT TO PURSUE PEDAGOGICAL METHODOLOGY

The right to pursue pedagogical methodology is an important aspect of academic freedom for faculty members. This right entails the freedom to choose and implement teaching methods, strategies, and approaches that align with their expertise, the needs of their students, and the learning objectives of their courses. Here are some key points regarding this right:

- **Pedagogical Autonomy:** Faculty members should have the autonomy to select pedagogical methods that they believe will be most effective in facilitating student learning. This may include traditional lecture formats, active learning strategies, group discussions, hands-on activities, flipped classrooms, and other innovative approaches.
- **Experimentation and Innovation:** Academic freedom allows faculty members to experiment with new teaching techniques and incorporate innovative pedagogical practices into their courses. This experimentation fosters creativity, stimulates intellectual curiosity, and enhances the overall quality of education.
- **Adaptation to Student Needs:** Faculty members should have the flexibility to adapt their teaching methods to meet the diverse needs, backgrounds, and learning styles of their students. This may involve providing additional support for struggling students, challenging advanced learners, or accommodating different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
- **Integration of Technology:** Academic freedom includes the freedom to integrate technology into teaching and learning activities as appropriate. This may involve using educational software, multimedia resources, online platforms, and other digital tools to enhance engagement, collaboration, and interaction in the classroom.



- **Reflective Practice and Professional Development:** Faculty members should engage in reflective practice and ongoing professional development to continuously improve their teaching skills and pedagogical approaches. This may involve attending workshops, conferences, and seminars on teaching and learning, participating in peer observation and feedback, and staying informed about current trends and research in education.
- **Alignment with Institutional Mission and Values:** While faculty members have the freedom to pursue their preferred pedagogical methodologies, it is essential that these approaches align with the mission, goals, and values of the academic institution. This ensures coherence and consistency in the delivery of education and promotes the overall academic integrity of the institution.
- **Assessment and Evaluation:** Faculty members should be responsible for assessing student learning outcomes and evaluating the effectiveness of their pedagogical methods. This may involve collecting feedback from students, analyzing student performance data, and making adjustments to instructional practices as needed to optimize learning outcomes.

2. THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE THE COURSES OF DELIVERY OR STUDY

The right to choose the courses of delivery or study encompasses both faculty and student autonomy in determining how courses are delivered and which courses students choose to study. Here's a breakdown of this right from both perspectives:

N. Faculty Perspective:

- **Course Design and Delivery Autonomy:** Faculty members should have the freedom to design courses and determine how they are delivered, whether through traditional in-person lectures, online platforms, hybrid models, or other innovative methods.
- **Selection of Teaching Materials:** Faculty should have the autonomy to choose appropriate teaching materials, including textbooks, articles, multimedia resources, and instructional tools, to support their course objectives and meet the needs of their students.
- **Pedagogical Approaches:** Faculty members should have the flexibility to employ various pedagogical approaches and methodologies that they believe



will be most effective in facilitating student learning, such as lectures, discussions, group activities, hands-on experiences, or experiential learning.

O. Student Perspective:

- **Course Selection:** Students should have the freedom to choose which courses they wish to study based on their academic interests, career goals, and degree requirements. This includes selecting elective courses, specialization tracks, or interdisciplinary studies that align with their personal and professional aspirations.
- **Flexible Delivery Options:** Students should have access to a variety of course delivery options, including in-person classes, online courses, blended learning formats, and evening or weekend classes, to accommodate their individual schedules, preferences, and learning needs.
- **Advising and Support:** Academic institutions should provide students with adequate advising and support services to help them make informed decisions about their course selections, navigate degree requirements, and plan their academic pathways effectively.

3. THE RIGHT TO DISAGREE WITH ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

The right to disagree with administrative policies and proposals is a crucial aspect of academic freedom for both faculty and students within higher education institutions. Here's a breakdown of this right:

P. Faculty Perspective:

- **Freedom of Expression:** Faculty members should have the right to express their disagreement with administrative policies and proposals without fear of retaliation or censorship. This includes voicing dissenting opinions in faculty meetings, committees, and other decision-making forums.
- **Shared Governance:** Academic institutions should uphold principles of shared governance, where faculty members play a significant role in shaping



institutional policies and decision-making processes. This involves consulting with faculty representatives and considering their input when formulating and implementing administrative policies.

- **Professional Autonomy:** Faculty should have the autonomy to exercise their professional judgment and expertise in matters related to teaching, research, and academic governance. This includes the freedom to challenge administrative decisions that may infringe upon academic standards, integrity, or values.
- **Academic Freedom:** The right to disagree with administrative policies is inherent to academic freedom, which protects the pursuit of knowledge, the free exchange of ideas, and the open debate of controversial issues within the academic community.

Q. Student Perspective:

- **Freedom of Speech:** Students should have the right to express their dissenting views on administrative policies and proposals through peaceful protests, petitions, and other forms of activism. This includes engaging in constructive dialogue with administrators, faculty, and fellow students to advocate for changes or revisions to existing policies.
- **Representation:** Academic institutions should provide students with opportunities for meaningful representation in decision-making processes that affect their rights, interests, and well-being. This may involve student government, advisory committees, or other avenues for student involvement in institutional governance.
- **Protection from Retaliation:** Students should be protected from retaliation or disciplinary action for exercising their right to disagree with administrative policies in a respectful and responsible manner. Academic institutions should have mechanisms in place to address grievances and ensure due process for students who raise concerns about administrative decisions.
- **Educational Engagement:** Disagreement with administrative policies can serve as a valuable learning opportunity for students, fostering critical thinking, civic engagement, and active citizenship. Academic institutions should encourage students to participate in discussions about institutional governance and policy-making processes.



4. THE RIGHT TO DETERMINE THE MODE OF COURSE DELIVERY AND ASSESSMENT

The right to determine the mode of course delivery and assessment is a significant aspect of academic freedom for faculty within higher education institutions. Here's a detailed explanation:

R. Course Delivery Mode:

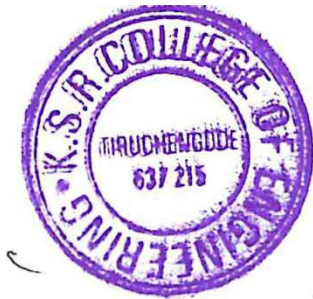
- **Pedagogical Autonomy:** Faculty members should have the autonomy to choose the mode of course delivery that aligns with their teaching philosophy, course objectives, and the needs of their students. This may include traditional face-to-face instruction, online learning, hybrid models combining in-person and virtual components, or other innovative approaches.
- **Flexibility and Adaptability:** Faculty should have the flexibility to adapt their course delivery methods based on factors such as student preferences, technological capabilities, and logistical considerations. This allows them to respond effectively to changing circumstances, such as public health emergencies or technological advancements.
- **Quality of Instruction:** Faculty members are responsible for ensuring the quality and effectiveness of instruction regardless of the mode of delivery. They should strive to provide engaging, interactive, and accessible learning experiences that promote student engagement, comprehension, and retention of course content.


S. Assessment Methods:

- **Assessment Autonomy:** Faculty members should have the authority to determine the methods and formats of assessment that best align with the learning objectives and content of their courses. This may include a variety of assessment techniques such as exams, quizzes, essays, projects, presentations, group work, or portfolios.
- **Alignment with Learning Goals:** Assessments should be designed to measure student achievement of course objectives and learning outcomes effectively. Faculty members should ensure that assessment methods are valid, reliable, and fair, and that they provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities.



- **Feedback and Evaluation:** Faculty members are responsible for providing timely and constructive feedback to students on their performance in assessments. This feedback helps students understand their strengths and areas for improvement, facilitates learning and skill development, and promotes academic success.
- **Adaptation to Remote Learning:** In the context of remote or online learning, faculty members may need to modify their assessment strategies to accommodate the virtual environment. This may involve utilizing online assessment tools, proctoring services, plagiarism detection software, or alternative assessment formats that are conducive to remote learning environments.




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