

academic freedom in higher education

Academic Freedom in Higher Education: A Multifaceted Exploration

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Abstract: This article explores the multifaceted concept of academic freedom in higher education, examining its historical development, core principles, various methodologies used to protect and promote it, and the contemporary challenges it faces. We will delve into different approaches to safeguarding academic freedom, including legal frameworks, institutional policies, and self-regulatory mechanisms within the academic community. Finally, we will consider the ongoing debate surrounding the scope and limitations of academic freedom in the context of evolving societal values and technological advancements.

1. The Historical Evolution of Academic Freedom in Higher Education

The concept of academic freedom in higher education didn't emerge fully formed. Its development is intertwined with the evolution of universities themselves. Medieval universities enjoyed a degree of autonomy, but the modern understanding of academic freedom, emphasizing the freedom of inquiry, teaching, and expression, solidified largely in the 19th and 20th centuries. Early proponents championed the freedom of scholars to pursue knowledge without external coercion or censorship. Landmark statements, like the 1940 statement of principles on academic freedom and tenure by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), codified these principles, establishing a framework that influenced academic institutions globally. However, the practical application of these principles has always been nuanced, subject to interpretation and ongoing debate. The historical context is crucial in understanding the current challenges facing academic freedom in higher education.

2. Core Principles of Academic Freedom in Higher Education

Academic freedom isn't merely the absence of restrictions; it's a positive right, encompassing several key principles:

Freedom of Inquiry: Scholars should be free to pursue research in any area, regardless of potential political, social, or economic consequences, provided it is conducted ethically and responsibly. This involves choosing research topics, methodologies, and interpretations freely.

Freedom of Teaching: Educators should have the autonomy to determine their teaching methods and curriculum within the framework of their institution's mission and academic standards. This includes the freedom to express their views and perspectives, even if controversial, provided they are presented in a scholarly and responsible manner.

Freedom of Expression: Academic freedom extends to the expression of scholarly findings and opinions, both within the academic community and to the broader public. This covers publications, presentations, and public discourse.

Institutional Autonomy: Universities should have the autonomy to govern themselves, make academic decisions, and set their own policies, free from undue external influence or interference from government or other bodies. This is crucial for fostering a climate of academic freedom.

3. Methodologies for Protecting and Promoting Academic Freedom in Higher Education

Protecting academic freedom necessitates a multi-pronged approach:

Legal Frameworks: Many countries have laws or constitutional provisions that protect academic freedom, though the specific provisions and their enforcement vary widely.

Institutional Policies: Universities should have clear and comprehensive policies on academic freedom that are widely disseminated and understood by faculty, students, and administrators. These policies should outline procedures for addressing alleged violations of academic freedom.

Self-Regulatory Mechanisms: Professional organizations, such as the AAUP, play a crucial role in upholding academic freedom by providing guidelines, investigating alleged violations, and advocating for its protection.

Faculty Governance: Faculty participation in shared governance structures, including departmental and university-wide committees, is essential for ensuring that academic freedom is respected and protected.

Education and Awareness: Ongoing education and awareness campaigns within universities are crucial for fostering a culture that values and protects academic freedom.

4. Contemporary Challenges to Academic Freedom in

Higher Education

Despite the established principles and protective mechanisms, academic freedom faces ongoing challenges:

Political Pressure: Increasing political polarization and the intrusion of political agendas into universities pose a significant threat to academic freedom.

Funding Constraints: Competition for research funding can lead to self-censorship as researchers prioritize projects perceived as more likely to receive funding.

Technological Advancements: The rise of social media and online platforms presents new challenges to the protection of academic freedom, including the spread of misinformation and online harassment.

Diversity and Inclusion: Balancing academic freedom with the need to create inclusive and respectful learning environments requires careful consideration and nuanced policies.

Concerns about Research Integrity: Maintaining research integrity is paramount, and breaches of ethical conduct can lead to challenges to academic freedom in investigations and sanctions.

5. Balancing Academic Freedom with Other Values

Academic freedom is not absolute. It must be balanced with other important values, such as:

Respect for Persons: Academic freedom does not extend to hate speech, harassment, or discrimination.

Responsibility to Students: While faculty have the freedom to express their views, they also have a responsibility to present information accurately and avoid misleading or misinforming students.

Protection of Intellectual Property: Academic freedom doesn't negate the need to protect intellectual property rights.

Conclusion

Academic freedom in higher education is essential for the advancement of knowledge, the cultivation of critical thinking, and the free exchange of ideas. Protecting and promoting academic freedom requires a continuous and multifaceted effort, involving legal frameworks, institutional policies, self-regulatory mechanisms, and a commitment from all members of the academic community. The challenges facing academic freedom today demand thoughtful consideration, open dialogue, and a resolute commitment to upholding the principles that underpin a vibrant and intellectually thriving higher education sector. Ongoing vigilance and adaptation to evolving societal contexts are crucial to safeguarding this fundamental right for future generations of scholars.

FAQs:

1. What is the difference between academic freedom and freedom of speech? While related, academic freedom is specifically concerned with the freedom of inquiry, teaching, and expression within the context of higher education, while freedom of speech is a broader constitutional right applicable to all citizens.
1. Does academic freedom protect controversial opinions? Yes, academic freedom protects the expression of controversial opinions, provided they are presented in a scholarly and responsible manner and do not violate other ethical or legal standards.
1. What happens if a professor violates academic freedom policies? Procedures vary by institution, but generally involve investigation, potential disciplinary actions, and possibly appeals processes.
1. How can students contribute to protecting academic freedom? Students can support faculty who face challenges to their academic freedom by advocating for their rights and participating in discussions about academic freedom on campus.
1. How does tenure relate to academic freedom? Tenure provides job security, allowing faculty to pursue their research and teaching without fear of dismissal for expressing unpopular views.
1. Can universities restrict academic freedom? Universities can impose reasonable restrictions on academic freedom, but these must be narrowly tailored and justified.
1. What role does the AAUP play in protecting academic freedom? The AAUP investigates alleged violations, provides guidelines and resources, and advocates for policies that protect academic freedom.
1. How does international law affect academic freedom? International human rights instruments often include provisions related to freedom of expression and academic freedom, influencing national laws and policies.
1. What are the implications of declining academic freedom for society?

Diminished academic freedom can stifle innovation, limit critical thinking, and hinder the pursuit of knowledge, ultimately harming society's progress.

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and serve in multiple political and social roles based on professional principles. It is closely linked to shared governance, in which academics participate in and influence decision making in core academic concerns such as choosing new faculty, faculty promotion, tenure decisions and the approval of new academic programs. In different countries and regions, the duress confronting academic freedom may come from different directions, and the ability of faculty to share power can vary greatly. In authoritarian mainland China, it is mostly political and ideological controls that greatly affect academic freedom, and shared governance is very much limited. In semi-democracies like Hong Kong and Macau and democracies like Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, the U.S. and Australia, corporatization and commercialization have had great impact on both academic freedom and shared governance. The result is that the roles professors play within academia are continually being diminished and the academic profession is struggling to maintain its ground. Similar developments are also occurring in Europe. These developments should cause great concern to educators, researchers and policymakers everywhere. The authors collected here present attempts to learn from current practice in order to move policy into directions that will help protect higher education as a common good. This book highlights the importance of academic freedom and provides insights into the ways it is being infringed both by commercialization and corporatization on the one hand and political repression on the other. It vividly illustrates detailed case studies and empirical data that make it a compelling read.- Professor Ruth Hayhoe, University of Toronto, Canada Academic freedom is as important today as at any time in the last century. The authors point out the challenges that academic freedom faces on a global scale. The import of the book is in its comparative perspective steeped in data and analysis. Thoughtful. Cogent. Compelling. - Professor William G. Tierney and Professor Wilbur-Kieffer, University of Southern California, United States

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the relationship between collective bargaining and academic freedom, and the influence on research and teaching of ideologically motivated donors. Significantly, he debunks myths about the strength of the alleged opposition to free expression posed by student activism and shows that the expressive rights of students must be defended as part of academic freedom. Based on broad reading in such diverse fields as educational theory, law, history, and political science, as well as on the AAUP's own investigative reporting, *The Future of Academic Freedom* combines theoretical sweep with the practical experience of its author, a leader and activist in the AAUP who is an expert on campus free speech. The issues Reichman considers—which are the subjects of daily conversation on college and university campuses nationwide as well as in the media—will fascinate general readers, students, and scholars alike.

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the field of higher education.

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The freedom of students to learn at university is being eroded by a performative culture that fails to respect their rights to engage and develop as autonomous adults. Instead, students are being restricted in how they learn, when they learn and what they learn by the so-called student engagement movement. Compulsory attendance registers, class contribution grading, group project work and reflective learning exercises based on expectations of self-disclosure and confession take little account of the rights of students or individual differences between them. This new hidden university curriculum is intolerant of students who may prefer to learn informally, are reticent, shy, or simply value their privacy. Three forms of student performativity have arisen - bodily, participative and emotional - which threaten the freedom to learn. Key themes include: A re-imagining of student academic freedom The democratic student experience Challenging assumptions of the student engagement movement An examination of university policies and practices *Freedom to Learn* offers a radically new perspective on academic freedom from a student rights standpoint. It analyzes the effects of performative expectations on students drawing on the distinction between negative and positive rights to re-frame student academic freedom. It argues that students need to be thought of as scholars with rights and that the phrase 'student-centred' learning needs to be reclaimed to reflect its original intention to allow students to develop as persons. Student rights - to non-indoctrination, reticence, in choosing how to learn, and in being treated like an adult - ought to be central to this process in fostering a democratic rather authoritarian culture of learning and teaching at university. Written for an international readership, this book will be of great interest to anyone involved in higher education, policy and practice drawing on a wide range of historical and contemporary literature related to sociology, philosophy and higher education studies.

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specific educational good that academics offer. Defending the university in all its glorious narrowness as a place of disinterested inquiry, Fish offers a bracing corrective to academic orthodoxy.

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education—is threatened on many fronts. In *The Future of Academic Freedom*, a leading scholar equips us to defend academic freedom by illuminating its meaning, the challenges it faces, and its relation to freedom of expression. In the wake of the 2016 election, challenges to academic freedom have intensified, higher education has become a target of attacks by conservatives, and issues of free speech on campus have grown increasingly controversial. In this book, Henry Reichman cuts through much of the rhetoric to issue a clarion call on behalf of academic freedom as it has been defined and defended by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) for over a hundred years. Along the way, he makes it clear that this is the issue of our day. Over the course of ten audacious essays, Reichman explores the theory, history, and contemporary practice of academic freedom. He pays attention to such varied concerns as the meddling of politicians and corporate trustees in curriculum and university governance, the role of online education, the impact of social media, the rights of student protesters and outside speakers, the relationship between collective bargaining and academic freedom, and the influence on research and teaching of ideologically motivated donors. Significantly, he debunks myths about the strength of the alleged opposition to free expression posed by student activism and shows that the expressive rights of students must be defended as part of academic freedom. Based on broad reading in such diverse fields as educational theory, law, history, and political science, as well as on the AAUP's own investigative reporting, *The Future of Academic Freedom* combines theoretical sweep with the practical experience of its author, a leader and activist in the AAUP who is an expert on campus free speech. The issues Reichman considers—which are the subjects of daily conversation on college and university campuses nationwide as well as in the media—will fascinate general readers, students, and scholars alike.

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prescribe relatively autonomous universities characterized by openness, transparency, dissent, and the maintenance of balance between conflicting perspectives, values, and interests.

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future of European cooperation in higher education. The research volumes offer unique insights regarding the state of affairs of European higher education and research, as well as forward-looking policy proposals. More than 50 articles focus on essential themes in higher education: Internationalization of higher education; Financing and governance; Excellence and the diversification of missions; Teaching, learning and student engagement; Equity and the social dimension of higher education; Education, research and innovation; Quality assurance, The impacts of the Bologna Process on the EHEA and beyond and Evidence-based policies in higher education. The Bologna process was launched at a time of great optimism about the future of the European project - to which, of course, the reform of higher education across the continent has made a major contribution. Today, for the present, that optimism has faded as economic troubles have accumulated in the Euro-zone, political tensions have been increased on issues such as immigration and armed conflict has broken out in Ukraine. There is clearly a risk that, against this troubled background, the Bologna process itself may falter. There are already signs that it has been downgraded in some countries with evidence of political withdrawal. All the more reason for the voice of higher education researchers to be heard. Since the first conference they have established themselves as powerful stakeholders in the development of the EHEA, who are helping to maintain the momentum of the Bologna process. Their pivotal role has been strengthened by the second Bucharest conference. Peter Scott, Institute of Education, London (General Rapporteur of the FOHE-BPRC first edition)

academic freedom in higher education: European Higher Education Area: The Impact of Past and Future Policies Adrian Curaj, Ligia Deca, Remus Pricopie, 2018-07-03 This volume presents the major outcomes of the third edition of the Future of Higher Education - Bologna Process Researchers Conference (FOHE-BPRC 3) which was held on 27-29 November 2017. It acknowledges the importance of a continued dialogue between researchers and decision-makers and benefits from the experience already acquired, this way enabling the higher education community to bring its input into the 2018-2020 European Higher Education Area (EHEA) priorities. The Future of Higher Education - Bologna Process Researchers Conference (FOHE-BPRC) has already established itself as a landmark in the European higher education environment. The two previous editions (17-19 October 2011, 24-26 November 2014), with approximately 200 European and international participants each, covering more than 50 countries each, were organized prior to the Ministerial Conferences, thus encouraging a consistent dialogue between researchers and policy makers. The main conclusions of the FOHE Conferences were presented at the EHEA Ministerial Conferences (2012 and 2015), in order to make the voice of researchers better heard by European policy and decision makers. This volume is dedicated to continuing the collection of evidence and research-based policymaking and further narrowing the gap between policy and research within the EHEA and broader global contexts. It aims to identify the research areas that require more attention prior to the anniversary 2020 EHEA Ministerial Conference, with an emphasis on the new issues on rise in the academic and educational community. This book gives a platform for discussion on key issues between researchers, various direct higher education actors, decision-makers, and the wider public. This book is published under an open access CC BY license.

academic freedom in higher education: *Academic Freedom Under Pressure?* Margrit Seckelmann, Lorenza Violini, Cristina Fraenkel-Haeberle, Giada Ragone, 2021-08-26 Is academic freedom threatened? The book examines current challenges to academic freedom in Europe, focusing mainly on Italy and Germany. The cases discussed demonstrate that research and teaching are under pressure in European democracies: in Hungary and Poland due to political constraints, in other countries due to societal expectations. Considering different interrelated aspects, the four parts of the book explore many real and potential threats to universities, scientific institutions and researchers, ranging from the European dimension of freedom of the arts and sciences to comparative analysis of emerging challenges to academic freedom against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic. They highlight threats to university autonomy from the economic orientation of university governance, which emphasizes efficiency, competition, and external evaluation, and from

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academic freedom in higher education: Academic Freedom in American Higher Education Robert K. Poch, 1993-05-12 Presents the popular conceptions and historical progress of academic freedom. Examines AAUP's 1940 Statement of Academic Freedom and discusses its legal aspects. Addresses issues on artistic expression, academic freedom in church-related colleges and universities, and political correctness.

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academic freedom in higher education: *The Future of Academic Freedom* Louis Menand, 1996 The essays respond to critics of the university, but they also respond to one another: Rorty and Haskell argue about the epistemological foundations of academic freedom; Gates and Sunstein discuss the legal and educational logic of speech codes. But in the end the volume achieves an unexpected consensus about the need to reconceive the concept of academic freedom in order to meet the threats and risks of the future.

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Academic Freedom 4, the most recent volume in the series, offers an overview of the international standards in this field and spells out the obligations of states in guaranteeing the educational rights of citizens. The reports on specific countries show the wide range of obstacles standing in the way of a full realization of the right to education. Several chapters analyse how disinvestment in education has undermined this right, particularly for women and minorities. In several parts of the world, structural adjustment programmes go hand in hand with stricter government control (including censorship) of universities, while in others, the control of education by religious groups has emerged as a new challenge, affecting both the quality of education and the level of tolerance in society. Other reports show why two factors, the existence of highly educated refugees and the globalization of the world economy, demand a much wider international recognition of educational qualifications.

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academic freedom in higher education: Academic Freedom in the Age of the University Walter P. Metzger, 1961

academic freedom in higher education: Open Minds Carolyn Evans, Adrienne Stone, 2021-03-02 Recently the alarm has been raised – basic freedoms are under attack in our universities. A generation of ‘snowflake’ students are shutting out ideas that challenge their views. Ideologically motivated academics are promoting propaganda at the expense of rigorous research and balanced teaching. Universities are caving in and denying platforms to ‘problematic’ public speakers. Is this true, or is it panic and exaggeration? Carolyn Evans and Adrienne Stone deftly investigate the arguments, analysing recent controversies and delving into the history of the university. They consider the academy’s core values and purpose, why it has historically given higher protection to certain freedoms, and how competing legal, ethical and practical claims can restrict free expression. This book asks the necessary questions and responds with thoughtful, reasoned answers. Are universities responsible for helping students to thrive in a free intellectual climate? Are public figures who work outside of academia owed an audience? Does a special duty of care exist for students and faculty targeted by hostile speech? And are high-profile cases diverting attention from more complex, serious threats to freedom in universities – such as those posed by domestic and foreign governments, industry partners and donors?

academic freedom in higher education: Academic Freedom in a Democratic South Africa John Higgins, 2014-09-02 How do we understand academic freedom today? Does it still have relevance in a global reconfiguring of higher education in the interests of the economy, rather than the public good? And locally, is academic freedom no more than an inconvenient ideal, paid lip service to South Africa’s Constitution as an individual right, but neglected in institutional practice? This book argues that the core content of academic freedom—the principle of supporting and extending open intellectual enquiry—is essential to realizing the full public value of higher

education. John Higgins emphasizes the central role that the humanities, and the particular forms of argument and analysis they embody, bring to this task. Each chapter embodies the particular force of a critical literacy in action, one which brings into play the combined force of historical inquiry, theoretical analysis, and precise attention to the textual dynamics of all statement so as to challenge and confront the received ideas of the day. These provocative analyses are complemented by probing interviews with three key figures from the Critical Humanities: Terry Eagleton, who discusses the deforming effects of managerialism in British universities; Edward W. Said, who argues for increased recognition of the democratizing force of the humanities; and Jakes Gerwel, who presents some of the most recent challenges for the realization of a humanist politics in South Africa.

academic freedom in higher education: Academic Freedom and the Law E. M. Barendt, 2010 This is the first comparative study of a subject of fundamental importance to all academics and others working in universities. It emphasises the importance of academic freedom, while pointing out that, on occasion, exaggerated claims have been made to its exercise. --Book Jacket.

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in the world of higher education. Academic freedom was often taken as an integral part of the fight for freedom and democracy in various parts of the world, while institutional autonomy

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of academic freedom. However, the Higher Education Framework (Threshold relevant Standards) 2015 (HE Standards) could be clarified by changing their subject matter from 'free intellectual ...

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assembly, petition, and academic freedom, and that private institutions of

higher education adhere to their own stated institutional policies regarding freedom of speech, including academic f ...

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Academic Freedom 3. Academic freedom is an essential precondition for those education, research, administrative, and service functions with which universities and other institutions of ...

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Academic freedom and institutional autonomy are values that are regarded as distinctive features of higher education systems in many countries across the world. South Africa is no exception. ...

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organizational climate of higher education. In the higher education climate dissent is valued, and dialogue and debate are encouraged. Often, there is a clash between academic freedom and ...

MAGIS: Student Development Journal

law principles (Kaplin & Lee, 2009). Academic freedom also refers to the prerogatives and rights to students, who have filed more lawsuits and complaints against diversity education programs ...

COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION – CHED

on Higher Education (CHED) carries out its function of establishing a complete, adequate and integrated system of higher education that (a) promotes relevant and quality higher education, ...

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higher education providers collectively, higher education providers or HEPs and students' unions (SUs). HEPs and SUs that have different legal obligations can still use the general principles ...

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Academic freedom must apply to the whole community engaged in research, learning and teaching, ... Commission has concentrated on supporting European research and higher ...

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ous higher education commissions on academic freedom. Third, I list some of the assaults on academic freedom on Indian university campuses today—ranging from book bans,

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freedom within the law of academic staff at English higher education providers (i) to question and test received wisdom, and (ii) to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular ...

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academic freedom? As higher education becomes increasingly globalized, including US university campuses and faculty operating overseas, what are interpretations of academic freedom in ...

Humboldt's philosophy of university education and ...

of knowledge and academic freedom. That is the higher education model proposed by Humboldt with the following principles: (1) Ensuring internal autonomy, (2) Academic freedom, (3) ...

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academic freedom within the assurance of lifelong employment. Such employment, of course, hinged on commonsense rules of professional, ethical conduct. ... Historically, this concept of ...

Academic Freedom, Political Interference, and Public ...

2 Akeel ilgrami, "Truth, alance, and Freedom," in ilgrami and ole, Who's Afraid of Academic Freedom, 10. "Here" in this case was the New School in New York, where ilgrami's essay was ...

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ingly fragile state of academic freedom. Indeed, as "cancel cul-ture" comes to higher education, some attacks on free speech and academic freedom are becoming easier to identify and ...

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Academic freedom empowers teachers and researchers in higher education to investigate and discuss the issues in their academic fields and to teach or publish findings without interference; ...

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higher education research system or institution. The emergence of ...
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6 days ago · freedom would, however, permit a private higher education institution or one of its faculty members to assert First Amendment academic freedom rights against a governmental ...

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values such as institutional autonomy and public responsibility for and of higher education. Academic freedom is a universal value rooted in the pursuit of knowledge and truth. Its core ...

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With regard to academic freedom, adjuncts have less autonomy to develop their own course materials or initiate changes to the curriculum (Kezar, 2013; Kuvakas, 2018). Students' ...

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There is a third practice that is inextricably linked to freedom of speech and academic freedom: shared governance. Derek Bok describes it in *Higher Education in America* as the four ...

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higher education, explore the intersections of the call for trigger warnings with the concerns of attack on academic freedom, discuss the lack of clarity in the language and enforcement of ...

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[communist]propaganda,"andtheabrogationismeantto"secure"theyouthagainstthe enemiesofthepeople. There still exists the UP-Department of Interior and Local Government ...

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academic freedom and freedom of speech. This not only threatens the ability of higher education institutions to meet their legal obligations in this regard, but is also preventing students from ...

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pioneering work on tenure practices and law is Clark Byse & Louis Joughin, *Tenure in American Higher Education: Plans, Practices, and the Law* (Cornell Univ Press, 1959). 7. Metzger, ...

Academic freedom, institutional autonomy and academic ...

institutional autonomy, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education as the fundamental values of the EHEA. One of ...

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