

Academic Freedom Policies in Higher Education

WHEREAS: Academic freedom is essential to the mission of higher education, ensuring that faculty have the right to teach, research, publish, and speak on matters of public concern without fear of reprisal or censorship; and

WHEREAS: Recent legislation, executive actions, and administrative directives at both the state and institutional levels have sought to limit faculty speech, constrain curriculum content, and penalize educators for engaging in discussions on diversity, equity, inclusion, and other academic subjects; and

WHEREAS: These restrictions undermine the ability of colleges and universities to provide rigorous, honest, and inclusive education that prepares students for participation in a democratic society; and

WHEREAS: Several Louisiana higher education institutions have revised or are considering revisions to their academic freedom and faculty conduct policies in ways that weaken long-standing protections for faculty autonomy and academic integrity; and

WHEREAS: Faculty across Louisiana have faced disciplinary action, reprimands, or threats of nonrenewal for exercising professional judgment or expressing views related to their fields of expertise; and

WHEREAS: While misconduct and unprofessional behavior should always be addressed appropriately, such procedures must never be misused to suppress dissent, scholarly debate, or protected speech; therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the United Federation of College Teachers affirms its unwavering commitment to academic freedom as a core principle of higher education and democratic society; be it further

RESOLVED: That the Louisiana Federation of Teachers and its affiliates actively oppose any state or institutional policy, executive order, or administrative directive that diminishes academic freedom, faculty governance, or due process protections; be it further

RESOLVED: That the Louisiana Federation of Teachers will advocate for legislative and institutional guarantees ensuring that academic freedom is protected equally for all faculty, regardless of employment status, discipline, or viewpoint; be it further

RESOLVED: That the Louisiana Federation of Teachers call upon the Louisiana Board of Regents and institutional governing boards to ensure that any and all revisions to academic

freedom or faculty conduct policies are developed transparently and in full collaboration with elected faculty representatives and unapologetically uphold the First Amendment.

As submitted by: United Federation of College Teachers