

Statement on Academic Freedom and Academic Responsibility

The Academy of Art University values the pursuit of meaningful creative expression and truthful inquiry as essential elements of the artist and scholar's contribution to culture and society. The University recognizes its commitment to upholding these pursuits in the event they should be challenged.

The Academy of Art University expects all members of its community to promote free expression as appropriate to the curriculum, while maintaining an environment conducive to learning and responsible academic behavior. The University's expectations of responsible academic behavior include, but are not limited to:

- Engagement in learning in a tolerant, respectful, and informed manner;
- Professional behavior in all aspects of work.

The University encourages a spirit of open inquiry as students develop their creative processes and intellectual positions. Intellectual and imaginative openness in itself, however, cannot sustain the educational process. The University expects faculty and directors to identify teachable moments and to cultivate habitual opportunities for learning. Faculty and administrators thus have the following responsibilities:

- Encourage free expression as appropriate to the curriculum;
- Avoid introducing material that has no relation to the course objectives;
- Place imagery, words, and symbols in their context and ensure their appropriate presentation in open and closed forums including classrooms and exhibition spaces.

Academic freedom is both a right and a responsibility—it is not a license to violate the law or the rights of others. The University reminds its members that they must abide by United States and California laws addressing:

- Discrimination against any demographic category;
- Harassment of any individual on any grounds;
- Obscenity, incitement, and slander.

While members of the Academy of Art University community will not be disciplined for activities that are protected under the law as free speech, they can be disciplined for sexual harassment if their activities are viewed as creating a hostile environment for others. The University will investigate expressions of violent intent that indicate the person may be endangering himself or others.

Any disputes will be adjudicated through the University's grievance procedure. The Board of Directors and President are ultimately charged with protecting and overseeing standards of academic freedom and responsibility at the Academy of Art University.