

# Policy on Academic Freedom and Free Expression at Baylor Law School

Baylor University and the School of Law value academic freedom and freedom of expression while emphasizing both individual and institutional rights and responsibilities.

In upholding these important principles, we also acknowledge our unique status as a private Christian university, affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas. Thus, while academic freedom and free expression are valued, they are also understood within the context of the University's Christian mission and its related policies. University and Law School policies aim to balance these aspects, ensuring that both faculty and students can exercise their freedom of expression within the context of and consistent with the University's mission and values.

## **Academic Freedom**

“Baylor University is an institution of higher education governed by a Board of Regents. The University was founded by the Texas Baptist Education Society, is controlled by a predominantly Baptist Board of Regents, and is operated within the Christian-oriented aims and ideals of Baptists. Baylor is also affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas, a cooperative association of autonomous Texas Baptist churches. As a religiously-controlled institution of higher education, it expects each member of its faculty to be in sympathy with the University's primary objective - to educate its students within the framework of a Christian culture. The rights and privileges of the instructor should, therefore, be exercised with discretion and a sense of loyalty to the supporting institution. The Baptist General Convention of Texas is likewise committed to a view that honors individual freedom and accountability. 1 Freedom to inquire and freedom to report the conclusions resulting from inquiry constitute the élan vital of a university. The quest for truth should be unhampered and conducted in an atmosphere that is free. "Liberty may sometimes lead to folly; yet it is better that some should be tolerated than that all should think and speak under the deadening influence of repression." 2 The right of dissent is a correlative of the right of assent. Any undue restriction upon an instructor in the exercise of this function would foster a suspicion of intolerance, degrade the University, and set the supporting denomination in a false light before the world.

The following policies are designed to protect the academic freedom Baylor University and the Baylor School of Law afford to all faculty members, including academic professionals (librarians), part-time permanent, and part-time temporary faculty members, and to provide fair process protections (including rights regarding notice, hearings, and review/reconsideration) for faculty members regarding conducting research, publishing scholarship, engaging in law school governance, participating in law related public service activities, curating library collections and providing information services, and exercising teaching responsibilities, including those related to client representation in clinical programs.

Academic Freedom and Duties ([BU-PP 701](#))

Policy on Academic Professionals at Baylor University ([BU-PP 718](#))

Baylor School of Law Bylaws

Faculty Grievance Policy ([BU-PP 712](#))

Faculty Dismissal Policy ([BU-PP 705](#))

### **Freedom of Expression**

The following policies are designed to protect the rights of faculty, students, and staff to communicate ideas that may be controversial or unpopular, while proscribing disruptive conduct that hinders free expression of others or substantially interferes with the carrying out of law school functions or approved activities. Some of these policies establish guidelines under which faculty, students, and staff can exercise their freedom of expression within the context of and consistent with the University's mission and values.

Baylor University Classroom Conduct Policy (Faculty Handbook (available [here](#)))

Baylor University Public Demonstration Policy (available [here](#))

[Baylor University Expectations for Events Involving Expressive Activity Student Organization Policy](#)

[Baylor University Campus Facilities Use and Campus Solicitation Policy](#)

Baylor New Student Manual (available to current students)

Baylor Civil Rights Policy (available [here](#))

Baylor Code of Ethics and Personal Conduct (available [here](#))

Baylor Staff and Student Employee Grievances (available [here](#))

Student Organization Policies (available [here](#))

Sexual Conduct Policy (available [here](#))

Statement on Human Sexuality (available [here](#))

Student Publications Policy (available [here](#))

Campus Speakers Policy (available [here](#))

Technology Usage Policy (available [here](#))