



**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY  
WASHINGTON DC 20319-5066**

NDU-VPAA

28 May 2025

**MEMORANDUM FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE UNIVERSITY**

**SUBJECT: Academic Freedom Policy, Directive-Type Memo 25-07**

**1. References:**

a. 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure with 1970 Interpretive Comments, Association of American University Professors Policy Documents and Reports, 1995.

b. Middle States Commission on Higher Education, Philadelphia, PA, Standards for Accreditation and Requirements of Affiliation, 14<sup>th</sup> Edition.

c. NDU Directive 5500.07, Professional Ethics, 1 August 2019.

d. National Defense University (NDU) DTM 25-05, Academic Integrity Policy.

e. National Defense University (NDU) DTM 25-08, Non-Attribution Policy.

2. Academic freedom is a cornerstone of National Defense University's (NDU) core values and principles to promote the right of students and faculty to express their ideas and challenge the ideas of others without fear of retribution. While aspects of academic freedom are protected by the First Amendment, the principle pre-dates the US Constitution. It is a right afforded to faculty members as a group for freedom in teaching, research, scholarship, internal criticism, and debate. It further serves as the basis for faculty input in institutional governance and derives from shared professional expertise and training.

3. NDU subscribes to the American Association of University Professors' statement on academic freedom, issued in 1940 (see reference (a)). That statement defines academic freedom in terms of:

a. Freedom of research and publication of results.

b. Freedom of classroom teaching.

c. Freedom from censorship when faculty speak or write as citizens.

4. As an accredited institution, NDU is committed to academic freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom of expression, and respect for intellectual property rights (see reference (b)).

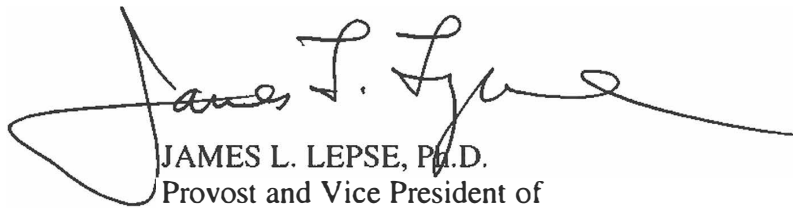
5. NDU student and faculty responsibilities in academic freedom include:

- a. When acting as private citizens, make every effort to indicate that they are not spokespersons for NDU.
  - b. Avoid controversial issues not relevant to the subject being discussed.
  - c. Encourage participation in the peer review process.
  - d. Avoid discussing classified or sensitive material in inappropriate settings or with those who do not have a “need to know.”
6. With academic freedom comes professional obligations, especially for faculty and staff. Per reference (c), those obligations include:
- a. Obligations to professional integrity.
  - b. Obligations to students.
  - c. Obligations to peers.
  - d. Obligations to National Defense University.
  - e. Obligations as citizens.
  - f. Obligations as government employees.
7. Free inquiry is essential at NDU because the senior officers and government officials educated here will assume a variety of roles in their future assignments, as policymakers, advisors, and leaders. NDU graduates must be ready to discuss, challenge, question, and determine national policy. Students and faculty may participate in free inquiry within the bounds of academic integrity (see reference (d) for guidance).
8. So that guests and university community members may speak candidly, the university offers its assurance that presentations will be held in strict confidence. NDU policy on non-attribution provides that, without the expressed permission of the speaker, nothing will be attributed directly or indirectly in the presence of anyone who was not authorized to attend the class or lecture. See reference (e) for further guidance.
9. Components may develop policies and procedures to further acknowledge, enforce, and comply with this NDU policy.

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10. For questions regarding this policy, contact Dr. Brian Buckles, Associate Provost for Academic Programs and Faculty Affairs, via email at [brian.buckles@ndu.edu](mailto:brian.buckles@ndu.edu) or telephone at 202-685-4315 as appropriate.



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