

**ARTICLE X
ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

February 27, 2026

Section 1: The University and the Union agree to the following regarding the rights of Student Employees as it pertains to their academic responsibilities:

Section 2: The University and the Union agree to the following regarding Academic Freedom:

- (a) Student Employees are entitled to Academic Freedom in their capacity as Student Employees. Academic Freedom is the freedom to teach the subjects of their academic field within their expert discretion both in and outside the classroom; to conduct the research, scholarship, or creative expression of their choice and to publish, display or perform the results of those investigations; and to address any matter of institutional policy or action whether or not as a member of an agency of institutional governance. Student Employees also have the right to address the larger Columbia and global community with regard to any matter of social, political, economic, or other interest, without institutional discipline. Student Employees will not be disciplined for extramural activity that would normally be covered under First Amendment principles. Such freedom does not cover violations of professional responsibilities.
- (b) The Union and University recognize that Student Employees work under the supervision, coordination, and authority of faculty, staff instructors, principal investigators, and administrators. Consistent with this guidance and directives from these supervisors and administrators, Student Employees shall have reasonable latitude in exercising judgment within their area of expertise and in deciding how best to accomplish their job duties within the scope of directions given by their individual supervisor. When providing teaching support under the supervision of a faculty member or other instructor in charge, Student Employees will have latitude to exercise their judgment in deciding how best to fulfill their duties and to support the learning objectives of a course consistent and commensurate with any guidance or directives of the faculty member or instructor in charge and otherwise no less than that afforded to such a faculty member. Student Employees will not be disciplined when exercising this latitude in performing research or teaching.
- (c) When working in a laboratory or a research group, Student Employees may participate in discussion with their mentors, advisors, or supervisors, as well as others working on the project, and are free and expected to offer their own views and interpretations in those discussions. When working for a principal investigator on funded or unfunded research, Student Employees shall be free to offer their independent judgment, while recognizing that the grant or project has objectives and that the principal investigator is the final arbiter. Student

The Union reserves the right to modify, subtract, delete or add to any of these proposals at any time.

Employees will not be disciplined for offering their independent judgment or opinions within professional disciplinary bounds.

Section 3: The University shall not retaliate against a Student Worker for exercising their right to academic freedom.

Section 4: The University will not share course content, information about Student Employees in the workplace, or statements made by Student Employees within the latitude of Academic Freedom with external entities, including governmental ones, except with the permission of that Student Employee and as required by law.

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