The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

**Argument**

CWRU is committed to the free exchange of ideas and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning in all areas.

The university's core values of inclusiveness and diversity specifically include civility and the free exchange of ideas as key components. The university’s ethics statement contained in the Faculty Handbook includes an expectation that the university community will be open to new ideas and to opinions that may be different from one’s own. The Rules of Conduct, which applies to all administrators, staff, students, and faculty, provides that conduct subject to university disciplinary action includes interference with freedom of speech or movement, or intentional disruption or obstruction of teaching, research, administration, or other functions on university property. Faculty members are responsible for respecting and defending the academic freedom of their associates, both colleagues and students.

Another university core value is integrity and transparency through academic freedom and responsibility. The right of academic freedom for faculty in teaching and research is guaranteed under the Faculty Handbook. The Faculty Senate also operates to uphold the principle of academic freedom. See the description of the responsibilities of the Committee on Research relative to policies on research, as stated within the Faculty Senate bylaws.

A commitment to truth in teaching and learning is paramount at CWRU and is evident in multiple policies relating to instructors and students. The Faculty Handbook speaks to faculty professional responsibilities and states that of primary importance is the responsibility to seek and state the truth as the faculty member sees it.

The university further demonstrates its commitment to truth in student learning through its general education requirements, the Seminar Approach to General Education and Scholarship program (SAGES). SAGES offers undergraduate students the benefit of learning in small interdisciplinary seminars throughout their education at CWRU and provides them with a foundation in the use of information, and engagement with ethical issues and diversity, among others. The expected learning outcomes of SAGES include advancing academic inquiry and ethical deliberation.

Information literacy is crucial in the pursuit of truth in learning because of the quantity and diversity of information resources available to students in the twenty-first century. One of the goals under the 2011-2014 strategic plan for the Kelvin Smith Library (the university’s main library supporting learning and research) is for the library to engage with faculty in the development of an innovative information literacy program. One of the outgrowths of this plan is the Personal Librarian Program that provides entering students with a Personal Librarian to serve as their point of contact at the library. Another outgrowth of the plan is the Kelvin Smith Library Community Outreach plan where the library partners with local schools and community groups to provide twenty-first century literacy skills training. The training includes information, technology and media literacy as well as training in ethical responsibility.
CWRU also encourages the free exchange of ideas through student government organizations. The constitution of the USG (Undergraduate Student Government) provides that it shall act as liaison between undergraduate students and the faculty and university administration. The USG operating bylaws require that business be conducted in open session, and a public record maintained. The Graduate Student Senate (GSS) represents the collective interests of graduate students to the faculty and administrative units of the University. The GSS bylaws require senators to bring the concerns and wishes of their constituents to the GSS, and to disseminate information on GSS activities. Both the USG and GSS regularly bring forward resolutions for faculty consideration.

Sources

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- Bylaws - Faculty Senate (rev. 3/14) (page number 12)
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- Description of community outreach programming offered by the Kelvin Smith Library
- Faculty Handbook (2014)
- Faculty Handbook (2014) (page number 28)
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- Faculty Handbook (2014) (page number 103)
- Graduate Student Senate - Bylaws (April 2014)
- Graduate Student Senate - Bylaws (April 2014) (page number 2)
- Graduate Student Senate - Constitution
- Graduate Student Senate, sample resolutions - from website
- Mission, Vision, and Core Values statements - from 2013 Strategic Plan
- SAGES program overview - from website
- SAGES student learning outcomes and assessment plan (February 2015)
- Strategic Plan - University Libraries (2011)
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- Student Handbook - homepage
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- Undergraduate Student Government, sample resolutions - from website