



The full text, including the introduction and more details on the six principles, can be found

in German at
go.uni-wue.de/kodexwissenschaft

and in English at
go.uni-wue.de/codeacademicfreedom



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CODE OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

of Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg



VERSION: AS PASSED BY THE SENATE ON 24 SEPTEMBER 2024

Research at Julius-Maximilians-Universität pursues two central goals: finding truth and producing results that are of benefit to society. It thrives on open exchange, critical dissent and the courage to ask questions without pre-conceived notions.

To reach its goals, research needs freedom. It must be free from political, economic or ideological influences – influences that would distort or bias findings. At the same time, it has a responsibility: for upholding the values of our free and democratic constitutional order and for protecting human dignity.

There is a tension between freedom and responsibility that must be rebalanced constantly. To create the right conditions for doing so and to secure academic freedom in the long term, the University of Würzburg has adopted the following six principles.



Prof. Paul Pauli
President



Prof. Markus Ludwigs
Chairman of the
Code Working Group

Principle 1

ENJOYMENT OF BASIC RIGHTS

Every natural person who carries out academic activities at a university is guaranteed the academic freedom enshrined in Article 5 (3) of the Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany. Universities and their independent organisational units can also be holders of the right to academic freedom, provided that they carry out academic activities, but at the same time, they are also bound by the basic rights.

Principle 2

FREEDOM OF RESEARCH AND TEACHING

Academic freedom applies to every attempt at finding the truth which, considering its content and form, can be regarded as serious and systematic as well as to the communication of the findings to others. The objective of research as an intellectual activity is to generate new findings in a methodical and verifiable manner. The purpose of academic teaching is to communicate to others the findings made and methods used so that they can serve as a basis for independent and critical reflection.

Principle 3

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH

Academic freedom always carries with it the duty of the institutions and individuals involved in the research process to act responsibly. The responsible conduct of research is more than compliance with legal requirements; it also includes evaluating critically whether the research carried out is ethically justifiable. In addition, the responsible conduct of research encompasses the idea of re-evaluating theoretical and methodical assumptions as well as empirical evidence in a manner that is self-critical and, basically, open to all points of view.

Principle 4

LIMITS TO ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Academic freedom is not absolute. In cases of conflict, it will have to be balanced in a considerate manner against conflicting constitutional interests, in particular the basic rights of third parties. In addition, the obligation for loyalty to the constitution applies where teaching is concerned.

Principle 5

RESEARCH AND INSTITUTION

The university has a responsibility to facilitate, encourage and protect free academic debate. It creates a suitable institutional framework for this purpose that is characterised by rules, structures and processes that are appropriate for the academic world.

Principle 6

RESEARCH AND SOCIETY

Research and society interact in a variety of ways. And the logic of research is not necessarily in accordance with the way in which it is presented in the media or perceived by the public. Researchers will therefore have to be able to endure criticism and be willing to allow their work to be the subject of debate.