

CUNY School of Law Policy on Freedom of Expression and Academic Freedom

I. Introduction

As a public institution, CUNY School of Law is committed to fostering an academic environment that encourages, supports and protects the principles of freedom of expression and academic freedom. These principles are essential for the pursuit of knowledge, the advancement of scholarship, and the development of critical thinking skills. This policy applies to CUNY School of Law faculty, staff, students, invited speakers, and other visitors, and outlines the school's commitment to protect these principles and provides guidelines for their implementation.

II. Freedom of Expression

Freedom of expression in all its forms is a fundamental right protected by the U.S. Constitution and is central to CUNY School of Law's academic mission. CUNY School of Law upholds the right of faculty, staff, students, invited speakers, and other visitors to express their ideas, beliefs, and viewpoints without fear of censorship or retaliation.

Students, faculty, staff, invited speakers, and other visitors are encouraged to engage in open and respectful discourse, including the exchange of controversial or dissenting viewpoints.

All expressions must adhere to the law.

III. Academic Freedom

As the leading social justice public law school in the country, CUNY School of Law is committed to academic freedom in all of its forms. CUNY School of Law upholds the rights of all faculty, instructional staff, and guest speakers, to pursue and share knowledge without fear of censorship or retaliation. Academic freedom is a professional right of the faculty. Along with the protection to practice a cherished craft, academic freedom protects the faculty in taking part in the governance of the institution by speaking out on matters of educational policy, including when opposing the views of the administration.

Academic Freedom protects 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 and all other forms of advocacy in clinical programs.

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Academic freedom does not encompass violations of law.

IV. Responsibilities and Protections

Members of the CUNY School of Law community are expected to engage in dialogue that is respectful, even when disagreements arise.

CUNY School of Law supports faculty, staff, students, invited speakers, and other visitors in exercising their freedom of expression while maintaining an environment conducive to learning and respect for all.

Recognizing the long tradition and importance of campus activism and civil disobedience, the Law School may regulate in means no more restrictive than necessary the time, place and manner of speech in order to preserve the academic, free expression and other functions of the Law School.

Faculty, staff, and students are owed due process in accordance with applicable provisions of the Education Law, the Civil Service Law, the applicable collective bargaining agreement, and/or the Bylaws or written policies of The City University of New York when it is claimed they have violated this policy.

VI. Conclusion

CUNY School of Law is dedicated to preserving a dynamic and open academic environment. By upholding the principles of freedom of expression and academic freedom, CUNY School of Law is committed to intellectual diversity and scholarly excellence.