

## **MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT**

**Between: Grant MacEwan University Board of Governors**

**And: The Grant MacEwan University Faculty Association**

### **ARTICLE 29.0 ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

#### **29.1 PREAMBLE**

29.1.1 Academic freedom is a principle shared by the Parties to this agreement. It is the cornerstone of a university's role to serve the common good of society. As such, academic freedom inheres in a university community to foster the search for, and dissemination of, knowledge through the leadership in thought and expression of its faculty members. The Parties agree that a university cannot fulfill its purpose as a public institution without an unwavering commitment to both the idea and the practice of academic freedom.

29.1.2 Academic freedom is a right of all Members of the Faculty Association. The Board of Governors, the Faculty Association, or the administration of the University will not abridge on any grounds the legitimate exercise of academic freedom.

29.1.3 The exercise of Academic Freedom as per this Article will not, of itself, be grounds for discipline.

#### **29.2 PRINCIPLES**

29.2.1 The responsibility of Members under the terms of this agreement to advance and communicate knowledge is inseparable from the examination, questioning, and testing of accepted ideas and established opinion.

29.2.2 The free and open pursuit of knowledge by faculty members sometimes results in differing judgments with respect to truth. Such differences are valued because the expression of unpopular judgments or interpretations of scholarly enquiry advances the search for knowledge beyond prevailing opinion or popular belief as may exist at a given time.

29.2.3 The shared principle of Academic Freedom respects the right of faculty members to search for truth and advance knowledge in a climate that supports independent thought and expression. Academic Freedom is the freedom of faculty members to teach, to design and to develop curriculum and pedagogy; to engage in professional practice; to engage in scholarly activity including research and creative work; to publish, perform, or otherwise present the products of that scholarly activity; to engage in institutional governance; and to engage in

service to the institution and community without being subject to infringement of the Academic Freedom upon which their work is based.

29.2.4 Coupled with the right to Academic Freedom are equally high standards of Academic Responsibility. Academic Responsibility includes adherence to policies approved via University governance processes and acknowledgement of the University's duty to manage its affairs in accordance with its mission and mandate. Academic Responsibility also requires respect for the rights of others, the exercise of Academic Freedom in a reasonable manner, and acknowledgement of the approved academic objectives of the institution.

29.2.5 Academic Responsibility as expressed in 29.2.4 does not require agreement with policies nor does it preclude criticism of policies and procedures without fear of censure or interference. The University is, and should be, a place where vigorous debate about governance is encouraged. The Parties agree that such debate when conducted in a respectful and reasonable manner strengthens collegial self-governance and allows the best ideas about governance policy and practice to be implemented.

### **29.3 Teaching**

29.3.1 Academic Freedom includes the right to teach approved and assigned courses without fear of censure or interference. To that end, Members have the right to select course materials, content, methodology, and sequence of topics to be taught. Faculty members shall exercise this freedom responsibly within the requirements of approved course syllabi.

29.3.2 Faculty members have the right and responsibility to participate in decision-making with respect to the development of curriculum and pedagogy; new programs; new course offerings; modifications of existing courses; and degree, diploma, or certificate requirements. Their participation in such decision-making shall be afforded by a system of appointed or elected Department, Faculty/School, and University committees as shall exist in accordance with approved policy at a given time.

### **29.4 Research, Publication, and other Scholarly Activities**

29.4.1 Members are free to select topics for research and/or creative work and in the publication, performance, or presentation in any form of the products of that research and/or creative work. Members have the responsibility to ensure that all research and creative activity meets high scholarly and ethical standards. Honest and thoughtful inquiry, reasoned discourse, rigorous analysis of evidence, and peer review are core elements of those standards.

### **29.5 University Governance**

29.5.1 Members have the right and responsibility to participate in university governance by providing counsel and advice on matters of planning and policy. Members share a right and responsibility for shaping the direction of their respective Departments and Faculties/Schools, and for serving on University-wide councils and committees. Since participation of Members in these areas is vital to academic governance, the University and all its Members have a shared responsibility to participate in university governance.

**29.6 Professional and Community Activities**

29.6.1 Members, as citizens and members of learned professions, have a right to personal and professional opinions, no matter how unpopular they may be, and to state these publicly without censorship or fear of harassment or reprisal. In any exercise of freedom of expression, Members will not purport to speak on behalf of the University unless so authorized by the Board, or the President or designate. An indication of affiliation with the University should not be construed as speaking on behalf of the University. When exercising these rights as citizens within the University, individuals must be cognizant of, and sensitive to, the fact that other members of the University also enjoy these same rights and freedoms.

Dated at Edmonton, Alberta this 27<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2015.

For the Board

For the Association



