

ARE INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY AND SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE?

WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 2018

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IAU promotes collaboration among its Members by articulating the fundamental values and principles that underpin the pursuit, dissemination and application of knowledge. The Association **advocates for higher education policies and practices that respect diverse perspectives and promote social responsibility**. With a particular emphasis on values and leadership, and acting as a forum for sharing and joint action, IAU encourages innovation, mutual learning and cooperation among institutions.

IAU aims to be the most representative and **influential global association of diverse higher education institutions** and their organizations, promoting and advancing a dynamic leadership role for higher education in society

IAU VISION AND MISSION

IAU promotes **core values** among its members and the wider higher education community including:

- academic freedom,
- autonomy and social responsibility locally and globally
- cooperation and solidarity based on mutuality of interests and shared benefits,
- tolerance of divergent opinions,
- freedom from political interference,
- equity in access and success in higher education and
- open access to knowledge,
- scientific integrity and ethical behaviour as cornerstones of conduct for all stakeholders in higher education
- higher education and research in the public interest
- quality in learning, research and outreach

ACADEMIC FREEDOM, INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

IAU Policy Statement
Adopted in 1998

We consider it timely, at the occasion of the UNESCO World Conference of Higher Education, to reaffirm these principles and to redefine their implications within the framework of a new Social Contract which sets out mutual responsibilities, rights and obligations between University and Society so that they may meet the challenges of the new Millennium:

1. The principle of Institutional Autonomy can be defined as the necessary degree of independence from external interference that the University requires in respect of its internal organisation and governance, the internal distribution of financial resources and the generation of income from non public sources, the recruitment of its staff, the setting of the conditions of study and, finally, the freedom to conduct teaching and research.
2. The principle of Academic Freedom can be defined as the freedom for members of the academic community - that is scholars, teachers and students - to follow their scholarly activities within a framework determined by that community in respect of ethical rules and international standards, and without outside pressure.
3. Rights confer obligations. These obligations are as much incumbent on the individuals and on the University of which they are part, as they are upon the State and Society.

4. Academic Freedom engages the obligation by each individual member of the academic profession to excellence, to innovation, and to advancing the frontiers of knowledge through research and the diffusion of its results through teaching and publication.
5. Academic Freedom also engages the ethical responsibility of the individual and the academic community in the conduct of research, both in determining the priorities of that research and in taking account of the implications which its results may have for Humanity and Nature.
6. For its part, the University has the obligation to uphold and demonstrate to Society that it stands by its collective obligation to quality and ethics, to fairness and tolerance, to the setting and the upkeep of standards - academic when applied to research and teaching, administrative when applied to due process, to the rendering of accounts to Society, to self-verification, to institutional review and to transparency in the conduct of institutional self-government.
7. For their part, organising powers and stakeholders public or private, stand equally under the obligation to prevent arbitrary interference, to provide and to ensure those conditions necessary, in compliance with internationally recognised standards, for the exercise of Academic Freedom by individual members of the academic profession and for University Autonomy to be exercised by the institution.

8. In particular, the organising powers and stakeholders public or private, and the interests they represent, should recognise that by its very nature the obligation upon the academic profession to advance knowledge is inseparable from the examination, questioning and testing of accepted ideas and of established wisdom. And that the expression of views which follow from scientific insight or scholarly investigation may often be contrary to popular conviction or judged as unacceptable and intolerable.

9. Hence, agencies which exercise responsibility for the advancement of knowledge as too particular interests which provide support for, or stand in a contractual relationship with, the University for the services it may furnish, must recognise that such expressions of scholarly judgement and scientific inquiry shall not place in jeopardy the career or the existence of the individual expressing them nor leave that individual open to pursuit for délit d'opinion on account of such views being expressed.

10. If the free range of inquiry, examination and the advance of knowledge are held to be benefits Society derives from the University, the latter must assume the responsibility for the choices and the priorities it sets freely. Society for its part, must recognise its part in providing means appropriate for the achievement of that end. Resources should be commensurate with expectations - especially those which, like fundamental research, demand a long-term commitment if they are to yield their full benefits.

11. The obligation to transmit and to advance knowledge is the basic purpose for which Academic Freedom and University Autonomy are required and recognised. Since knowledge is universal, so too is this obligation. In practice, however, Universities fulfil this obligation primarily in respect of the Societies in which they are located. And it is these communities, cultural, regional, national and local, which establish with the University the terms by which such responsibilities are to be assumed, who is to assume them and by what means and procedures.

12. Responsibilities met within the setting of 'national' society, extend beyond the physical boundaries of that society. Since its earliest days, the University has professed intellectual and spiritual engagement to the principles of 'universalism' and to 'internationalism' whilst Academic Freedom and University Autonomy evolved within the setting of the historic national community. For Universities to serve a world society requires that Academic Freedom and University Autonomy form the bedrock to a new Social Contract - a contract to uphold values common to Humanity and to meet the expectations of a world where frontiers are rapidly dissolving.

13. In the context of international cooperation, the exercise of Academic Freedom and University Autonomy by some should not lead to intellectual hegemony over others. It should, on the contrary, be a means of strengthening the principles of pluralism, tolerance and academic solidarity between institutions of higher learning and between individual scholars and students.

14. At a time when the ties, obligations and commitments between Society and the University are becoming more complex, more urgent and more direct, it appears desirable to establish a broadly recognised International Charter of mutual rights and obligations governing the relationship between University and Society, including adequate monitoring mechanisms for its application.

A JOINT INITIATIVE TO BE
CONSIDERED FOR THE UPCOMING
WORLD CONFERENCE ON HE?

Academic Freedom and University Autonomy under threat

IAU HORIZONS VOL 22.2

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Higher Education Partnerships for Societal Impacts

13-15 November 2018

IAU INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2018

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