

Academic Freedom: Developing Defense Strategies

Academic Freedom: The Goals

Freedom

- to *pursue knowledge* wherever it may lead, without undue or unreasonable interference.
- to engage in the *entire range of activities* involved in the production of knowledge
- to choose a *research focus*,
- to decide *what to teach* in the classroom,
- to *present research findings* to colleagues and the public, and to publishing them.

Guiding Principles for Strategies

- Integral part of the Human Rights Movement
- Multiple potential strategies: protect, promote, monitor, advocate, litigate, report on, educate, train, mobilize, lobby, protest, campaign, remedy etc.
- Best strategies are those gauged to the political space available

Suggestions for the Strategy Workshops

- *A Plan*
(assessment of threats and establishing clear goals, rationale and means/strategies) **involving:**
- *Sustained Outreach*
- *Stage I: Articulate* social benefits of academic freedom
- *Stage II: Expand* partnerships: local and international, educational and political, the media.
- *Stage III Inform* the larger community
- *Integration into academic research, teaching and publications*

Local Implementation: The curriculum matters

- Promote courses
 - that include *conflict-solving* discourse.
 - that call for *critical thinking* and discursive debate
 - that address *national and international problems*
 - that encourage *independent research* and publications

Options and Roles vary by discipline

- Law
- Philosophy
- Political Science
- Economics
- History
- Literature
- Media and Communications
- Physical Sciences etc.

Local Implementation: Extra-Curricular

- **Inventory** interested faculty, students, activities and organizations
- **Establish** faculty committees
- **Maximize** intra-academy processes in conflict-solving.
- **Organize** more special events: films, conferences, debates etc., especially in the humanities, open to the community at large, (civil society and the media)
- **Expand** national and international networking, including especially the media.
- **Seek funds**

Articulating Social Benefits of Academic Freedom to the Community at Large

As source of

- New solutions to, and professionals for, today's and tomorrow's problems
- Enrichment of the whole culture: history, science, inventions etc.
- Examples of how to debate, manage conflict, and value critical thinking.

"The Struggle for intellectual freedom is an integral part of the struggle of our people for human rights."

Preamble

"Every Person has the right to education and participation in intellectual activity"

Art #1

Kampala Declaration on Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility. 1990