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CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY
VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

PH.D. IN PUBLIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

This is to certify that the dissertation prepared by Zachary G. Goodell, entitled:

*Faculty Perceptions of Academic Freedom
at a Metropolitan University: A Case Study*


has been approved by his committee as satisfactory completion of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Ph.D. in Public Policy and Administration.




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FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM AT A
METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY: A CASE STUDY

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University.

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Abstract

FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM AT A METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY: A CASE STUDY

Zachary Grant Goodell, Ph.D.

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Virginia Commonwealth University.

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Major Director: Dr. Joseph Marolla, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology

This research study examines how faculty perceive academic freedom at a metropolitan university. Thirty structured interviews were conducted with social science faculty, who have been tenured for 10 years or more, at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). These faculty came from the departments of Sociology, Psychology, Anthropology, Political Science, Urban Studies, Criminal Justice, Women's Studies, and African-American Studies. The following five questions were the central research questions: (a) how do core faculty in the social sciences at VCU define academic freedom; (b) do these same faculty perceive academic freedom to be a significant feature of a career in higher education; (c) do these same faculty perceive any existing threats to their academic freedom; (d) how do these faculty define academic tenure; and (e) how did these faculty learn about academic freedom and tenure. Where previous research has

often focused on comparing and contrasting faculty perceptions of academic freedom from different institutions, ranks and disciplines, this research targeted a fairly homogenous population of faculty in order to identify any common socialization experiences, both formal and informal, which may have contributed to common perceptions. The findings suggest that these faculty do not share a common perception of academic freedom. Where most of the respondents did agree that academic freedom protected both research and teaching, approximately half of the respondents did not associate any institutional limitations or professional responsibilities with academic freedom. Most of the respondents considered academic freedom to be a significant feature of an academic career. They perceived the current threats to academic freedom to be largely stemmed from within the institution. In particular, they believed that a top-down business model of leadership coupled with a weak academic culture to be the most significant threats to academic freedom. They defined tenure primarily as a means of protecting their own academic freedom through job security. Lastly, most of them learned about academic freedom very vicariously and informally, which helps explain the varied perceptions of what academic freedom means to them and how it should be exercised.

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

The institution of higher education has experienced a significant period of change over the last 20 years. What makes this period of change unique is that while enrollments continue to climb, resources and programs are being reduced. To survive, many institutions have had to move toward business models of management in order to be more efficient with, and accountable for, the limited resources that remain at their disposal. This is particularly difficult for higher education because the primary resource that constitutes the major expenditure in higher education is the faculty. Businesses are much more flexible in their ability to purge or downsize their human capital, higher education cannot because of tenure. As a result, one strategy that many institutions have turned to is early retirement packages for tenured professors coupled with the hiring of non-tenured, collateral appointments that are based on annual contracts.

Another, more sweeping strategy, is to bring the entire tenure system into question. Many people in the public and private sector have challenged the legitimacy of tenure especially during a period of financial and resource paucity. In the past, faculty, as well as other leaders in higher education, has been able to coalesce and champion the

virtues of academic freedom and tenure. However, the unity and passion that carried the cause in the past is missing in the present. There seems to be little concern for academic freedom today and when there is, it involves few faculty—usually members of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), and is intermittent at best. Furthermore, there has not been much attention or research as to how this affects academic freedom or the broader mission of the institution. My concern is that the aforementioned socio-cultural forces coupled with a fractured, demoralized professorate, academic freedom and tenure are as vulnerable as ever before.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore how these socio-cultural forces are affecting the professorate at an institution that is experiencing these very issues. More specifically, this is a case study of social science faculty members' perceptions of the state of academic freedom and tenure at a public, metropolitan university. Do these faculty members believe that academic freedom is alive and well? If not, what is responsible for the erosion of academic freedom? Do they believe that tenure is linked to academic freedom and if so, do they believe that it is a sufficient protection? These are the central issues underlying this study.

Brief History of Higher Education in America

The balance of this chapter will introduce the central concepts and issues that will be the basis for this research project. Specifically, the chapter will address three interdependent themes: (a) the form and function of higher education in America; (b) the form and function of the professorate; and (c) the form and function of academic freedom and tenure. After reviewing how these three themes have evolved over the centuries,

attention will be directed to the more recent past and the fundamental changes that have taken place in the last 40 years. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of some of the more current issues affecting the institution of higher education and how they pertain to this research project.

Form and Function of Higher Education

Cathedral Schools in Medieval Europe

Three universities arose within a decade or so on either side of 1200 AD in Europe. According to Hyde (1988), these three universities in Paris, Oxford, and Bologna, became the prototypes for the vast majority of universities that would follow. What makes this period of European history quite extraordinary is that these universities arose quite spontaneously and independent of each other. The one common denominator is that much of Western Europe was experiencing an unprecedented growth of towns and cities during this period. Given the logistical problems associated with the acquisition and distribution of resources in medieval Europe, these flourishing cities provided the concentration of resources that were necessary to support the fledgling universities including food, living accommodations, and a concentrated population from which to draw students, faculty, and service providers.

It was in these medieval years that the university acquired its corporate form—a form of autonomy that has proven to be a significant reason for its survival for over 800 years. The University of Paris provides a good example. Duryea (1981) explains that, in the case of the University of Paris, "the form of the *autonomy* [italics added] came as Papal bulls or charters that granted the university power over its internal affairs as a

church *corporation* [italics added] that owed its legal existence to the Pope” (p. 16). This arrangement was consistent with other trends in medieval Europe whereby corporate associations arose around not just the church, but secular ways of life as well, such as mercantile and craft expertise. What was common in these developments is that these *associations* claimed an inherent right to existence, separate from its members, but obliged to its charterer.

So, in this sense, although these institutions had a certain degree of institutional autonomy, there was no “professional autonomy” primarily because the function of higher education was the transmission of an already existing body of knowledge in law, medicine, and theology.

These medieval universities, and the faculty therein, enjoyed some latitude (freedom) as they attempted to satiate a genuine thirst for new knowledge. However, this knowledge was not new in the sense that it was original. Rather, it was new because it was imported from other cultures. The most significant of which might be the tremendous interest in and dissemination of classical Greek literature which was imported to Europe from Arabian manuscripts (Cobban, 1975). The medieval scholars undertook the task of understanding and communicating this past learning and did so in the halls of these nascent university centers. This is especially provocative given that these "classical" works were often antithetical to the hegemony of the church, and the cathedral schools during this period of history.

Cobban (1975) also points out that although the medieval university did evolve during and intellectual fervor over the potential of human reason to emancipate humanity,

it was also stimulated by the *utilitarian* values of that period. Along this dimension, universities served a more mundane function of providing the elemental training and education for the ecclesiastic and governmental requirements of medieval society—a passage to "higher" or professional careers.

Soon, however, these developments were reversed somewhat, as kings began to challenge and assuage the authority of the papacy through divine right. As a consequence, a power struggle emerged between the universities and other corporate endeavors and the monarchies. It was during this period that the university was caught between the church and the state, which in the English tradition were inextricably linked. However, the common motive for both church and state—to render control through conformity—was a defining characteristic of the evolution of the university during the Reformation in both Europe and the New World.

According to Bender (1988), "Precisely when it was most weakened and vulnerable, the [European] university was saved...by the strength and stimulation it received from city life" (p. 6). The vitality of some of the major European cities, Leiden, Geneva, and Edinburgh, in particular, coupled with burgeoning influence of the enlightenment, the university was redirected toward creating and maintaining a civic society and its mission was to prepare its graduates for public life in the metropolis. At this stage, the university became less accountable to the powers that be (church and state) and more accountable to the public or community in which it resided. So, not only does this mark a significant shift in accountability it also marks a shift in the function of higher education. In medieval Europe, it was intended to provide a "passage" into the

professions for the elite citizenry in an effort to conserve and protect the status quo. By the time of the Reformation, the university was seen as an institution of socialization, a "passage" into civility and morality for a much larger and broader segment of the population.

Colonial Colleges in the New World

In the New World, a number of colleges emerged that were based on the European or English tradition. Harvard, William and Mary, Yale, and six other colleges before 1770, were all meant to provide a learned clergy and a lettered people; or as Rudolph (1962) explains, the colonial college “would train the school masters, the divines, the rulers, the cultured ornaments of society—the men who spell the difference between civilization and barbarism” (p. 6). So in terms of purpose, the medieval university and the colonial college were similar in that their autonomy was *granted* by either church or state (thereby defining the lines of accountability), and their role was largely utilitarian—in service to the state.

Ironically, just as the Reformation contributed to a shift in accountability in Europe from the *chartering authorities* to the *public*, secularization contributed to a similar shift in the New World. According to Hofstadter, “the most significant trend in collegiate education during the eighteenth century was the secularization of the colleges. By opening up new fields of study, both scientific and practical, by rarefying the devotional atmosphere of the colleges, and by introducing a note of skepticism and inquiry, the trend toward secular learning inevitably did much to liberate college work” (Hofstadter & Metzger, 1955, p. 185). However, Hofstadter adds that for all the gains

made by many sectarian colleges in the ante-bellum period, there were also several setbacks. First of all, the number of new colleges grew beyond the nation's resource base. Rudolph (1962) points out that "the American people went into the American Revolution with nine colleges. They went into the Civil War with approximately 250, of which 182 still survive" (p. 47).

By the mid-19th century, higher education in America was facing another crisis. In the years that preceded the Civil War, America experienced unprecedented economic growth. The growth ushered in an era of opportunity so alluring that even the most humble of citizens were motivated by the promise of economic and social advancement. Economic opportunity coupled with Andrew Jackson's political impact left higher education with empty desks and empty pockets. Until that time, higher education in America had been providing a service—training for the professions in law, medicine, and theology primarily, as well as the indoctrination of morality. However, the new industrial era was in need of citizens equipped with technical skills, much of which could be learned on-the-job. As a consequence, the future of higher education became in doubt.

In response, leaders in higher education at the time began to look for ways to steer the institution toward the future. The answer for many of them was science. And although science had already been a part of the curriculum, it was so "not as a course of vocational study but as the handmaiden of religion" (Rudolph, 1962, p. 226). By 1870, close to 25 institutions would open scientific departments (p. 223). Arguably, the capstone of this reform movement came with the Wayland Report in 1850. Francis Wayland, from Brown University, issued a provocative report calling for a new program

of courses in applied science, culture, law, and teaching. His goal was to “bring the American college into line with the main economic and social developments of the age” (Rudolph, 1962, p. 239).

Johns Hopkins was the first university to truly epitomize this tradition. According to Rudolph (1962), “Johns Hopkins was committed to a never-ending search for the truth. In reality, the old-time college had all the truth it needed in revealed religion and in the humanist tradition, and for that reason alone the philosophy of research and inquiry...was calculated to force a major adjustment in the purposes of American higher education” (p. 274).

In the decades that followed, America witnessed the birth and growth of dozens of new variations of the American university but two in particular made an indelible mark in the history of higher education—land-grant colleges and state universities (Rudolph, 1962, p. 275). According to Rudolph, state universities “served both to sustain the yeoman and to liberate the farm-boy and in doing so it kept its focus on the practical and allowed others to concern themselves with the theoretical. It became in America the temple of applied science, essentially institutionalizing the American’s traditional respect for the immediate and the useful” (p 265).

This climate also led to the growth of the land-grant university movement following the Morrill Act of 1862. These research universities were established on federal lands in order to promote agricultural research, technological research and development, and the establishment of agricultural research stations. These early land-grant universities combined research, teaching and technological transfer so as to meet

the needs of their agricultural constituents (farmers) and a burgeoning society (Campbell, 1995).

The growth and success of these two institutional types illustrates the onset of another shift in the form and function of the academy in America. In the preceding pages, I documented how the institution of higher education acquired its corporate form (institutional autonomy) and the shift in accountability from the church and state to the community as the functions shifted from service to the church and state to service to the community. Now we are witness to a new form of autonomy—*professional autonomy*—as we become accountable to our fellow scientists, and a new function (or mission)—the advancement of science in the name of human progress and welfare. Together, these fundamental changes are seen by historians as an unprecedented transformation of the institution of higher education.

The German University

Although it was not the first university to incorporate a research agenda as a primary function, the University of Berlin became so preeminent and had such good public relations that it soon earned credit for being the pioneer of research universities (McClelland, 1988). As such, it became the prototype for research universities across the globe. The German research university was certainly not the first to incorporate science and research into the mission of the academy. Rather, it was the first to emphasize and pursue the transcendent function of science as opposed to the technical and applied function. In fact, “the very notion of *Wissenschaft* had overtones of meaning utterly missing in its English counterpart, *science*. The German term signified a dedicated,

sanctified pursuit. It signified not merely the goal of rational understanding, but the goal of self-fulfillment; not merely the study of the 'exact sciences,' but of everything taught by the university; not the study of things for their immediate utilities, but the morally imperative study of things for themselves and for their ultimate meanings" (Hofstadter & Metzger, 1955, p. 373).

The research university claimed its autonomy and legitimacy by embracing the German ideal of "academic freedom." This ideal, based on the German concepts for professorial academic freedom and student freedom, *lehrfreiheit* and *lernfreiheit*, respectively, would become institutionalized in the United States in 1915 when the AAUP was established.

Whereas the earlier university experience was that of accountability to the church, state, and eventually the city, the research university became known as the "ivory tower" where science could be pursued and the mysteries of the universe uncovered without the intrusion of outside forces. Furthermore, the generation of knowledge and its application in our society was to be pursued with a healthy dose of value-neutrality.

This perception of being *detached* was so pervasive that it even affected scholars on the departmental level. So much so that it contributed to the migration of the Institute of Social Research from the Frankfurt School to America (Jay, 1988). This form of autonomy implies that the agent is only accountable to oneself or one's scientific discipline and that no justifications are necessary for the purpose of its existence other than the lofty and abstract notions of social progress. Questions pertaining to what

exactly constitutes progress, and what the appropriate means are for pursuing it, were left to the community of academic scholars.

In summary, the medieval college and university, as well as the colonial college and university, owed their corporate autonomy and allegiance to the power structure—be it religious, political, or civil. As such, faculty members were simply instruments of dissemination. However, the rise of the German research university facilitated a shift away from corporate autonomy and toward professional autonomy. This shift redirected the professorate's allegiance to their own "community of scholars" and ultimately lifted the occupation's prestige and status in American society.

Metropolitan Universities

In the foreword to the book, *Metropolitan Universities* (1995), Ernest A. Lynton explains: "A new breed of American universities, the metropolitan university is an institutional model committed to be responsive to the knowledge needs of its surrounding region, and dedicated to create active links between campus, community, and commerce" (p. XI). These universities typically serve a higher proportion of "non-traditional" students who are older, racially and ethnically diverse, and part-time. They tend to focus on programs of continuing education, professional development, and the education of practitioners. They emphasize community outreach through applied research and technical assistance. All of these characteristics contribute to a university model that is significantly different from the traditional English or German university models.

I raise this point to make the case that metropolitan universities appear to have a form, function, and links to accountability that are distinct from both the English and

German models. In form, metropolitan universities are the synthesis of the English and German models. They are in many ways what Clark Kerr (1991) refers to as the “multiversity”—providing a variety of services and resources to a variety of people and enterprises. In addition, given their urban environment, these institutions are often spread out and up to the point where the borders defining campus and community are virtually nonexistent.

In both mission and in practice, metropolitan universities aspire toward establishing and nurturing partnerships and symbiotic relationships with their host communities. And in contrast to the ivory towers and professionally aloof faculty in the more traditional models, metropolitan universities and their faculty claim to be more sensitive and self-aware of their roles and responsibilities as key agents in urban policy and to everyday life and everyday problems. They are, in essence, “urban-grant” universities whose relationship and linkages to the external world are symbiotic and mutually rewarding, rather than the linear and parochial linkages that tended to characterize their colonial predecessors or the direct service orientation of their land-grant cousins.

Today, our public colleges and universities are no longer subservient to the church as were our colonial colleges and universities. The main threats to the institutional autonomy of our public universities (as well as the main determinant of what form of autonomy an institution will acquire) are state governments; coordinating boards; judicial intervention, as in the cases of Affirmative Action; and state accrediting agencies (Berdahl & McConnell, 1994). John D. Millett (1984) identifies this growth in

governmental intervention into higher education as a trend that began in the post-G.I. Bill era when the nation faced economic stagnation, states experienced budgetary debt, and universities experienced a waning of public support concerning the economic utility of our institutions of higher education. This has particular implications for metropolitan universities.

Faced with these current constraints, leaders of metropolitan universities must be able to find their niche (Newman, 1987) so as to avoid redundancy in institutional mission. They must be constantly engaged with their environment in order to recognize and deliver what the public demands—thereby serving a more utilitarian function—while at the same time they must be able to expand the borders of science—pursuing and fostering innovativeness. The former requires a finger on the pulse of the host community and society. The latter requires an understanding of and respect for academic freedom. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, in order to succeed, they must be self-reflective—constantly monitoring their progress in both areas and making necessary changes where appropriate.

The Professorate

The old-time college professor, in a word, was a character (Rudolph, 1962). Couched in an era where there were few educational resources at one's disposal (e.g., buildings, rooms, desks, books, students, etc.), the old-time professor had to rely on his powers of persuasion, conviction, and oration to fulfill the mission of the old-time college—the production of a trained clergy, a learned citizenry, and a moral character. They were well-rounded, old-fashioned men of culture whose job it was to produce the

same. Rudolph (1962) makes reference to the “Mark Hopkins Ideal” as the epitome of the old-time professor—one who sits on a log with his student engaged in the transmission of knowledge without the need for props or tools. In this sense, he was both a teacher and a mentor.

However, whatever relative prestige the faculty had in the eyes of their respective student bodies was offset by the lack of pay and respect by those who employed them. They were often treated as “theological salesmen,” especially during the Great Awakening, and whatever freedom or autonomy they had as teachers they had little of each as inquirers into ultimate truth and justice. As such, their autonomy was limited as they saw themselves as extensions of the church and state. And although they were motivated more so by a “calling” than a “career,” they remained accountable to secular authorities.

If “character” was the defining characteristic of the old-time professor, then “prestige” would become the defining characteristic of the new-professor and the Ph.D. would become the “badge” of respectability (Rudolph, 1962). It became a symbol of respect, competence, aptitude, experience, and standardization, all of which were missing to some extent in the old-time professor. The new professor was motivated by the German ideal of scholarship—generating new knowledge, testing theory, and the sharpening of the mind.

As the Germanic influence began to shape the course of the university movement in America, including the status and role of the faculty, it also triggered changes in the organization of the university. The expansion of the institutions of higher education

coupled with the tremendous growth in knowledge resulted in two organizational developments—the academic hierarchy of the faculty, and the departmentalization of knowledge. Together, they would coordinate “an otherwise unwieldy number of academic specialists into the framework of university government; it was also a development that unleashed all of that competitiveness, that currying of favor, that attention to public relations, that scrambling for students, that pettiness and jealousy which in some of its manifestations made the university and college indistinguishable from other organizations” (Rudolph, 1962, p. 400).

Other than a gain in prestige and status, the faculty also gained a great deal of individual and professional autonomy over their work. De George (1997) referred to this as *epistemic authority* and it is based on the fact that the professorate is the one group in the institution that has the most experience with the product—knowledge. Based on the German concept of academic freedom briefly described above, faculty members endeavored to create an environment conducive to the principles of scientific method and inquiry in the pursuit of knowledge and truth. These principles, in effect, unified the faculty with a common framework and purpose. As a consequence, however, the faculty lost their institutional commitment and psychological security as these were replaced by professional commitment and a new reverence for the dynamic nature of knowledge.

The steady professionalization of the faculty culminated in the establishment of the AAUP in 1915. In part a public relations campaign to seek respectability and gain legitimization for the new professor, it was also an attempt to clarify the concepts of academic freedom and tenure and their significance for both the institution of higher

education and the society for which it serves. I will examine both concepts in more detail in the next section but for now, suffice it to say that both are critical for defining the new role of the faculty in the new research-oriented university—the unfettered search for the truth.

A subsequent development to the professionalization of the faculty is a growth in its agencies—learned journals, learned societies, and university presses. So, where the epitome of the old-time professor was Mark Hopkins on one end of a log and a student on the other the epitome of the new-time professor would be “publish or perish.”

In more recent years, as we have moved further into a post-industrial economy, professional service and technological development and transfer have become more in demand and our institutions of higher education have responded—especially metropolitan universities. Consequently, what defines “good” scholarship in these institutions, as well as the reward systems that reflect such, should be modified to honor this third dimension of the university mission—service (or the application of knowledge) in a postmodern America (Boyer, 1997). Furthermore, what will be the implications for academic freedom and tenure? In the colonial college the professor relied on academic freedom largely for instructional purposes. In the research university the professor relied on academic freedom more so for his or her scholarly endeavors. In metropolitan universities, the professorate must be able to balance the temptation to do “applied” research in pursuit of professional service with the need to exercise academic freedom in their own scholarly endeavors.

Academic Freedom

In this section, I will discuss the concept of academic freedom in the western world and its development in America. I will then examine the threats to, and protections for, academic freedom and how they have changed as our conception of academic freedom has changed.

In the colonial colleges, designed in the image of the English model (Oxford and Cambridge), academic freedom was more in the guise of religious freedom and civil freedom for the *student*. Professors, whose primary responsibilities were teaching and mentoring, were viewed and treated more as hired hands or as means to an end. Professors were often kept in check by what Metzger calls “restraint by recruitment” (Hofstadter & Metzger, 1955, p. 155). Consequently, academic freedom, as it pertained to the professors’ liberties in the areas of instruction and inquiry, was severely limited.

Metzger identified three factors that “blighted the courage and imagination of college science” in this period (Hofstadter & Metzger, 1955, p. 285). The first was the tendency to emphasize utility and practicality. This emphasis clearly manifested itself in the fact that teaching was a higher priority than research for the average professor. A second factor was the emphasis on doctrinal moralism—the indoctrination of morality in youth. The third was simply due to the substantive limitations of natural theology. “Freedom thrives on desire and desire on opportunity; and these ideals [traditionalism, paternalism, doctrinal moralism, and sectarianism] were an effective prophylactic against the passion and incitement to be free “(p. 303). Later Metzger adds, “As long as

conserving was the foremost ideal, academic freedom was a freedom *for*, not *in*, the colleges” (Hofstadter & Metzger, 1955, p. 317).

Soon, however, the ethos of conservation would yield to the ideal of exploration, and institutions of higher education would go through their first major transformation in North America. Metzger identifies three forces at work (Hofstadter & Metzger, 1955). The first is the unhooking of moral certainties, which was brought about by three sweeping, socio-cultural forces that were landscaping the western world—urbanization, industrialization, and secularization. The second force, Darwinism, was largely responsible for unleashing the creative potential of science, which in no way rebuked the virtues of utility-based science: it simply added a new dimension to its endeavor—the search for truth. The third force was the adoption and diffusion of the German university model. With a shift in function from conservation to exploration came a shift in the status and role of the university professor and subsequently, a shift in the meaning and practice of academic freedom.

The new emphasis on searching and exploration as functions of higher education are captured rather eloquently by a quote from the Board of Regents at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1894 after a rare defense of a professor, Richard Ely, who stood accused of supporting labor union strikes. The quote reads, “Whatever may be the limitations which trammel inquiry elsewhere, we believe that the great state university of Wisconsin should ever encourage that continual and fearless sifting and winnowing by which alone the truth can be found” (Hansen, 1998:p.312).

The onset of this transformation did not come with a full consensus. There were many nay-sayers like Andrew West, who in 1885 referred to the liberating forces within higher education as “a crisis greater than any they have hitherto been called upon to meet” (Hansen, 1998, p. 432). Later he added, “In short, it means not the construction of a real university; but the destruction of what little good we now have in our preparatory education...what our youth most need is discipline of character, deeply inwrought with their studies. What our culture needs is men first and specialists second (p. 442-443). However, the inertia of tradition could not withstand the impetus of reform and soon the concept of academic freedom for the scholar became a subject of public debate, critique, and refinement.

One of the first notable scholars to pick up the debate and help articulate general principles of academic freedom was John Dewey (1902). Dewey makes the distinction between institutions of higher education whose mission it is to “discipline” from those whose mission is to “disciple.” The former has been explicitly linked to the English model of college and the latter with the German model university. As such, academic freedom is more of an issue for the individual professor in the former whereas it is an issue for the entire institution in the latter. Dewey explains:

It is clear that in this sphere any attack, or even any restriction, upon academic freedom is directed against the university itself. To investigate truth; critically to verify fact; to reach conclusions by means of the best methods at command, untrammelled by external fear or favor, to communicate this truth to the student; to interpret to him its bearing on the questions he will have to face in life—this is precisely the aim and objective of the university. To aim a blow at any one of these operations is to deal a vital wound to the university itself (p. 3).

Dewey (1902) also suggests that it is the “backward sciences,” those without the luxury of universal laws and theorems, such as the humanities and social sciences that are the ones who most need academic freedom. He felt that if the fledgling social sciences were granted academic freedom along with the guidance and discipline of the scientific method (already granted to the natural sciences), we would soon see the fruits of our labor just as we did with the natural sciences in the land-grant tradition. Social progress and human emancipation would be at our disposal.

Other than the rights of scholars to pursue, critique, and express the “truth,” there also arose limitations and responsibilities. In his convocation address in 1900, William R. Harper, President of the University of Chicago, warned, “Academic frædom is not exhausted in the right to express opinion. More fundamental is the matter of freedom of *work*” [italics added] (Harper, 1900, p. 8). This is what distinguishes academic freedom from other civil liberties—where the later is granted to all citizens in both public and private life, the former is granted to scholars as a precondition for their work. Harper identified a number of internal threats to the scholars’ work and to academic freedom which gives legitimacy to the concern that faculty not only have a right to academic freedom but they also have a responsibility and obligation to protect it from misuse and abuse as a community of scholars. Butler (1914) made the case rather succinctly when he said, “Most abuses of academic freedom are due simply to bad manners and the lack of ordinary tact and judgment. In order to prove that one is individually free it is not necessary to be an ass or to use violent or insulting language toward those with whom one is not in agreement” (p. 292).

In 1915, the concepts of academic freedom, tenure (seen as a means to its end), and the correlative duties and responsibilities were finally hammered out after the first official meeting of the AAUP. And although it did provide a declaration of these general principles, it was seen as more of a publicity campaign to gain respect from governing boards and presidents as well as the general public (for excerpts of the original AAUP statements on academic freedom, tenure, and the correlative responsibilities, please see Appendix A).

By World War I, however, the principles needed further clarification because the war and the national interests therein began to challenge the preeminence of academic freedom and the authority of the scholar in its practice. Similar to the cases that precluded the formation of the AAUP in the first place, a number of cases arose regarding the “freedom” of professors in utterances off-campus and outside the realm of their expertise. As a result, Committee A of the AAUP reconvened in 1917 for matters pertaining to academic freedom in wartime. The committee concluded “that there are four grounds upon which the dismissal of a member of a faculty of a college or university by the academic authorities, because of his attitude or conduct in relation to the war, may be legitimate. Of these grounds, three presuppose no prior action on the part of any governmental official” (AAUP, Committee A, 1918, p. 34). These included: (1) any faculty member who was “convicted of disobedience to any statute or lawful executive order relating to the war;” (2) any faculty member who engages in “propaganda designed or unmistakably tending to cause others to resist or evade the compulsory service law or the regulations of the military authorities;” (3) any faculty member who seeks “to

dissuade others from rendering voluntary assistance to the efforts of the government;” and (4) any faculty member whose allegiance to the enemy is preordained prior to their appointment must “abstain from any act tending to promote the military advantage of the enemy or hamper the efforts of the U.S.” (AAUP, Committee A, 1918, p. 34)

The report concludes that these clarifications do not in any way undermine the principle of academic freedom as the following statement illustrates: “Any seeming inconsistency will, however, disappear if the reader will bear in mind a simple distinction, which is fundamental to the entire report. There is a plain difference between an attempt to persuade citizens or legislators, by argument, to favor, or oppose, a project or law not yet enacted, and an attempt to persuade individuals to disobey or evade or render ineffective a law already enacted (AAUP, Committee A, 1918, p. 44).

In 1955, Robert M. MacIver published *Academic Freedom in Our Time* in an attempt to redefine and defend the principles of academic freedom, tenure and the transcendent function of the university. Living in the context of McCarthyism, MacIver wrote, “the aggravated assaults on academic freedom and the general disesteem of intellectual enterprise characteristic of our country at this time furnish the occasion of this work. It will serve its purpose so far as it helps to show the need for a stouter defense and yet greater need for a wider understanding of the intrinsic values of higher education” (MacIver, 1955, Preface section).

MacIver’s (1955) definition of academic freedom consists of three dimensions. *Institutional* freedom defines *where* or under what circumstances this special freedom can be exercised. *Professional* freedom indicates who has the right to this freedom. Here he

refers to the faculty as members of a guild. He is also careful to say that this professional autonomy confers a certain responsibility to police one's own. He also describes academic freedom as a *functional* freedom. "Here," he adds, "lies its full significance"

(p. 10). MacIver writes:

An educator has various other professional tasks to do, subsidiary to his primary function. He plans courses and prepares materials, he sits on committees of various kinds, he examines and grades his students, he discusses their problems, and so forth. But the reason he belongs to the guild of educators, the reason he has a place in an institution of higher learning, is that he is first and foremost engaged in the pursuit and communication of knowledge. This function is a community service, and its importance can hardly be overestimated. The service of the educator is not a service to his students alone or to his institution or to his profession. It is a service to his country, a service to civilization, a service to mankind (p. 10).

MacIver proceeds to make the case that the primary threat to academic freedom during his time was from those "who are unwilling to let our colleges and universities be themselves, who are constantly agitating to make them agencies for the propagation of particular causes" (p. 17). He also attributes some of the blame to the weak understanding and defense of academic freedom by the professorate. Regarding the latter, he writes, "It has in various areas been infected by the anti-intellectual basis of the times, which makes of knowledge a merely instrumental good" (p. 276). He adds, "The infection has been especially prevalent in those areas of knowledge where it can do the most harm, in the social sciences and in educational studies" (p. 277).

After dismissing any attempts by the AAUP to "knit together the profession," MacIver (1955) calls for faculty response: "With greater awareness and greater professional coherence would come as improvement in strategy where action is needed.

Too frequently in recent years a faculty has been confronted suddenly with a grave violation of its freedom. It is unprepared, has no policy in advance, has no clear leadership, and is likely to suffer from divided counsels. In this area the strategy of defense is more difficult than the strategy of attack, and the battle may be lost before it ever begins” (p. 279-280). I will discuss more current issues associated with the professorate, academic freedom, and the institution of higher education in a subsequent section in this chapter subtitled, “Post World War II: Seeds of Change.” Now I will turn to the primary threats to, and protections for, academic freedom and how they have evolved over the last century.

Threats to, and Protections for, Academic Freedom

One way to understand and appreciate the abstract and dynamic nature of academic freedom is to identify those periods when it was most vulnerable and examine the policies that arose to protect it. In a book entitled *Zealotry and Academic Freedom*, Hamilton (1995) examines the history of academic freedom in modern America. He identifies seven waves of zealotry in which academic freedom has been threatened. After defining the cornerstones of the liberal intellectual system (the *skeptical rule* based on the Popperian principle of falsifiability and the *empirical rule* where objectivity is gained through methodological rigor), Hamilton explains:

Suppression of others results when extreme proponents of an ideology embrace zealotry to impose or enforce the ideology. Zealotry enforcing an ideology within the university has common features: (1) belief unshakable in its correctness substituted for thorough gathering of the relevant evidence, accuracy in its recording and use, careful and impartial consideration of the weight of the evidence, analytical reasoning from the evidence to the proposition, and internal consistency (whereas a strong ideology implies dogmatism and closure, zealotry insists upon them); (2)

rejection of the notion that “you might be wrong” and refusal to subject beliefs to the normal checking process of academic inquiry to rectify error; (3) conviction that the ideology occupies moral ground higher than free speech and the liberal intellectual system and that heretics must be prevented from harming the higher morality; (4) belief that dissent is not merely wrong but it is lying by denying the evident truth and thus deserves punishment; (5) tactics of harassment and intimidation to suppress and eliminate the immoral heretical thought and speech, particularly the labeling of disagreement as an act of moral turpitude; and (6) tactics of manipulative persuasion substituted for responsible assertion, reasoned debate, and fairness and balance in argument and controversy (p. 2).

Tables 1, 2, and 3 present a summary of Hamilton’s (1995) major suppositions regarding the development of academic freedom in the twentieth century. Table 1 summarizes the seven major waves of zealotry that have shaped the development of academic freedom during this time period. Table 2 represents the common tactics that were used during each “wave.” Lastly, Table 3 lists the similarities that Hamilton identifies as characteristic of each of these “waves.”

One of the major differences between these “waves of zealotry” against academic freedom is that the early waves were characterized by external, overt threats. As a result, there was an emphasis on tenure as the primary mode of protection. The more recent waves are defined by internal and more covert threats starting with number 5

McCarthyism (Table 1). As a result, the AAUP began to shift their emphasis toward the correlative. One of the major differences between these “waves of zealotry” against academic freedom is that the early waves were characterized by external, overt threats. As a result, there was an emphasis on tenure as the primary mode of protection. The more recent waves are defined by internal and more covert threats starting with number 5

Table 1

Seven Waves of Zealotry

-
1. Religious fundamentalism of trustees and administrators (1870s)
 2. Unfettered capitalism of trustees (early 1900s)
 3. Patriotism movement during World War I (1917ish)
 4. Anti-communism prior to and during World War II (early 1940s)
 5. McCarthyism during early 1950s
 6. Student activism during mid/late 1960s
 7. Fundamentalism "New Academic Left" (1990s)
-

Table 2

Common Tactics Used in Each Wave

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1. Public accusation
 2. Social ostracism
 3. Investigations
 4. Tribunals
 5. Threats to employment
 6. Disruption of speeches, classes, and administrative functions
-

Table 3

Similarities in Each Wave

-
- 1 Periods of zealotry in service of a variety of strong ideologies have been frequent in higher education, occurring approximately every 15 to 20 years.
 - 2 Waves of zealotry originated both from without and from within the faculty and student body.
 - 3 During any particular period, it was difficult to predict the ideological direction from which the next wave would come.
 - 4 In each wave, zealots labeled disagreement as heresy, demonstrating the moral turpitude of the heretic, and justifying a variety of coercive tactics to harass and to eliminate heretical academic thought and speech. A favorite tactic has been to subject alleged heretics to investigation and tribunal. These have been especially effective against vulnerable groups like students, candidates for appointment, and untenured faculty. In a number of these periods of zealotry, attacks on the academic freedom of competent dissent were disguised as pretextual accusations of other misconduct.
 - 5 Once unleashed, zealotry did not stop with targets who were clearly heretics like communists and bigots; it attacked others for political advantage.
 - 6 The usual faculty response of silent acquiescence in the face of coercive tactics has been the ballast of ideological zealotry in each wave.
 - 7 There were instances in each period where faculty or administration, or both, publicly defended academic freedom.
 - 8 The major result in each wave was not just the silencing of the targets but also the silencing of a vastly greater number of potential speakers who would steer wide of possible punishment.
-

McCarthyism (Table 1). As a result, the AAUP began to shift their emphasis toward the correlative McCarthyism. As a result, the AAUP began to shift their emphasis toward the correlative duties and responsibilities as the primary mode for protection. MacIver (1955) writes:

Our institutional weakness is evidenced in the weakness of our strategy when the educational integrity of our institutions is assailed. With greater awareness of the issues, we would exhibit more unity and more courage. The defense has not been conspicuous for either of those qualities. We do not sufficiently recognize that if one member is unfairly attacked, all of us are implicated; or that if another institution is under fire, it is our concern as well. There is testimony both from administrators and teachers that colleges and universities, particularly the smaller colleges, feel insulated when they are struggling to protect themselves. One reason is that the academic profession is not nearly so well organized as are the other major professions, such as medicine and law. And there is the further disability that its own institutional guardians have in so many cases either stood aside from the battle or even sided with the enemy (p. 279).

A second difference, according to Hamilton (1995), is that the latest round of assaults on academic freedom, assaults emanating from the academic left, have the potential to do the most damage because they target the very philosophical foundation on which the principles of academic freedom rest—a liberal, progressive intellectual base.

Hamilton writes:

In all earlier periods, zealots ignored the rights of academic freedom using coercive tactics to suppress heretical thought and speech, but they did not assault the principle of academic freedom itself. The current wave of zealotry from the fundamentalist academic left is the first both to ignore rights of academic freedom and to deny the legitimacy of the premises upon which professional academic freedom rests. Fundamentalist ideology seeks to give intellectual to the politicization of the university. To the degree the ideology gains acceptance, academics will be left without a principled defense when university employers or other groups choose to exercise political and economic power to interfere with academics' professional autonomy. Professional autonomy will exist

under these circumstances only as long as the professorate exercises more political or economic power than employers and other groups (p. 248).

Hamilton continues, “This position is fatal to professional academic freedom. Our tradition of professional academic freedom is premised upon a progressive concept of knowledge. If there is no knowledge, and no way to distinguish fact from perception or reason from rhetoric, then professional academic freedom has no privileged defense” (p. 250).

Tenure

Simply put, tenure is a means to an end. The 1940 statement articulates the following, “Tenure is a means to certain ends; specifically: (1) freedom of teaching and research and of extramural activities, and (2) a sufficient degree of economic security to make the profession attractive to men and women of ability. Freedom and economic security, hence, tenure, are indispensable to the success of an institution fulfilling its obligations to its students and to society” Later in the statement, the authors add, “After the expiration of a probationary period, teachers or investigators should have permanent or continuous tenure, and their service should be terminated only for adequate cause, except in the case of retirement for age, or under extraordinary circumstances because of financial exigencies” (AAUP, <http://www.aaup.org/statements/Redbook/1940stat.htm>).

The justification for tenure is ancient. In “Tenure for Socrates,” Huer (1991) writes, “In the ancient Orient the king would appoint a most respected scholar to a post whose job consisted solely of criticizing the king’s conduct. With the job went the guarantee that no matter what he said about the king’s conduct, he would not be punished for his honest opinion. It is an amazing feat of creativity that a modern market society

appoints its most educated yet practically useless segment to a protected position just to tell the truth about the society itself” (p. 25).

This concept of truth is once again premised on the principles of a liberal educational system where knowledge is both falsifiable and rigorously pursued through objective scientific methods. Tenure, and the German version of academic freedom, has no philosophical presupposition in the more traditional sense of knowledge and its usage as was found in the colonial colleges during the ante-bellum period.

In summation, it is clear that when we consider the context in which the AAUP first formulated the principles of academic freedom and tenure in 1915, tenure was meant to protect professors research, teaching, and external utterances from *external* forces—namely, the influence of boards of trustees, legislatures, college presidents, and the general public. However, there remained (and continues to remain) a number of internal threats.

Post World War II: Seeds of Change

Following the World War II, the institution of higher education experienced another major transformation, similar in many ways to the period that followed the Civil War. However, it was unique in many ways, which prompted Clark Kerr (1991) to coin it *The Great Transformation in Higher Education: 1960-1980* in his book by the same title. “By the end of this period, there will be a truly American university, an institution unique in world history, an institution not looking to other models but itself serving as a model for universities in other parts of the globe” (p. 113).

Kerr (1991) describes the essence of this transformation as one in which the university becomes “a prime instrument of national purpose” (p. 113). This is one of the key similarities between the two major transformations in each post-war period. In the 1870s, as science and the land-grant movement spread across the continent, higher education linked itself to the industrialization and agribusiness that was fueling the national economy and spirit. In the 1960s, it linked itself to the advancement of science and technology and the emancipation of oppressed groups both through access to higher education and to the new professions that arose in and around the university at the time.

Another similarity was the sheer growth, in both the student body and the institutional resources devoted to their instruction—including the number of institutions. In the 1870s it was defined by a shift from serving an elite “Jeffersonian” clientele to one more open to the Jacksonian masses.

Kerr (1991) suggests that this “great transformation” took place in three phases. In the first phase, 1960-1965 was a period defined by the tidal wave of students described in the previous paragraph. The second phase, 1965-1975, was marked by student revolts and economic recessions. The third phase, from 1975-1980, is described as a period of “shaky restabilization.” In Kerr’s words, “the first was a Golden Age; the second, a descent into a time of troubles for much of higher education; the third, a grey day of reality following survival, of innocence gone forever” (p. 109).

Kerr (1991) identified several key adjustments that took place in higher education during this second “great transformation,” all of which distinguish it from any other period in history. One was a shift in academic emphasis. Part of this shift manifested

itself in the birth of the “knowledge working” professions like social work and business administration. Another dimension to the shifting academic emphasis was noted by growth in the biological sciences. “If the first half of the twentieth century may be said to have belonged to the physical sciences, the second half may well belong to the biological (Kerr, 1991, p. 118).” He adds a caveat, though, warning of a shift in the balance of research and resources between departments.

A second distinguishing feature of the latest transformation is the increased involvement of higher education in the “life of society.” This involvement goes above and beyond the economic and industrial, which also increased during this period. It also included extension divisions that reached out into the host communities and in the fine arts where universities took advantage of their own resources in an effort to become cultural centers as well. This was particularly true for the urban public universities (metropolitan universities) which have become the equivalent of the land-grant university for the metropolis. The last characteristic that Kerr (1991) attributes to this period of change was tremendous growth in the involvement of the federal government in the operations of higher education.

Kerr (1991) observes that, “the 1870s and the 1960s had at least two things in common—a spurt of growth in enrollments that made additions of new faculty and new programs much easier, and new surges forward in national efforts in which higher education could participate” (p. 146-147). On the other hand, one of the defining distinctions between each period was that the impetus for change came from within the academy in the first major transformation, whereas the latest transformation was viewed

more as adjustments to outside forces beyond the institutions direct control. Furthermore, “the internal academic changes that accompanied these forward movements were generally fruitful after the Civil War but generally not in the 1960s” (Kerr, 1991, p. 147).

In conclusion, Kerr (1991) identified a number of issues that higher education will face. One of them has particular relevance for this study and was a central concern for Kerr—self-governance. According to Kerr, when we look at the three layers of faculty self-governance: formal structures, mental attitudes, and informal structures of decision making, “it is in the second of these areas that higher education underwent a transformation” (p. 156). In Kerr’s words, “The second leg of a three-legged stool of governance is attitudes, such as the degree of tolerance for the opinion of others and the comparative respect for authority. The spirit that animates conduct, the mentalities that inform approaches to problems, can turn the same system of formal governance from a low level of Paradise to an advanced level of the Inferno” (p. 155). The “most serious consequences” of which, according to Kerr, include: the loss of tolerance toward the presentation of controversial issues in the classrooms and on campus platforms, and more timidity in general in the face of group pressure; weakened administrative leadership; and less autonomy on campus in many public institutions (p. 154).

The Current Crisis

In many ways, Kerr’s (1991) observations were both humbling and prophetic. A review of the literature in higher education from the 1980s to present offers a great deal of evidentiary support. Many of the topics that were researched and debated revolved around “problems” concerning the faculty, institutional mission and direction, as well as

academic freedom and tenure. Of course, as the previous literature review indicates, this is not the first time (or last) that such scrutiny has been directed at the institution of higher education. However, what is unique about this latest round of attention is that it is occurring during a period of relative peace and social stability. The previous occasions of heightened public scrutiny took place during periods of domestic social turmoil or international war. Only this latest period of “alleged” infringements on academic freedom and tenure has come from inside the academy.

Given this rather unique circumstance, many observers have been prompted to direct the finger of blame toward the professorate. Such was the sentiment of Paul H. L. Walters during his Presidential address to the 72nd meeting of the AAUP, when he said, “The most dangerous threat to academic freedom is that which comes from within the professorate itself.”

Others find plenty of evidence of “arbitrary and capricious abrogation of faculty rights” by administrators (Slaughter, 1994). Slaughter has published several articles in the last two decades that examined the state of academic freedom, the professorate, and the institution of higher education at the turn of the century. Both articles appeared in the highly regarded series *Higher Education in American Society* edited, in part, by the noted higher education historians, Phillip G. Altbach and Robert O. Berdahl. Both articles (1981, 1994) consist of research that examines data gathered by the AAUP Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure—cases that have been published in the journal, *Academe*, for the decades of the 1970s and 1980s, respectively.

In, *Academic Freedom at the end of the Century: Professional Labor, Gender, and Professionalization*, Slaughter (1994) reviews 47 academic freedom cases that were investigated by the AAUP between the years of 1980 and 1990. She acknowledges that the nature of the data is somewhat biased but she insists that, “the process by which the AAUP staff chooses cases for *Academe* probably compensates for the unrepresentativeness and serves well my concern with understanding threats to academic freedom. The AAUP staff selects cases for *Academe* because they illuminate pressing problems facing the academic community” (p. 74).

Slaughter (1994) begins with a general comparison of the cases investigated by the AAUP between the two decades. She found that both decades witnessed a high number of financial exigency/retrenchment cases, which led to a general restructuring of higher education. The 1980s witnessed a small increase in the number of gender-related issues compared to the 1970s. Cases involving the ideologies of students and/or professors waned a bit in the 1980s. Finally, administrative abuse cases increased slightly in the 1980s.

In those cases that were specific to the 1980s, the majority (70%) of them were divided between cases involving retrenchment and program restructuring (36%) and administrative abuse (34%). With respect to the former, Slaughter (1994) identifies the planning process and the overuse of part-time faculty as key indications of the shift in authority from the professorate to the administration. According to Slaughter, “Strategic planning posed problems to academic freedom because the process often undercut faculty authority with regard to curricular decisions and faculty review. In effect, administrators

took over long-range curricular decision making when they, not faculty, made decisions to expand some programs and cut others. Administrators also reviewed all faculty, tenured or not, when decisions to cut were made, effectively substituting their judgments about hiring and firing for peer review committee's judgments on promotion and tenure" (Slaughter, 1994, p. 79).

Later, Slaughter (1994) expresses her concerns about a two-tiered work force in higher education—composed of part-timers and full-timers. She writes: "A two-tier work force posed many problems for academic freedom. A two-tier work force often resulted in a divided academy, marked by internal inequities and unequal rights. Faculty in the second tier were generally not incorporated into the system of rights and responsibilities that had evolved for faculty. Increased reliance on second tier faculty for cheap labor meant that fewer faculty generally had access to tenure and to the academic freedom that accompanies tenure" (p. 81). Slaughter attributes this shift in the power base of the academy to university managers who felt compelled to model their institutions after the business model—using many of the same kinds of tactics and strategies used by many CEOs in the 1970s (p. 96). Tactics such as pressuring the faculty into a loss of academic line, heavier teaching loads, and the reduction of benefits, in concert, result in the general fragmentation of the faculty and a reduction in professional autonomy. In conclusion, Slaughter writes, "Overall, the academic freedom cases of the 1980s points to the ways in which threats to academic freedom shift as historical conditions change. The financial exigency and retrenchment cases of the 1970s were replaced by reorganization and reallocation, and a deepening threat to tenure. Challenges

to political orthodoxy that characterized the 1970s became challenges to gender ideology in the 1980s. Only the struggle on the part of faculty to gain professional autonomy remained fairly constant, although this struggle may have become more difficult” (Slaughter, 1994, p. 97).

The question remains, however, as to whether the professorate has “fumbled” the responsibility built into the authority associated with professional autonomy; or, has the university administration and bureaucracy usurped the authority from the faculty under the guise of retrenchment or financial exigency. Slaughter (1994) seems to favor the latter. Other authors push the responsibility back into the laps of the professorate.

In 1993, Edward Shils asked the question, “Do we still need academic freedom?” in an article by the same name. Shils also placed some of the responsibility (or irresponsibility) in the administration suggesting that they are reluctant to get involved in many circumstances where academic freedom is a central issue. Shils wrote: “Administrators are nowadays very fearful of taking actions of a sort which were, until about a quarter of a century ago, regarded as infringements on academic freedom proper or on the civil freedom of academics. Indeed, they lean over backward to avoid such infringements....It goes without saying that many teachers now enjoy a high degree of freedom to infringe on the obligations of academic life, such as conscientious teaching, respect for evidence.” (p. 198).

Shils (1993) also makes the observation that beginning in the 1960s, the AAUP began to shift the priority of its agenda regarding academic freedom from the protection of the rights of the professorate to pursue their own research unencumbered by the threat

of dismissal to the second component of academic freedom, issues regarding self-governance. More specifically, the AAUP took up issues pertaining to terms of appointments (i.e., job security, salaries, promotion, teaching load, etc.). In the 1970s, the AAUP took on the issues of collective bargaining and unionization. It was not long after this shift in priority, according to Shils (1993), that the professorate began to view their appointments as “jobs” that they could be “hired” and “fired” from. As a consequence, the “calling” that used to define and motivate the professorial profession has waned and as a result, professors have begun to take their “jobs” for granted and as such, many professors have learned to neglect, or worse, abuse the rights and obligations associated with academic freedom. Shils writes, “Nevertheless, in some respects, academic freedom is more infringed on now than it has been for several decades. These latter infringements are not unilaterally imposed by university administrators or instigated by the old external custodians—often self-appointed—of the university. They are imposed by incumbent academics, encouraged by the policies of the federal government, which is a relative newcomer on the academic scene. Infringements on academic freedom are nowadays, to a greater extent, infringements imposed from within the university and even from within the teaching staff” (p. 206). Hamilton (1995) comes to a similar conclusion. He writes, “During each wave of zealotry, most egregious during the last three since the 1940 statement, the faculty as a collegial body and the administration of many universities frequently failed both to address the zealotry and to protect the academic freedom of alleged heretics. The faculty’s usual public response of silent acquiescence to coercive tactics has been the ballast of the ideological zealotry in each

period” (p. 235). Hamilton offers a number of reasons why professional autonomy in higher education is weak (see Table 4).

Table 4

Explanations for Weak Professional Autonomy

Faculty Weakness

- 1 Inadequate preparation for professional roles and responsibilities
- 2 Ambivalence about public defending academic freedom for opposing ideas
- 3 Fear of damage to reputation and career
- 4 Reprisals based on personal grudges
- 5 Common traits of academics--individualism and autonomy, intellectualize problems, conflict avoiders

Administration Weakness

- 1 Conflict avoiders--public relations oriented
 - 2 Lack vision/leadership--more like politicians/managers
-

Summary

In summation, it appears as though the institution of higher education in America is at a crossroad yet again, and the professorate continues to occupy a rather unique position of authority—whether they know it or not. The literature reviewed in this chapter suggests that the last two “great transformations” in American higher education were due in part to fairly major socio-economic changes. These in turn led to the genesis and development of academic freedom and its subsequent threats and protections. Hence, academic freedom, tenure, and the professorate are, for the time being, inextricably linked to higher education and the future of our society.

Another theme that emerges from the literature is the pivotal role that the professorate plays as these “great transformations” unfold. Recall that during the first “great transformation” it was the professorate, especially from the sciences, who were able to unify and lift the profession as well as steer the institution of higher education into a golden age. They did so by investing in a broader—or *transcendent* notion of both academic freedom, and science. Tenure then, was established to protect faculty who were willing to exercise this transcendent notion of academic freedom from *external* agents or agencies. If the professorate no longer views academic freedom in this way, do we still need tenure? Moreover, if faculty no longer views academic freedom in this way, do we still have a progressive liberal education system with a community of scholars? Lastly, even if the professorate does share a transcendent notion of academic freedom, is tenure effective at promoting academic freedom on a campus, and protecting it from *internal* abuse and neglect?

How the professorate chooses to define academic freedom does have, and will continue to have, significant implications for the role of tenure, the professorate, and the institution of higher education in the U.S. In general, if the professorate views academic freedom narrowly—as synonymous with first amendment right to free speech and expression, the tenure will be more self-serving—regarded as a badge of prestige and job security, and higher education will evolve into more of a vocational training system. Or, perhaps the professorate still harbors a transcendent notion of academic freedom, but they may have a narrow understanding of the role of tenure. In this case, tenure will not foster or protect academic freedom and higher education will be caught in limbo—serving one

mission in theory and another in practice. It is my impression that we are already in this state of affairs. A third scenario involves a professorate who understands and appreciates the broader, or *transcendent*, role of academic freedom and tenure in our society and chooses to promulgate each continuously in an effort to build and maintain professional autonomy (as opposed to only occasionally when we are periodically under attack).

Therefore, I intend to interview faculty members about their understanding of the concepts of academic freedom and tenure. This will be informative for at least two reasons. First, the study will provide a benchmark that can be used to gauge the level of academic freedom and professional autonomy. Secondly, although this is explorative research, I hope it will provoke additional research in this area—research that may act as a catalyst for increasing professional autonomy.

The next chapter will review the research that has been conducted on faculty attitudes on the nature and role of academic freedom, tenure, and the institution of higher education in America. The chapter pays particular attention to how their attitudes and beliefs on these subjects are shaped by institutional type, discipline, and longevity in the profession. The chapter concludes with an examination of *how* faculty members learn about these issues.

Chapter Two

REVIEW OF RESEARCH ON FACULTY ATTITUDES

The previous chapter provides a brief history of higher education in the United States with a deliberate focus on the professorate, the principle of academic freedom, and the function(s) of tenure. One of the most significant themes that emerged from the literature reviewed in Chapter One is the somewhat unique and dynamic relationship between all three (academic freedom, tenure and the professorate) but in particular, the central role of the professorate in determining how the merits of each are realized. Other scholars have also recognized the authority of the professorate in these relationships. This chapter reviews the research that has examined faculty *attitudes* toward the central values, beliefs and practices in higher education, particularly research that examines faculty attitudes toward institutional mission, the role of the faculty, and the nature and role of academic freedom and tenure. Research on the professorate is fairly few and far between prior to World War II, so this review does not address research that precedes 1940. The review is organized chronologically beginning with Logan Wilson's *Academic Man*, originally published in 1942, and will proceed to the present.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first examines faculty attitudes concerning some of the central values, beliefs and practices. The second section focuses on how faculty attitudes are shaped by various factors such as institutional type, tenure

status, years tenured, and by academic department and discipline. The third examines the *socialization* process by which faculty members become familiar with the core values, beliefs, and practices that shape higher education in the United States, and in particular, academic freedom and tenure. The chapter concludes with a brief summary and a restatement of the problem.

Research on Faculty Attitudes Regarding Core Values and Beliefs

1940s

Logan Wilson's (1942), *The Academic Man*, is considered one of the first comprehensive social science-based studies ever done on the faculty at that time. It offered a sociological analysis of the organizational structure and function of the profession. It did not explore faculty attitudes in any way nor did it examine the issue of academic freedom to any significant degree. It was limited in institutional scope—focusing primarily on “leading” research and liberal arts schools, and was largely blind to minority experience—even though approximately one-quarter of the profession was female. However, it does offer a benchmark for evaluating how organizational life has changed over the last 60 years and is considered by many to be a pioneering study in the sociology of the academic profession.

It is important for the reader to keep in mind that Wilson's (1942) study was conducted in a different historical period in higher education. Much has happened during the succeeding 60 years to shape both the country and the institution of higher education: World War II; McCarthyism; growth and expansion of higher education (comprehensive colleges and universities, community colleges, etc.); student protests; financial

retrenchment; collective bargaining and unionization; multiculturalism; and increased accountability to external agencies.

Given these differences in socio-cultural context, it is not surprising that the differences in the professorate then (1942) and now (2003) is almost as disparate as the old-time professor in the ante-bellum colonial college was from Logan Wilson's (1942) *academic man* described in his book by the same title. The old-time professor was low-paid or even unpaid and had very limited social prestige. Logan Wilson's *academic man* was also limited in social prestige and pay, but benefited from the autonomy gained from the "professionalization" of the profession. Consequently, they experienced a rise in social prestige resulting from higher professional autonomy over their work. This heightened autonomy over the nature of their work is captured by Wilson's lengthy discussion of the role of the "professor administrant"—the very name of which connotes a degree of autonomy. Today, the professorate, after a brief period of salary increases, has experienced a leveling-off of both pay, prestige, and autonomy.

Other than these differences, Wilson's (1942) research does offer one other interesting benchmark. He suggests that research preoccupied the work of faculty members in the more elite research schools. He writes, "Although teaching appears to be a more important factor in the reputations of men in the liberal arts than in the sciences, research is given much the greater weight as a basis for professional prestige in every field" (p. 189).

1950s

The next major attempt to examine the professorate was Lazarsfeld and Theilens' (1958), *The Academic Mind*. This study also focused on the social sciences because, according to the authors, "it was they who dealt directly in the classroom with the very issues over which the larger community was concerned" (p. v). During the McCarthy era, the social and political ideologies of many professionals were under a great deal of scrutiny, but social scientists were particularly vulnerable. Therefore, they included teachers in the sample whose respective courses were likely to deal with controversial topics including History, Political Science, Anthropology, Economics, Geography, Sociology, Social Psychology, and the general social sciences.

After developing an index of apprehension—one that is based more on the situational context and less so on personal security—Lazarsfeld and Theilens (1958) conclude that, "Broadly speaking, from either the long- or short-range point of view, American social scientists felt in the Spring in 1955 that the intellectual and political freedom of the teaching community had been noticeably curtailed, or at least disturbingly threatened" (p. 37). Sixty-three percent of the respondents replied that there was a greater threat to intellectual freedom compared to a generation ago, and 79% replied that they thought there was a greater concern over a teacher's political opinions from a generation ago. They also concluded that incidents involving alleged violations of academic freedom were more likely to occur at both private and public secular schools than at the more traditional church-related colleges (p. 68).

Lazarsfeld and Theilens (1958) proceed to link this apprehension to the degree of social integration that each faculty member experienced within his/her own professional peer group, as well as the integration of their field or discipline into the larger society. “Mutual support within the college makes for less apprehension, just as a lack of support by the larger community (or teachers’ doubts to this effect) makes for more” (p. 247). This apprehension, in turn, restricts (or widens) the “effective scope” of each faculty member. The “effective scope” is defined as what a researcher “perceives, what he has contact with, and what he reaches for through his interest or his expectations” (p. 264), and it was in these respects that the authors conclude, “the effective scope of higher education in America was threatened” (p. 264). The concept of “effective scope” will be a central component of this research, especially with respect to the extent to which it is limited or broadened by the organizational culture of each institution in higher education.

1960s

In 1964, Lionel Lewis (1966) examined *Faculty Support for Academic Freedom and Self-Government* at a northeastern American state university. The data were gathered through a questionnaire that was administered in 1964 following a number of incidents on campus that was directly attributable to McCarthyism. The questionnaire was mailed to the entire full-time faculty of this university and the response rate was 56%. Lewis was primarily interested in the competition for control over the university between faculty and administration. Some of the participants would claim that faculty members are simply attempting to secure two basic rights—academic freedom and faculty governance—rights that they have sought since the onset of the modern American

university. Others sided with the administration claiming the faculty had neglected its duties. According to Lewis (1966), "They contend that faculties consist of the meek who lack courage to protect their autonomy, the obtuse who are not astute enough to determine what, in fact, their interests really are, or the politically inclined who are too concerned with furthering their own careers to bother with issues in which time and personal risk are involved" (p. 451). Lewis contends that, "The two divergent judgments of how faculty feels about academic freedom and self-government, and the proffered reasons for this disagreement, suggest that faculty in various disciplines and schools or colleges within an institution differ in attitudes about these two issues" (p. 451). As a result, Lewis embarks on his research to examine the following hypotheses: "H(1) the faculty in different schools or colleges within an institution will have dissimilar attitudes toward academic freedom and self-government" (p. 451); and "H(2) the faculty in different disciplines within an institution will have dissimilar attitudes toward academic freedom and self-government" (p. 452). The schools or colleges represented in the study included: public administration (including: business administration, schools of law and of social welfare); arts and sciences; education; medical sciences (including: schools of medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, nursing); and engineering. The disciplines included were the behavioral and social sciences, humanities, physical and life sciences, and professional schools.

According to Lewis (1966), "The first noteworthy datum...is the finding that there is little unqualified commitment to academic freedom among the respondents" (p. 452-454). Furthermore, the respondents were far more in favor of the *principles* of

academic freedom than they were in its *practice*. Less than half of the respondents believed that academic freedom should be defended when a faculty member espouses controversial views regarding religion or public policy. With respect to the first hypothesis, Lewis (1966) did find variations among schools and colleges. Public administration faculty displayed the highest support for the *principles* of academic freedom followed by arts and sciences, education, medical sciences, and engineering, respectively.

Lewis (1966) also found variations among academic disciplines. The behavioral and social sciences, as well as the humanities were significantly higher in their support for the principles of academic freedom than were the physical and life sciences and professional. Furthermore, with respect to the issue of self-government, Lewis found that “the faculty of those schools or colleges and disciplines which indicated the strongest adherence to academic freedom are those which most clearly favor faculty self-government” (p. 456).

Lewis (1966) notes the similarities between his results and those discovered in the Lazarsfeld and Theilens (1958) study. Lewis, like Lazarsfeld and Theilens, also attributes much of the variations to both selection bias—on the part of the faculty member as he or she enters the discipline, and indoctrination—which captures the role of the socialization process that takes place once the faculty member is accepted into a discipline. Lewis refers to this as the *culture of autonomy*. He writes, “We suspect that the prevailing environment in each school or college or discipline includes a body of norms that define the extent to which faculty are independent from the institution in

which they hold appointments and from the society at large, to whom as scholars or scientists involved in the production of knowledge or as teachers of the young they might give the impression of being contentious” (p. 456).

In conclusion, Lewis (1966) writes, “Our data would lead us to believe that the overriding reason for the vulnerability of academic freedom is that faculty do not vigorously want or do not see themselves as having autonomy within the institution” (p. 460). Ironically, where many observers might take this to mean the state of the faculty, academic freedom, and higher education is relatively healthy and calm, Lewis argues that it may also reflect the fact that they are not acting in a manner that would jeopardize their positions. In other words, just as Lazarsfeld and Theilens (1958) suggested almost a decade before, only those faculty who push the borders of knowledge and/or who challenge traditional ways of acting and thinking would feel most threatened and would most likely seek the protection of academic freedom and professional autonomy. As long as the “effective scope” is narrow or limited, academic freedom is alive and well.

In 1968, *Academic Revolution* by Christopher Jencks and David Riesman was published. This extensive work provides a sociological and historical analysis of American higher education, and although it does not lend itself to this project directly, it is a very large study that uses the professorate as a major source of data. The authors visited 150 different institutions and spoke with several thousand professors. However, the study also relied heavily on secondary sources such as college newspapers, magazines, journals, catalogues, etc. It was by design a descriptive analysis—a case

study of American higher education—and as such, it is open to interpretation, which the authors unapologetically offer. They acknowledge, “Our interpretations rest on a small sample of these chronicles and on the general histories done by traditional historians” (Jencks & Riesman, 1968, p. x).

1970s

In 1970, Rosalio Wences and Harold J. Abramson conducted a study on faculty opinions regarding the role or function of the university. The two issues that were examined included (a) the role of the university in job recruitment and placement for graduates, and (b) the role of the university as a place for dissent. The study examined the attitudes of the faculty of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Connecticut during the 1968-1969 school year when the Vietnam War was unfolding overseas and campus demonstrations were taking place across the nation. The data were gathered from published official mail ballots on the following two resolutions: “(1) We reject the proposition that recruiting is a central function of the university; (2) the protection and, indeed, the fostering of morally and intellectually authentic dissent are among the essential functions of the university, and these functions are seriously impaired when students or teachers must fear that radical social criticism will bring down upon them not only hostility or derision from the general public but the severest possible restraint from their own academic institution” (Wences & Abramson, 1970, p. 28).

The results indicate that 71% of the voters rejected the assumption that job recruiting is a “central function” of their institution. However, the faculty were more

evenly divided on the issue of protecting and fostering dissent—only 51% who expressed an opinion (n=284) agreed that these were functions of their university (Wences & Abramson, 1970, p. 29). When Wences and Abramson compared faculty votes by discipline and department, the results reflected many of the patterns found in the previous research. The faculty in the social sciences was most likely to view the university as an autonomous critic (64%) followed by the humanities (56%), the biological sciences (50%), and the physical sciences (42%). The pattern holds for the issue of whether the university is (or should be) a service organization. The physical and biological sciences had the highest percentage of faculty who agreed with the service function, with 44% and 32% respectively, followed by the social sciences (20%) and then the humanities (9%). Wences and Abramson (1970) also found that “the variations among some of the departments within the same discipline are almost as great as, and sometimes even greater than, the difference across disciplines” (p. 31). Within the social sciences for instance, Wences and Abramson discovered a wide range of opinion regarding the role of the university—autonomous critic, autonomous noncritic or service organization (see Table 5). If this was a *generational* issue, then *faculty rank* could explain these differences (see Table 6). But Wences and Abramson went a step further. They were not satisfied with the “generational conflict” explanation because they found that a plurality of the older group (full and associate professors) sided with the younger faculty members. So they looked at *longevity* and found that it was positively related to the image of the university as a service institution. The relationship was so strong that it compelled the authors to write, “Clearly then, there is no marked conflict of generations in this

Table 5

The Role of the University by School or College

School/College	Service/Organization	Autonomous Critic	Autonomous Noncritic
Economics	79	14	7
History	76	12	12
Anthropology/Sociology	74	17	9
English	72	24	4
Mathematics	69	31	0
Psychology	55	20	25
Biological Sciences	50	18	32
Romantic Languages	35	53	12
Chemistry	28	6	67
Political Science	28	14	57
Physics	27	7	67

Table 6

Role of the University by Faculty Rank

Faculty Rank	Autonomous Critic	Autonomous Noncritic	Service Organization
Instructor	82	14	5
Assistant Professor	63	17	20
Associate Professor	47	24	29
Professor	40	26	34

academy. But there is a conflict of the newly-arrived faculty of all ranks. Rank only reflects the impact of longevity, but it has no independent effect itself. Among faculty of the same rank, the longer the local residence, the higher is the proportion who define the university as a service institution” (Wences & Abramson, 1970, p. 35). The effect of longevity was such that it superceded the differences which arose across disciplines among new faculty as well.

In conclusion, the Wences and Abramson (1970) write, “The data from this study suggest that faculty are deeply divided in their conception of university functions. Professors who have been thoroughly socialized into this local culture, by means of longer local residence and common interests, view their institution as a service organization. Newly-arrived faculty define the university as more autonomous; they oppose on-campus recruiting, and are committed to the promotion of dissent” (p. 37).

In 1975, Everett Carl Ladd, Jr. and Seymour Martin Lipset published *The Divided Academy: Professors and Politics*. This study was based largely on a 1969 survey of student and faculty opinion—funded by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education. The faculty study consisted of a survey that was mailed to approximately 100,000 full-time faculty members at 303 institutions around the United States. It took place during a period of time in which campus unrest—caused largely by student protests and demographic shifts due to drastic growth and expansion in higher education—shaped the academic experience for everyone involved. The study was designed to address three general concerns: (a) what distinguishes the academic mind (politically) from others; (b) where are the divisions between faculty members on political issues and what factors

explain the sources of division within the faculty; and (c) what are the underlying dimensions of conflict in faculty politics.

With respect to the first query, the 1969 Carnegie data revealed the faculty were considerably more liberal-left as compared to a Gallop opinion survey of the general public (Ladd & Lipset, 1975). When the two categories are combined—moderately liberal and strongly liberal—the faculty outnumber the public 46% to 21%, respectively. If we combine the categories moderately conservative and strongly conservative at the other end of the index, the numbers are 28% and 42%, respectively. These results were supported several years later in 1972 by the Ladd and Lipset study which also included a national sample of American professors (Ladd & Lipset, 1975, p. 27).

Ladd and Lipset (1975) best express the answer to the second question: “Apart from the sheer magnitude of the variations, the most striking discovery bearing on faculty political attitudes by discipline is the rather neat progression from the most left-of-center subject to the most conservative, running from the social sciences to the humanities, law, and the fine arts, through the physical and biological sciences, education, and medicine, on to business, engineering, the smaller applied professional schools such as nursing and home economics, and finally agriculture, the most conservative discipline group”(p. 59-60). The authors also acknowledge that divisions exist within some of the disciplines, especially in the social sciences. However, they suggest that these divisions were more pronounced during the late 1960s as compared to the late 1950s when the Lazarsfeld and Theilens (1958) study was conducted. This division was drawn between those faculty

who saw the university as a neutral place of free inquiry and exploration and those who saw the role of the university (and those within it) as advocate and activist.

The third question, what are the underlying dimensions of the conflict within faculty politics, uncovered an interesting “split” in the mentality of the professorate over the goals and tactics in a particular issue. Some professors are national liberals but campus conservatives. They might be for the cause (e.g., anti-war) but against the tactics (e.g., violence, destruction of property, and infringements on civil liberties) employed by some student activists. According to the Ladd and Lipset (1975), “They are disproportionately at the better schools, are more research-oriented, and publish *more* than any of the other group” (p. 215). “In contrast, those academics conservative in national affairs but liberal in the campus conflicts come disproportionately from the teaching, nonscholarly culture of schools of lesser academic standing” (p. 217).

Ladd and Lipset (1975) conclude that even as they were publishing *The Divided Academy*, the issues facing the professorate were changing from student protests and growth to issues of collective bargaining unionization, and financial retrenchment and that this shift was not simply the movement from one problem or crisis into another. Rather, it was a reflection of an ongoing problem—the institution and the professorate becoming more specialized and complex.

1980s

In 1986, Howard R. Bowen and Jack H. Schuster published *American Professors: A National Resource Imperiled*. This was another large, comprehensive study of the academic profession that was based on 532 interviews gathered on 38 diverse college and

university campuses—data which were gathered between the fall of 1984 and the late spring of 1985. It was designed to assess the impact of the previous 15 years (1970-1985). This was a period that the authors describe as a deterioration of the working conditions and status of the professorate—a sentiment reflected in the subtitle, *A National Resource Imperiled*. The authors attribute this condition, not to any one group attempting to claim control over the faculty “turf.” “Rather it was the larger social forces, coupled with more than a little benign neglect, which contributed to the deteriorating condition of the American faculty” (Bowen & Schuster, 1986, p. 5). Some of these external forces included prophecies of sharp enrollment declines, a decrease in real earnings along with job satisfaction, an increase in part-time faculty, and an opening of the system minorities as democratization increased. The authors maintain that assuming the working conditions and morale have declined for the professorate, something needs to be done to correct this pattern or we may be faced with recruitment problems and a consequent dearth of talent, ability, and commitment in the next generation of scholars.

Bowen and Schuster (1986) offer one of the better justifications for treating the professorate, as diverse as it is, as a cohesive unit of analysis:

Through all these processes, the academic community creates an ethos. This ethos is not promulgated officially; it is certainly not shared by all the professorate; it often differs from views prevailing among the general public, and it changes over time. Yet one can say that the weight of academic influence in any given period is directed toward a particular world outlook. Thus, though most faculty members enjoy considerable freedom in their work, and though there are substantial differences among them, it is not wholly outrageous to speak of an academic community as a nationwide (or even worldwide) subculture. And, despite the variety that exists in academe, it is appropriate for many purposes to treat the professorate as a closely knit social group and not merely as a collection of disparate individuals or unrelated small groups (p. 13).

Furthermore, Bowen and Schuster (1986) suggest that a set of basic values exists for the professorate and that “one can only conclude that the basic attitudes and values are not sharply divergent among colleges and universities of various types, but that significant differences among faculty members are present on each campus and are more closely related to discipline than to type of institution” (p. 52). The authors continue, “These values are derived from the long academic tradition and tend to be conveyed from one generation to the next via the graduate schools and also through the socialization of young faculty members as they are inducted into their first academic positions. These values may be subsumed under three main categories: The pursuit of learning, academic freedom, and collegiality” (p.53).” The issue of the socialization of new faculty into these values is an issue that will be taken up later. For now, it is sufficient to recognize that they (the values of learning, academic freedom, and collegiality) are an integral part of the “common” organizational culture of the professorate.

The idea that academic freedom is a core value of higher education is supported by a recent international survey (Altbach & Lewis, 1997). This study found that, in addition to learning, academic freedom, and collegiality as core values, autonomy and scholarship were also central values of higher education. This study also found that about one-third of the faculty respondents from the United States felt that there were political or ideological “constraints” on what a scholar could publish. And, most of the countries offered ample evidence that working conditions had deteriorated, which was the main concern that was the motivation behind the Bowen and Schuster (1986) study.

Regarding the crux of Bowen and Schuster's (1986) study, whether faculty rewards and working conditions deteriorated over the period of 1970-1985, the answer was "yes." The authors capture the findings in the following sentence: "Four overarching themes emerged from our campus visits: The faculty dispirited, the faculty fragmented, the faculty devalued, and the faculty dedicated" (p. 138). In one-third of the sample, approximately 13 campuses, the quality of faculty life was deemed poor or very poor and 7 out of 10 of the comprehensive colleges and universities were in negative territory. On a final note, the issues of academic freedom and tenure were not major variables in the study. Nonetheless, academic freedom was mentioned in the analysis. The authors write, "Thus, academic freedom does not appear to have been weakened. But some faculty members were concerned about the subtle threats to academic freedom that result from the vulnerability of non-tenured faculty in a tight academic labor market; several seasoned observers commented that junior faculty were less willing to be bold in their teaching and writing" (Bowen & Schuster, 1986, p. 145). Tenure, coincidentally, was raised by the authors as a policy-oriented solution to the tribulations befalling higher education at the time.

Burton R. Clark (1987a) came to similar conclusions in another comprehensive study sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching). Using a qualitative approach, Clark interviewed over 170 faculty in six different fields (Physics, Biology, Political Science, English, Business, and Medicine) at six major types of institutions—ranging from public community colleges to Carnegie I research universities (16 institutions in total)—between 1985 and 1987. Like the previous study by Bowen

and Schuster (1986), this research does not directly address faculty attitudes toward the concepts of academic freedom and tenure. However, it does provide an in-depth analysis of the “condition” of higher education in the United States—elucidating a number of other issues that are indirectly related to academic freedom and tenure.

Kerr’s (1991) argument is that higher education in the late 20th century went through a fundamental stage of growth characterized by decentralization of authority, differentiation in function or mission, and open-competition brought about by the growing influence of external market forces. These conditions in effect, led to a “competitive disorder and unplanned hierarchy” (p. xxxii). In short, Kerr found that these institutional and disciplinary hierarchies, as they continue to grow and expand, pull the academic profession apart along a number of different dimensions. For instance, Kerr’s research indicated that although faculty shared a set of commonly held values—stewards of knowledge, the norms of academic honesty and integrity, and the ideology of freedom (academic freedom)—they were also pulled in many other directions leading to fragmentation. The direction or source of these “pulls” depended on where you were in the institutional or disciplinary hierarchy. Faculty in the more prestigious research universities emphasized the freedom to research whereas the faculty in liberal arts and community colleges emphasized teaching or classroom freedoms.

Another dimension to the academic profession mentioned by Clark (1987a) that is relevant to this study is authority. Clark identifies three types of authority environments (or authority structures) in higher education. The discipline-based authority environment is one that places the faculty at the center. Enterprises-based authority places

administrators at the center. The system-based authority environment places governmental officials and/or special interest groups at the center. According to Clark (1987a), since the trend in the late 20th century has been toward decentralization, the preconditions necessary for a system-based authority environment have not been met and so the balance of power pivots between the discipline based and the enterprise-based authority environment. Clark found that as we move up and down the institutional and disciplinary hierarchies, we find not only differences in culture and authority, there are also difference in work, career lines, and the degree of participation in national and international societies and associations. I will discuss these differences in more detail in the next section.

1990s

In 1990, Charles M. Ambrose published a study entitled, *Academic Freedom in American Public Colleges and Universities*. The principal goal of his research was to determine how faculty members and administrators define academic freedom to see if there were any significant differences. He also examined how their perceptions compared to a general taxonomy of five broad categories of protections for academic freedom affirmed by recent court cases (individual faculty members' political or religious beliefs; teaching and classroom discussions; research and scholarship; personal conduct outside the classroom; and institutional academic freedom from increasing government regulation).

Ambrose's (1990) research, consisting of a survey questionnaire, took place at 15 senior colleges in the University of Georgia system—all of which are 4-year public

colleges. The sample included 2,130 full-time faculty members (tenured or tenure track positions; 232 department chairs; and 123 academic administrators (president, vice-president of academic affairs, and deans of separate schools). The questionnaire had three parts: a demographic and background information section; a 12-item semantic differential scale, which used a 7-point rating scale for each of the 12 bipolar adjectives, as a means of measuring the respondents' attitudes toward the concept of academic freedom; and a list of 16 brief summaries of actual court cases where respondents were asked if they thought academic freedom was an issue. Respondents in this last section were asked to use a 4-point scale where 1 = "clearly not an issue" and 4 = "clearly an issue."

In Ambrose's (1990) own words, "the results of the statistical analysis of the survey questionnaire revealed that faculty members, department chairs, and administrators appear to hold similar values toward the concept of academic freedom" (p. 24). He draws a comparison between his research and that of Edward Gross (1968), who found that there appeared to be a consensus among faculty members and administrators at 68 universities on what academe's goal should be—to protect the faculty's *right* to academic freedom.

The results of Ambrose's (1990) semantic differential scale also affirmed the idea of an academic subculture, or consensus. However, he did find significant differences in the three groups' analysis of the 16 specific cases. All three groups ranked research as the top issue in each of the cases. Faculty and department chairs ranked instruction as the second major issue whereas administrators ranked personnel decisions as second. These

findings tend to illustrate and reinforce the fundamental tension between the faculty's professional autonomy and the growing bureaucratic model that has emerged.

In 1991, Carol L. McCart completed a dissertation entitled, *Using a Cultural Lens to Explore Faculty Perceptions of Academic Freedom*. As the title suggests, McCart also used a qualitative approach based largely on in-depth interviews only; her research was specifically designed to address faculty perceptions of academic freedom as well as its major threats and protections. McCart interviewed 57 faculty members at the Pennsylvania State University during the summer and fall of 1989—29 members came from three engineering departments and 28 came from departments in the liberal arts). In addition to the differences and similarities across these two schools, McCart was also interested in the differences and similarities across length of time in the institution. Hence, McCart divided her sample into faculty who had been at the institution for less than 5 years, and those who were there for 10 years or more.

McCart (1991) found that “academic freedom is a significant value uniting that culture...all respondents evidenced a strong appreciation of the concept” (p. 125). She also found that, contrary to some of the previous literature, there is no marked difference in the *strength* of the value of academic freedom between disciplines. Rather, the differences are more qualitative—with the hard/applied sciences like engineering more likely to emphasize research issues while the liberal arts would emphasize teaching and classroom issues. McCart's research did show evidence of differences across length of time with the institution, especially in terms of linking an element of personal responsibility in their definitions of academic freedom. The “freshmen” faculty did not

whereas the “senior” faculty did. I will discuss these differences in further detail in the next section. Perhaps the most startling finding was that, “the predominant sentiment among all the faculty interviewees was that they believe their colleagues value academic freedom, but that it is not often discussed. It appears that academic freedom remains a strong value for faculty, but one that is talked about infrequently. This raises the question of how this central value is transmitted especially because junior faculty often said they do not talk to older faculty much, and that they have no faculty mentors at Penn State (McCart, 1991, p. 134). McCart also commented that the interviewees often reported that they felt academic freedom was important to them but that other faculty “took it for granted.” The general consensus about tenure is that it should not be eliminated but that it needed to be revised to include some kind of post-tenure review.

With respect to current threats and protections to academic freedom, the results of McCart’s (1991) research suggests that the threats do not come from the traditional sources that are more explicit and external to the institution. Instead, they are subtler and they emanate from both outside and inside the academy. According to McCart, the primary threat to academic freedom in the classroom is the demographic and ideological movements of diversity. “Most respondents said that they have strong concerns, and even fears, about the censorship which they see resulting from cultural diversity issues on campus—often referred to as ‘political correctness,’ but nearly all of those who raised the issue, said that they have not talked with any of their fellow faculty members about their concerns” (McCart, 1991, p. 278). The second largest threat to academic freedom, according to McCart’s research, was with respect to academia’s growing reliance on

outside funding as federal and state funding, as well as many private endowments, has shrunk. This very issue became the topic of a book a few years later, the title of which captures this growing concern, *The Leasing of the Ivory Tower: The Corporate Takeover of Academia* (Soley, 1995). This sentiment was also expressed by Lazarsfeld and Theilens (1958). They suggested that relying too heavily on external funding would inevitably contribute to the narrowing of the *effective scope* of research (and of controversial teaching topics or pedagogues).

In 1996, Keith conducted research for his dissertation that he published later that year. The study, entitled *Faculty Attitudes Toward Academic Freedom*, examined the following research questions: “(1) How do faculty define academic freedom? (2) What do faculty perceive to be the threats to, and protections of, academic freedom? (3) How do faculty attitudes toward academic freedom vary by (a) academic discipline, (b) institution, or (c) tenure status?” Keith examined these questions from a qualitative research design based on structured interviews. A total of 89 faculty were interviewed at 6 private institutions—4 small in size (1,000-2,500 full-time students) and 2 medium (6,000-6,500) in Southern California. Five of the 6 institutions were closely affiliated to their founding churches (2 Roman Catholic, 2 Lutheran, and 1 Protestant) and the sixth was secular but it retained “some of the historical values of its founding church” (p. 92). The faculty were in the academic disciplines of Sociology, History, Biology, and Business.

Keith’s (1996) methodology was rather unique in that it included structure questions with scaled responses (1-5), as well as open-ended questions which allowed the

respondent to elaborate upon or clarify their answers. The numerical data were analyzed by using ANOVAs and t tests, the qualitative data were analyzed by content analysis.

With respect to the first question, Keith (1996) found that the faculty interviewed were “overwhelmingly in favor of academic freedom” (p.115) and rated it as very important to the academic profession. From the content analysis, a number of keywords and concepts were frequently included in faculty members’ definitions. The following is a list of the keyword concepts presented in descending order (the number in the parentheses denotes the number of faculty whom mentioned the term in their respective definitions): teaching/classroom (61); research/scholarly work/publication (46); not be hounded or interfered with (30); pedagogy (27); speaking/expressing opinions (25); pursuit of truth (19); autonomy (12); institutional academic freedom (8); honesty (6); and the freedom to disagree with institution (5).

Keith (1996) also found that the faculty attributed many limitations to academic freedom—27 to be exact. The top 4 mentioned by faculty (in a list of 12) included: academic discipline/scholarly methods (36); professional responsibility (21); no harm to others (16); and institutional mission (16). Keith concludes that the faculty “saw academic freedom very narrowly, to be exercised only within the norms of their academic disciplines and the behavior accepted by the profession, with an eye toward institutional mission, and not harming others or taking advantage of students. On all these questions and issues, there were few significant differences between faculty groups (p. 144).

With respect to the second research question, Keith (1996) found that the faculty interviewed in his study did not feel that academic freedom on their campuses was very

threatened (p. 146). Although 35% of the entire faculty interviewed were able to identify incidents or issues that they believed raised academic freedom issues. Furthermore, 43 faculty (or 48%) saw current threats, or had worries or concerns. He asked them to rate 8 groups or entities which could be threats using a scale from 1-5 (5 = high threat). The results were as follows in descending order (the number in parentheses represents the mean): churches (2.65); administration (2.09); government (2.01); students (1.98); board (1.94); faculty (1.74); courts (1.72), and the general public (1.66). These data were consistent with the literature—suggesting that the faculty is very concerned about administrative threats to academic freedom.

In addition, Keith (1996) conducted a content analysis on their comments to open-ended questions regarding current threats, and the results suggest that the faculty in this sample perceived the greatest threats to be from inside the academy—from internal administration issues to political or ideological issues such as sexual harassment and multiculturalism (p. 156).

Factors Influencing Faculty Attitudes

In the previous section, I reviewed the literature that has been done on faculty attitudes concerning academic freedom and tenure, as well as other central issues that relate to the professional autonomy of the professorate. Two themes are clear from the literature. First, faculty attitudes on many of the core values and principles appear to vary quite a bit across institutional types, disciplines, and tenure status (or longevity). Second, the last *major* study that addressed faculty perceptions of academic freedom, as well as other central values and beliefs, was Clark's (1987a) study. The last four studies

were all doctoral dissertations with fairly modest sample sizes. This study is designed to contribute to the first of these themes. It will fall short of addressing the second, as it will be yet another doctoral dissertation—the fifth in a little over a decade.

Most of the literature reviewed in this section addresses the *condition* of the professorate. The discussion revolves around the extent to which the professorate resembles a unified “profession” on the one hand, or a fragmented constellation of vocations and disciplines on the other. According to Kuh and Whitt (1998), “Two perspectives on faculty culture predominate: (1) academics make up one homogenous profession and share values of academic freedom, individual autonomy, collegial governance, and truth seeking, and (2) academics make up a complex of subprofessions characterized by fragmentation and specialization” (p. v). The implications for both scenarios on policy-making for higher education were examined at the end of Chapter One and will be revisited again at the end of this chapter.

This section will examine more closely the factors that influence faculty attitudes. I will begin by combing the literature for evidence of a unifying common culture. I will then look for evidence of factors that lead to the development of subcultures within higher education. Particular attention will be devoted to the organizational culture of higher education and how this can be shaped by the national context, institutional context, disciplinary context, and tenure status. I will conclude the chapter with an examination of the socialization process of new faculty. Fledgling faculty members become acquainted with the core values, beliefs, and behaviors in graduate school as well as during the first years of their first appointments. This socialization process takes place

both formally—through contractual agreements, orientation programs, and mentoring programs—as well as informally—through trial and error experiences and observations.

The central question that I intend to explore through this research is whether or not we are preparing a generation of new faculty to be aware of the complexities and nuances of these core values, principles and issues? Or, are we taking it for granted that both the formal and informal processes currently in place are indeed preparing the next generation? Furthermore, should we assume that these core values, principles, and issues are universal—requiring standard protections from the “usual” threats, or do they vary with the contextual features in which each faculty member has been socialized into the profession—thereby requiring particular protections specific to each institutional and departmental context.

Common Culture

While there is a general consensus in the literature on the existence and nature of core values and principles in American higher education, it is divided as to whether they actually unify the faculty into a common professional culture. The Ladd and Lipset (1975) study discussed in the previous section found that academics were, when compared to the general population, “considerably to the left” in their political views—suggesting a degree of homogeneity. However, they also found that,

The professorate has come to be deeply divided because in the age of the multiversity it has become extraordinarily disparate in its range of fields, substantive interests and outside associations, career lines and expectations, and social backgrounds. No longer does “college” refer primarily to a small cluster of liberal arts faculty all performing more or less the same task...The university started as a single community—a community of masters and students. It may even be said to have had a soul in the sense of a central animating principle. Today the large American

university is, rather, a whole series of communities and activities held together by a common name (Ladd & Lipset, 1975, p. 55-56).

Some have described this common culture as a “scientific ethos” (Bowen & Schuster, 1986; Ruscio, 1987). Bowen and Schuster (1986) write:

Through all these processes, the academic community creates an ethos. This ethos is not promulgated officially; it is certainly not shared by all the professorate; it often differs from views prevailing among the general public, and it changes over time. Yet one can say that the weight of academic influence in any given period is directed toward a particular world outlook. Thus, though most faculty members enjoy considerable freedom in their work, and though there are substantial differences among them, it is not wholly outrageous to speak of an academic community as a nationwide (or even worldwide) subculture. And, despite the variety that exists in academe, it is appropriate for many purposes to treat the professorate as a closely knit social group and not merely as a collection of disparate individuals or unrelated small groups (p. 13).

Bowen and Schuster go on to say, “The ideal academic community from the point of view of faculty is a college or university in which the three values—pursuit of learning, academic freedom, and collegiality—are strongly held and defended” (p. 54). Clark (1987a) found similar commonly held values in his study of over 170 faculty members. He found that faculty valued knowledge, the norms of academic honesty and integrity, and the ideology of academic freedom.

In *The Invisible Tapestry*, a study sponsored by the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE), Kuh and Whitt (1988) also found evidence of faculty attitudes having multiple influences. They identify four discrete but interdependent cultures at work simultaneously—the culture of the discipline; the culture of the academic profession; the culture of the institution; and the culture of the national system of higher education. However, they conclude that “the culture of the discipline is the primary

source of faculty identity and expertise and typically engenders stronger bonds than those developed with the institution of employment, particularly in large universities” (Kuh & Whitt, 1988, p. 77). Some have even argued that it is this unique amalgamation of specialization and diversity in our national system of higher education that also defines our national federation of states—*e plurabus unum* (Becher, 1987, p. 298).

On the other hand, there are many scholars who have come to the conclusion that the degree of fragmentation and specialization has reached a point where the professorate is actually a collection of many different professions (Ruscio, 1987). In the next section, I will examine some of the predominant subcultural influences on faculty affiliations and attitudes.

Institutional Variation

Some of the research indicates that the institution where faculty members work also plays a role in shaping their attitudes regarding academic freedom and tenure. Generally speaking, one would expect to find that professors who work in research universities would be more concerned about infringements on their research agendas whereas professors who work in primarily teaching or liberal arts colleges would be more concerned about infringements on their classroom teaching. In addition to this distinction in institutional mission, Kuh and Whitt (1988) found that other institutional characteristics may also play a role in shaping faculty attitudes—characteristics which in effect constitute an institutional culture. The saga, academic programs, distinctive themes which create an “institutional ethos,” and organizational characteristics are all

factors that may influence faculty attitudes on academic freedom and tenure from institution to institution.

Clark's research (1987a) revealed that within the institutional context of higher education we find a hierarchy—ranging from Carnegie I research universities to public community colleges. Within this hierarchy are significant differences in academic freedom (p. 136). Faculty who work in institutions at the top of the hierarchy define academic freedom more broadly and with respect to research whereas faculty who work in institutions at or near the bottom of the hierarchy define academic freedom more narrowly and with respect to both job security and teaching.

Throughout the literature, there is a recurrent theme that suggests that faculty are pulled into at least two distinct directions—disciplinary affiliation and institutional affiliation. Gouldner (1957) was the first to describe these two affiliations, or organizational identities, as the “cosmopolitans” and the “locals.” The cosmopolitans were more focused on their respective disciplines and the external relationships that defined and perpetuated them. The locals were more focused on their respective institutions and the internal relationships therein. Clark's (1987a) research revealed that the faculty at institutions near the top of the hierarchy were more likely to be shaped by their respective discipline whereas the faculty at institutions near the lower end were more likely to be locals.

Disciplinary Variation

The most significant influence on faculty attitudes, according to the literature, is academic discipline. According to Kuh and Whitt (1988), “The culture of the discipline is the primary source of faculty identity and expertise and typically engenders stronger bonds than those developed with the institution of employment, particularly in large universities” (p. 77). All of the research reviewed in this chapter that examined disciplinary differences in the faculty found them. For instance, Keith (1996), McCart (1991), and Lewis (1966) all found differences in attitudes toward academic freedom and tenure. Lewis (1966) and Clark (1987a) found differences with respect to attitudes on self-governance and authority. Wences and Abramson (1970) found disciplinary differences regarding the role of higher education. Although the Lazarsfeld and Thielens (1958) study did not compare disciplinary distinctions regarding faculty attitudes on academic freedom and tenure, it did provide a good justification for why we should treat the social sciences as a distinct disciplinary subculture, “It was they who dealt directly in the classroom with very issues over which the larger community was concerned” (Lazarsfeld & Thielens, 1958, p. v). This rationale was based on the fact that the majority of academic freedom cases that had been brought to light up to this point in time, involved faculty members in the social sciences. The results of the Ladd and Lipset (1975) study later confirmed these disciplinary distinctions.

Faculty Rank/Length of Time

In the literature reviewed for this chapter, only one study looked specifically at tenure status and its influence on faculty attitudes regarding academic freedom and

tenure. Keith (1996) found a number of statistically significant relationships between tenure status and faculty attitudes. First, with respect to how important the First Amendment and freedom of speech is to the freedom to teach, tenured faculty ranked higher than nontenured. Second, tenured faculty believed academic freedom was well protected, whereas nontenured faculty were less likely to believe so.

Other studies examined length of time in the profession as an independent variable. Lazarsfeld and Theilens (1958) discovered that “the number of years a respondent has taught at his present college, and the way he feels about the relations among his faculty members...we can use them to make several points. First, let us notice that the longer a professor teaches at a college, the more satisfied he is with the social climate in the faculty. Among those on a campus for five years or less, 20 percent considered the faculty relations fair at best; this proportion diminishes to 10 percent among teachers with more than ten years residence” (p. 242). Lazarsfeld and Theilens go on to discuss how this impairs the “effective scope” of the academic mind and that this is why the “integration” of new faculty members should be of utmost importance to the AAUP and the profession itself—a theme that drives this research as well.

Wences and Abramson (1970) discovered that the longer faculty members spent in an institution and its surrounding community, the more likely they would define the institutional mission in terms of social service. Faculty who had spent much less time at a given institution were more likely to view the role of the institution in terms of an autonomous social critique.

McCart (1991) divided her sample into faculty members who had been in the profession for 10 years or more (whom she referred to as senior faculty), and those who had been in for 5 years or less (junior faculty). Forty-three percent of the senior faculty category respondents included an element of responsibility in their definition of academic freedom as compared to 0% of the junior faculty (p. 89), and 77% of the senior category faculty included limits and constraints in their definitions compared to only 30% of the junior faculty (p. 96). These results suggest that there are major differences in how faculty view academic freedom and that these differences are due to socialization experiences.

Ruscio (1987) frames the implications in the following manner. “Is an academic in one setting kin to his or her counterpart in another, or do local circumstances encourage indigenous ideologies? These issues challenge the profession more acutely than do questions about a division of labor or different approaches to institutional governance; for the most fundamental, most basic definitional component of any profession is a consistent set of values that integrates a community of individuals and distinguishes it from other professional and occupational groups. If this ideology becomes fragmented, pluralistic, less unifying, the distinctiveness of the profession diminishes; professionalism itself diminishes” (p. 356).

Faculty Socialization

What lies at the heart of the aforementioned body of research, as well as the present research study, is the issue of faculty socialization. For any social institution to persist and thrive, new members must be recruited, trained, and then eventually

socialized into the organization within which they will practice. Although this is painfully obvious, it is a topic that often remains neglected or ignored in the research, as well as the daily operations of many institutions around the country. Some authors have characterized this process as haphazard—like the process of “osmosis” (Hamilton, 1995; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). In this section, I will outline a framework for understanding the faculty socialization process as described by William G. Tierney and Robert A. Rhoads (1994) in *Faculty Socialization as Cultural Process: A Mirror of Institutional Commitment*, and review the literature that has addressed faculty socialization in the last 10 years.

According to Tierney and Rhoads (1994), colleges and universities, as social institutions, “exhibit a unique organizational culture” (p. 1). It is an organizational culture that is inherently schizophrenic providing the faculty with multiple cultures that compete for status and power, and often contradict each other over fundamental issues like institutional mission, faculty work, and even academic freedom and tenure. Faculty culture may be understood as a complex interplay of symbolic meanings predicated on five sociological forces: national, professional, disciplinary, individual, and institutional (p. 9). Each of these cultures offers their own sets of norms and standards, the intersection of which is often where we find the majority of friction. This situation may never, and by some accounts, should never, change. Is a homogenous faculty governed by a dominant culture the ideal? Or, should we aspire toward “communities of difference” as advocated by Tierney and Bensimon (1996). More about the ramifications of each will be discussed later in this chapter.

Tierney and Rhoads (1994) write, “Faculty socialization is a process with two stages: the anticipatory stage and the organizational stage. Anticipatory socialization occurs largely during graduate school. The organizational stage involves initial entry and then role continuance. The organizational stage occurs when a faculty member enters the institution for the first time and comes into contact with the institutional culture” (p. 23). Tierney and Rhoads continue, “Anticipatory socialization pertains to how non-members take on the attitudes, actions, and values of the group to which they aspire” (p. 23). During this stage, 4 out of the 5 cultures mentioned in the previous paragraph are at work shaping the life and attitudes of the prospective scholar—the individual culture; the national culture, the professional culture, and the disciplinary culture. Much of this takes place during graduate school as the aspiring scholar learns about the knowledge base and tools of their respective areas of study. During the second stage of faculty socialization—the organizational stage—the nascent scholar is introduced to the fifth cultural influence that will begin to shape their lives, the institutional culture.

The organizational stage is divided into two phases. The *entry* phase involves the various interactions that constitute the recruitment and selection process of new faculty members as well as their initial experiences during the early period of their employment. The *role continuance* phase begins after the new faculty member has become situated or acclimated to his/her new job. According to Tierney and Rhoads (1994), “When anticipatory socialization for an individual is consistent with that of the organization’s culture, then the recruit will experience socialization processes, which affirm the individual qualities brought to the organization. On the other hand, if the values, beliefs,

and norms brought by a recruit are seen as inconsistent with the cultural ethos of the institution, then the socialization experience will be more transformative in nature: The organization will try to modify an individual's qualities" (p. 25). At issue here are the ramifications associated with ignoring and neglecting the organizational stage of faculty socialization. According to Tierney and Rhoads (1994), "Most often, organizational socialization occurs informally and haphazardly" (p.26). Given this observation, a faculty member who was reared in a large graduate school that emphasized research and is later hired at a small liberal arts college that emphasizes teaching, will be ill-prepared for the responsibilities that they will face in their daily work. As was indicated by the research reviewed earlier in this chapter, faculty who are research oriented define academic freedom in terms of the circumstances in which they conduct their research. Faculty who are more oriented to teaching, define academic freedom in terms of their courses, curriculums, and classroom conduct. Not only will they be ill-prepared, they may never be *transformed* into the type of scholar suited for the organizational culture of the institution. The authors conclude, "Unfortunately, as we have noted, few real institutional mechanisms are enacted in any kind of formalized way. Instead, qualities of new faculty are affirmed or transformed through informal mechanisms that are, for the most part, imprecise and haphazard" (Tierney & Rhoads, 1994, p. 30).

Tierney and Rhoads use a six dimensional framework, borrowed from Van Maanan and Schein (1979, as cited in Tierney & Rhoads, 1994), to analyze how members of organizations *structure* the transition process from one role to another—in this case, faculty socialization into an academic organizational culture. The dimensions of

organizational socialization are: (a) collective versus individual; (b) formal versus informal; (c) sequential versus random; (d) fixed versus variable; (e) serial versus disjunctive; and (f) investiture versus divestiture.

With respect to the socialization of faculty into the organizational culture of an institution of higher education, individual socialization is the norm as opposed to collective socialization. Faculty members, especially at larger public universities, are fairly isolated during much of the socialization process. Examples of collective forms of socialization are found in smaller liberal arts colleges with more distinct cultures that use all-inclusive orientation programs. “Faculty socialization, generally, is most typically a ‘sink or swim’ proposition and is more informal than formal” (Tierney & Rhoads, 1994, p. 27). Random socialization is typical as “evidenced by the tremendous stress, ambiguity, and confusion faculty experience in pursuit of promotion and tenure” (p. 28). “The process is both fixed and variable in that, the passage from novice through the promotion and tenure process is relatively fixed—usually six years. The role continuance that occurs when a person passes from an associate professor to a full professor is more individualistic time frame and thus much more variable” (p. 29). Serial versus disjunctive pertains to the presence of a senior member whose responsibility it is to facilitate the socialization process. The lack of mentors and role models, especially for under-represented groups, and the lack of mentoring programs at large public universities suggest a more disjunctive process. The last dimension, investiture versus divestiture, pertains to whether the faculty members anticipatory socialization is “affirmed” or

deemed ill-suited and thus, “transformed.” Again, Tierney and Rhoads (1994) find a mixture of both. The author’s conclude by observing:

Faculty socialization is an example of how individuals in an organization have the ability to create the conditions for empowerment. An institution where no mentoring or orientation program is in place or no thought has been given to the needs of tenure-track faculty is an organization where individuals must become empowered in spite of—rather than because of—the organization’s culture. Conversely, a coordinated program that takes into account cultural difference, that develops activities to enhance professional training, and that exhibits concerns for individuals is socialization for empowerment. At the same time, even the best programs only create the conditions for empowerment, because individuals still must meet the challenges of tenure and professional enhancement through their own initiatives (p. 73).

The research conducted on faculty socialization over the last 10 years has consistently supported the previous analysis. For instance, research has indicated that new faculty often experience disillusionment and adjustment issues (Olsen & Sorcinelli 1992; Sorcinelli & Austin, 1992; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996), as well as loneliness and intellectual understimulation. Tierney and Rhoads (1994) attribute these problems to larger universities that rely more on individual socialization processes instead of collective. Hence, creating more collective processes should alleviate the problem. Other studies revealed issues involving heavy work loads and other time-budgeting issues (Mager & Myers 1982; Sorcinelli 1988; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996; van der Bogert, 1991). Tierney and Rhoads (1994) attribute these problems to disjunctive socialization. Serial socialization in the form of mentoring and mentoring programs could help reduce these kinds of experiences. Still, other research reveals that new faculty experience ambiguity associated with having to “learn the ropes” of the informal and formal aspects

of the organizational culture through trial and error (Baldwin 1979; Mager & Myers 1982; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). Tierney and Bensimon (1996) write, “No one seemed to know exactly what was expected. Even the process itself was a mystery to most candidates. Information, if it may be called that, on the time frame, who was involved, and how dossiers were compiled was most often, if not downright contradictory” (p. 127). Furthermore, “Faculty members admitted they were socialized to meet norms that had little, if anything, to do with the protection or advancement of academic freedom” (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996, p. 140). Tierney and Rhoads (1994) suggest that the problem stems from the reliance on informal mechanisms of socialization instead of formal ones.

Tierney and Rhoads (1994) explain the implications for academic freedom and tenure:

Perhaps the greatest cultural anomaly is that the system was devised to protect academic freedom, yet no consideration has been given to how it affects pre-tenured candidates, in terms of socializing them to the nature of inquiry and the meaning of community. According to the rules of the system, once individual have proven their worth, they are then granted academic freedom; but until that time, we need never consider whether their freedom is abridged or denied. Is it not a bizarre structure of socialization we have constructed where the ultimate goal—academic freedom—is never taken into consideration as candidates are considered on the basis of their teaching, research, service and scholarship. The structure seems designed to filter candidates rather than to advance diverse concepts of inquiry. The cultural system of organizations offering tenure provide diverse ways of evaluating individuals, but it does not seem to socialize them to survive and thrive in a community based on difference (p. 35-36).

Conclusion

At the heart of the institution of higher education is the faculty. At the heart of any particular institution of higher education is the core faculty—both tenured and senior faculty—whose responsibility it is, in part, to transmit the culture of that institution to the next generation of faculty, just as they had been socialized during their respective graduate school experiences and initial faculty appointments.

Therefore, if faculty members are socialized to a narrow definition of both academic freedom and tenure—one that is based more on civil liberties and job security, then we would expect to find an organizational culture where an administrative model of governance prevails. On the other hand, if we find a broader conceptualization of both academic freedom and tenure to exist—one based more on the social good produced from unfettered “social critique” and the associated responsibility to both exercise and encourage it—then we would expect to find an organizational culture based more on a professional model of governance. Furthermore, logic suggests that faculty members who are hired into an organizational culture where administrative authority prevails *should* be properly socialized to this situation. Just as faculty members who are hired into an organizational culture that is based on professional authority should be properly socialized with this ideal in mind.

The implications are twofold. Practically speaking, what a faculty member believes will affect how they operate. William Tierney suggests that, “the beliefs one holds about the academy inevitably frame how one acts in a postsecondary institution” (Tierney & Bensimons, 1996, p. 5). On the other hand, what a faculty body believes will

effect and direct the mission of the institution. Again, Tierney argues, “Ultimately, these issues are philosophical in nature: What should be the role of the faculty vis-à-vis society? How should academic freedom be defined? What roles do promotion and tenure play in protecting academic freedom? And yet, we seldom deal with such questions in a philosophical manner that might help to give meaning to our lives; rather, such questions are seen as instrumental and political topics” (Tierney & Bensimons, 1996, p. 6).

Summary

In Chapter One, we examined the history and development of academic freedom and tenure, the professorate, and the institution of higher education in the United States. This examination led us to a much richer understanding of the nature and role of each in a liberal democratic society. In addition, we also came away with a better understanding of how each is affected by socio-cultural circumstances that vary over time, and from place to place. In general, during periods (or in places) of social tranquility, the nature and role of each is rather fragmented and narrow, respectively—rendered virtually insignificant as each become “taken-for-granted.” It is during periods of social unrest when we begin to witness an edification of these units of analysis and a subsequent coalescing of the professorate. Furthermore, throughout the 20th century, the majority of assaults on academic freedom came from external agents who attempted to shape the course of research or teaching through intimidation, threats or chilling dissent. Tenure was created and practiced to protect faculty and academic freedom from these kinds of assaults.

However, tenure has not proven very effective at promoting academic freedom, or protecting it from assaults that emanate from within the academy.

A variable that has been linked to promoting academic freedom and protecting it from internal assaults is the *professional autonomy* of the professorate. When it is high, the “effective scope” of teaching and research is broad, and abuse and neglect are low. However, when professional autonomy is low, the effective scope of research and teaching is narrow and our defenses are low. A weakened state of professional autonomy, coupled with the structural factors that are shaping the conditions of higher education—shrinking budgets, increasing student enrollments, increasing diversity, and poorly trained (or mentored) faculty, the preconditions and structural conduciveness for abuse and neglect of academic freedom and tenure is present.

Levels of professional autonomy can be linked to the degree to which faculty share common understandings of the unifying principles and practices of the profession. In short, broader understandings (or definitions) of academic freedom and tenure tend to unify the profession. Narrower definitions tend to fragment and undermine the profession. Therefore, gauging the degree to which faculty share this broader understanding of the nature and role of academic freedom and tenure at any given institution should help us gauge the level of professional autonomy that exists as well.

In Chapter Two, we examined a body of research that explored faculty attitudes on a variety of core values and beliefs in American higher education. The review contributes to this study in a number of ways. First and foremost, as with any literature review, any examination of a body of research will help to identify successful

methodological strategies and techniques, as well as research gaps that lie unaddressed. As reflected in the literature, unless one is conducting a large scale, heavily funded survey research project, the most appropriate research strategy for studying attitudes, beliefs and meanings in a particular culture is qualitative research. However, previous research has focused more on comparing differences between institutions, disciplines, and faculty rank. I am more interested in examining similarities in values, beliefs and meanings and from what formal or informal process does this consensus emerge.

A second way in which the literature reviewed in Chapter Two has informed this study is by identifying the sampling pool from which this consensus on core values and beliefs should be found. Based on the literature, core faculty (defined by virtue of tenure status or longevity) in the social sciences at public universities should share a broader understanding of academic freedom and tenure. They should also be aware of the broader roles and responsibilities afforded to core faculty in order to both exercise and protect academic freedom. Furthermore, they should be acutely aware of the role of higher education in a liberal democracy—the role of Socratic Gadfly, or social critic.

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

Research Questions and Methodology

This research study examines how core, tenured faculty in the social sciences define academic freedom at a public, metropolitan university. In addition, how did these faculty come to learn about academic freedom and how does their respective definitions influence their perception of the role of tenure, the role of the faculty, and the role of higher education in America? Lastly, to what extent does the structure of the host institution—with its mission and associated norms and sanctions—influence the perceptions and experiences of these faculty members. In order to explore this line of inquiry, the following research questions were explored:

1. How do core faculty in the social sciences at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) define academic freedom?
2. Do these same faculty perceive academic freedom to be a significant feature of a career in higher education?
3. Do these same faculty perceive any existing threats to their academic freedom?
4. How do these faculty define academic tenure?
5. How did these faculty learn about academic freedom and tenure?

The previous chapters provide a review of the relevant literature—laying the conceptual framework for the study. This chapter outlines the methodological framework. After briefly reviewing the conceptual framework and research questions, I discuss the research strategy, methods of data collection, and rationale. Then I address issues pertaining to the selection of site and sample population, the researcher’s role, managing and analyzing the data, data trustworthiness and a timeline for the completion of the research.

The literature reviewed in the previous chapters indicates that academic freedom arose as a guiding principle in the professorate during the genesis of the German research university in 19th century America. Hofstadter and Metzger (1955) linked the concept of academic freedom to the German concept of *wissenschaft*—a concept with “overtones of meaning utterly missing in its English counterpart, *science*” (p. 373). These “overtones of meaning” provided the foundation for a more progressive or *transcendent* function for science (as opposed to the more applied function that science held during the post-Civil War era in the United States). This, in turn, became the basis of our liberal, progressive educational system pioneered by people like John Dewey at the turn of the 20th century. Academic tenure arose soon thereafter as a means of both recognizing expertise in research and scholarship amongst the professorate, as well as protecting individual faculty members from being unjustly fired—in particular as a result of pursuing unpopular or controversial research. Over time, and from place to place (institution to institution, and from discipline to discipline), the meaning and application of these concepts have changed.

Previous research has primarily explored the range of faculty attitudes concerning academic freedom and tenure *among* institutions (Clark, 1987a; Keith, 1966; Lazarsfeld & Theilens, 1958); disciplines (Clark, 1987a; Keith, 1966; Ladd & Lipset, 1975; Lewis, 1966; McCart, 1991; Wences & Abramson, 1970); and faculty rank (Keith, 1996); or longevity (Lazarsfeld & Theilens, 1958; McCart, 1991; Wences & Abramson, 1970). These studies have revealed that academic freedom is a somewhat nebulous concept—the meaning of which changes over time and varies among institutions, disciplines, faculty rank and length of time in the profession. What is unique about this study is that it is designed to examine the range of faculty attitudes concerning academic freedom and tenure *within* a particular institution, discipline, and rank. Based on the literature, these faculty *should* have a fairly homogenous perspective on these core concepts. Whether they do or not could be attributed to the socialization process that these faculty experienced during their professional development within the social sciences—including, and in particular, the tenure and promotion process and their host institution.

This study is grounded by five basic assumptions. First and foremost, it is assumed that different times and places can yield very different experiences with, and perceptions of, academic freedom and tenure. Secondly, it is also assumed that how a particular group of faculty defines the concepts of academic freedom and tenure will largely determine how these concepts will be acted upon or exercised. This assumption is based upon the often-cited theorem by William Isaac Thomas, “If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences” (Thomas & Thomas, 1928, p. 572). A third assumption is that the primary method by which faculty become familiar with academic

freedom and tenure is the socialization process, both formal and informal, that they receive as they rise through their academic discipline and career. Fourth, faculty in the social sciences *should* be sensitized to the more complex nature of academic freedom and tenure because of the controversial nature of their disciplines. Lastly, it is assumed that a public, metropolitan university located in a state capital, would be more sensitized to the complex nature of academic freedom because of the greater potential for outside influence on the institution—both in the number and in the degree of outside influences.

Research Strategy

In order to determine the most appropriate research strategy, Yin (1984) suggests asking three questions. First, what is the form of the research question? Is it exploratory, descriptive, explanatory, or predictive? Second, does the research demand that behavior be controlled, or observed unobtrusively in its natural setting? Third, is the phenomenon under study historical or contemporary? According to Yin, answers to these questions will help determine the most appropriate research strategy.

My research questions are largely exploratory, descriptive and interpretive. In addition, I am also hoping that the data will have some explanatory value—especially with respect to how each faculty member learned about academic freedom and tenure. With respect to the second question, I am not interested in controlling behavior. Rather, I seek to gather my data from faculty members while they are engaged in their everyday work environments. As to the third question, this research seeks to examine *current* faculty perceptions of academic freedom and tenure. Given this approach, I have chosen a qualitative framework. According to Marshall and Rossman (1995), a qualitative

design is most appropriate when conducting “research that is exploratory or descriptive and that stresses the importance of context, setting, and the participants’ frames of reference” (p. 44). Furthermore, “the range of possible qualitative strategies is small; choice depends on the focus for the research and on the desired time frame for the study” (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 42). Given the rather narrow focus of my research, coupled with a current, cross-sectional time frame, a case study is most appropriate—a design successfully employed by McCart (1991), who studied faculty attitudes concerning academic freedom and tenure at Pennsylvania State University.

The research design is intrinsically ethnographic. Although it is largely descriptive, ethnographic research can produce what Clifford Geertz (1973) refers to as “thick descriptions.” According to Geertz, conditions, processes, and events can be “thinly” described if we only record, from a behaviorist’s perspective, what we actually see. A “thick description” is one that is able to probe beneath the surface of social interaction in order to reveal the underlying meaning that weaves the behaviors into “webs of significance”—a reference that he borrowed from Max Weber. In order to accomplish this, Geertz prescribes a “semiotic” approach to culture. One where a researcher is both a part of and apart from the culture he or she is examining. “The whole point of a semiotic approach to culture is, as I have said, to aid us in gaining access to the conceptual world in which our subjects live so that we can, in some extended sense of the term, converse with them” (p. 24). A “thin description” would only leave us with the ability to mimic our subjects at best—like a parrot.

According to Geertz (1973), there are four characteristics to a “thick description”: first, it is interpretive; second, what it is interpretive of is the flow of social discourse; third, the interpretation involves “trying to rescue the ‘said’ of such discourse from its perishing occasions and fix it in perusable terms; and fourth, it is microscopic (p.20). He explains, “Cultural analysis is (or should be) guessing at meanings, assessing the guesses, and drawing explanatory conclusions from the better guesses, not discovering the continent of meaning and mapping out its bodiless landscape” (p. 20). Ultimately, according to Geertz, “Our double task is to uncover the conceptual structures that inform our subject’s acts, the ‘said’ of social discourse, and to construe a system of analysis in whose terms what is generic to those structures, what belongs to them because they are what they are, will stand out against the other determinants of human behavior” (p. 27).

Research Methods

According to Marshall and Rossman (1995), “The fundamental methods relied on by qualitative researchers for gathering information are (1) participation in the setting, (2) direct observation, (3) in depth-interviewing, and (4) document review” (p. 78). The primary method of data collection for this research is semistructured elite interviews composed of questions used by McCart (1991) in her research on the same topic at Pennsylvania State University (see Appendix B). Other questions that are specific to my research have also been added. Marshall and Rossman (1995) explain that an elite interview “is a specialized case of interviewing that focuses on a particular type of interviewee. Elite individuals are considered to be the influential, the prominent, and the well-informed people in an organization or community and are selected for interviews on

the basis of their expertise in areas relevant to the research” (p. 83). Marshall and Rossman (1995) also warn that elite interviewing is limited by accessibility to the respondents, opportunity to meet with the respondents, and keeping the respondents on track during the interview—they tend to have their own agendas.

In addition to interviewing, both direct observations and document analysis are supplementary methods in this research study. Direct observations taken during the interview process are vitally important when used toward “validating” the sincerity, authenticity, or veracity of the interview data provided by the respondent(s). All of the interviews were tape recorded, which afforded me the opportunity to observe the body language and mannerisms of the respondents during the interview process. This, coupled with field notes taken immediately after each interview, provided me with an opportunity to better evaluate the validity of the data.

This study also includes a document analysis. A review of relevant materials associated with VCU's hiring patterns; mission statement and strategic planning process; faculty rights and responsibilities; and promotion and tenure process should shed some light onto the “formal” processes by which new or junior faculty become familiar with the concepts of academic freedom and the tenure. More importantly, these materials should also provide insights into the institutional constraints that tether academic freedom to the institutional mission and steer faculty research and teaching in such a way that supports that mission.

Rationale

In addition to an ethnography, this research can also be viewed as an oral history—which is not in the least incompatible with ethnographic research. Both strategies place a great deal of emphasis on the role of the researcher (interviewer) to probe for the truth—much like a lawyer—with carefully structured questions and appropriate spontaneity. Allan Nevins (1996) says this about oral history, “Here is where one advantage of oral history lies. If Cellini and Rousseau had been set down before a keen-minded, well-informed interviewer, who looked these men straight in their eye and put to them one searching question after another, cross-examining as Sam Untermyer used to cross-examine people on the witness stand, they would have stuck closer to the path of truth” (p. 37). Nevins goes on to say this about the role of the interviewer, “But in the hands of an earnest, courageous interviewer who has mastered a background of facts and who has the nerve to press his scalpel tactfully and with some knowledge of psychology into delicate tissues and even bleeding wounds, deficiencies can be exposed; and oral history can get at more of the truth than a man will present about himself in a written autobiography” (p. 37).

Oral histories can serve a number of benefits. “Oral history can help document much previously undocumented information about communities, businesses, events, or the lives of individuals. It can compliment or supplement information already on the record, fill gaps in the historical record, bring out new and previously unknown information, help us understand how people view and understand the past, and, at times, correct or provide new insight into existing information or clarify confusing accounts. It

can also uncover complexities and add new dimensions to what was generally perceived as a simple, straightforward recitation of past events” (Sommer & Quinlan, 2002, p. 3).

In addition,

Oral history also serves communities with a history of disenfranchisement. Those with little or no written record, or for whom the written record is distorted at best, benefit greatly from the use of oral history. In many cases, while documenting the community’s history is critical in itself, the interview also becomes a catalyst. It can provide an avenue to correct long-held misconceptions about an event or a time period. It can help collect information that balances the existing record. It can become an impetus for developing community pride through the telling of a community’s story in its own words (Sommer & Quinlan, 2002, p. 3).

Therefore, this research is both inductive and deductive—what some researchers have called analytical induction (Silverman, 1993, p. 160). Given that this research is intrinsically an ethnographic case study, rather than being guided by theory, it seeks *grounded theory*. According to Nachmias and Nachmias (1990), with respect to researchers engaged in fieldwork, “The theory they develop is called grounded theory because it arises out of and is directly relevant to the particular setting under study” (p. 294). Patton (1990) adds, “Grounded theory depends on methods that take the researcher into and close to the real world so that the results and findings are “grounded” in the empirical world” (p. 67). On the other hand, Geertz (1973) reminds us that “theoretical ideas are not created wholly anew in each study; as I have said, they are adopted from other, related studies, and refined in the process, applied to new interpretive problems. If they cease being useful with respect to such problems, they tend to stop being used and are more or less abandoned. If they continue being useful, throwing up new understandings, they are further elaborated and go on being used” (p. 27). Furthermore,

regarding the virtues of oral histories, Sommer and Quinlan (2002) assert “While information collected may be of interest to a local area, its contribution to a greater understanding of related state and national issues should not be overlooked. Local perspectives often provide insight into state and national issues that cannot be found anywhere else” (p. 3).

Site and Population Sampling

I selected Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) as the site from which I would collect the data for two reasons. First, from the literature reviewed in the first two chapters, it is evident that data on this same topic has already been gathered from both private and public institutions of higher education (Ambrose, 1990; Keith, 1996; McCart, 1991). Keith (1996) found that faculty at private, religious institutions in southern California defined academic freedom more in terms of what goes on in the classroom, than research or scholarship. He also found that faculty tended to equate it more in terms of personal rights and responsibilities rather than professional or institutional rights and responsibilities (p.127).

Ambrose’s (1990) study compared attitudes about academic freedom between faculty, chairpersons, and administrators at 15 state colleges within the state of Georgia. Ambrose found that all three groups, in general, held a “positive attitude” about academic freedom. He concluded that, “Within this population, academic freedom is seen as positive, valuable, fair, good, contemporary, strong, active, democratic, dynamic, complex, liberal and broad” (p. 87). Finally, he also found that collegiality was held in as high regard as autonomy.

McCart (1991) examined how faculty members define academic freedom across disciplines and across longevity (junior faculty who had been with the institution for 5 years or less and senior faculty who had been there for 10 years or more) at Pennsylvania State University. What was most revealing, and most pertinent to this study, is that McCart found that none of the junior faculty interviewed in the liberal arts mentioned any “responsibilities” that are associated with academic freedom compared to 43% of the senior faculty (p. 100). The zero is bad enough, but less than half of the senior faculty associating *any* responsibilities with academic freedom is also a little disturbing. Furthermore, only 30% of the junior faculty mentioned limits or constraints on academic freedom compared to 77% of the senior faculty. Just at first glance, one can assume that unless and until these junior faculty members become more acquainted with the “realities” of academic freedom at a public institution in the 21st century, they are going to have a higher potential for abuse or misuse of academic freedom.

I have yet to find any research that has been conducted on this topic within a public, metropolitan university. Perhaps faculty in metropolitan universities, with a mission that emphasizes community engagement and professional service, will also have a unique perspective on academic freedom and tenure. Furthermore, VCU resides within a state capital, potentially adding additional social and political influence on the academy. Although it is beyond the scope of this current study to validate, it is hypothesized that a public, metropolitan university residing in the state capital is the most sensitive to academic freedom issues. These institutions may be a critical unit of analysis for

identifying trends that will inevitably trickle out to more insular academic institutions—the traditional “ivory towers.”

I also selected Virginia Commonwealth University because I have worked here as an instructor in Sociology for the last 12 years, and I have worked as the Associate Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence for the last 3 years. As such, I have developed relationships with both faculty and administrators that are based on trust and respect. As Marshall and Rossman (1995) explain, “The ideal site is where (1) entry is possible; (2) there is a high probability that a rich mix of the processes, people, programs, interactions, and structures of interest are present; (3) the researcher is likely to be able to build trusting relations with the participants in the study; and (4) data quality and credibility of the study are reasonably assured” (p. 51). My history with VCU helped me satisfy the first three criteria. My ability to reduce bias and increase data trustworthiness will satisfy the last criteria—a subject that I will address shortly.

The population from which I chose my sample is core faculty in the social sciences. By core faculty I mean tenured faculty who have been employed by the university for 10 years or more. I have chosen core faculty because of their unique role as cultural transmitters. They are the very faculty whose role it is to mentor and socialize the next cohort of faculty—not only to the professorial profession in general, but also to the idiosyncratic issues that shape a particular institutional structure and culture. They have also been around long enough to have experienced, either directly or vicariously, academic freedom issues that are unique to a particular institution, providing them with a unique perspective on the academic ethos of that institution.

The sampling frame was drawn from the social sciences because of the unique history and experience that social science faculty members have had with respect to academic freedom and its infringements. Specifically, I drew my sample from seven disciplines (Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology, Political Science, Criminal Justice, Public Administration, and Urban Studies and Planning) and two programs (African American Studies and Women's Studies). It is important to note, however, that the departments in which many of these disciplines were once housed at VCU were recently absorbed into two new schools—essentially dissolving all of the departments except Sociology and Psychology. Although this restructuring took place right before the data were collected, there is considerable evidence in the literature reviewed in the first two chapters of this study that faculty members maintained a strong affiliation with the disciplinary background from which they worked over their professional careers (Clark, 1987a; Keith, 1966; Ladd & Lipset, 1975; Lewis, 1966; McCart, 1991; Wences & Abramson, 1970).

Because I have a specific population defined whose personal experience is of interest, the sampling design was purposeful. According to Patton (1990), “The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth” (p. 169). Patton proceeds to outline 16 different strategies for selecting information-rich cases and suggests, “The final selection, then, may be made randomly—a combination approach. Thus these approaches are not mutually exclusive” (p. 181). Given this advice, my sampling strategy was guided by a combination of intensity sampling—which provided “information-rich cases that manifest the phenomenon of interest intensely”

(Patton, 1990, p. 171), homogenous sampling—which afforded me the opportunity to define a particular subgroup in-depth who share a common experience and understanding of the phenomenon of interest, and snowball or chain sampling—which took advantage of the fact that members of this subgroup will know each other better than I do. Thus, I was able to maximize the level of homogeneity within the subgroup, as well as minimize the amount of time it took to generate a list of potential respondents on my own.

On September 8, 2003, I received permission from the Dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences to acquire a list of faculty who met my criteria—tenured social scientists who have been with VCU for 10 years or more. Upon receiving this list of 43 faculty members, I proceeded to e-mail each of them an Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved cover letter explaining who I was, the nature of my research and a request to have them participate. Of the 42 faculty in the sampling frame, 31 accepted and were eventually interviewed. However, I eliminated one of the interviews from the data set because the respondent rarely answered the questions directly. Rather, the respondent answered each question with additional questions, which inevitably moved the discussion into directions that were irrelevant to the study. Ultimately, I ended the two and a half hour interview before I was half way through the interview guide. Consequently, the final number of respondents in the sample was 30. Seven faculty members respectfully declined to be interviewed due to workload constraints. Ironically, one faculty member refused to be interviewed for fear of how it might be held against him or her. Three never responded to my requests. The final sampling frame consisted of 7 females and 24 males; 5 African-Americans and 25 Caucasians. Their length of time at VCU ranged

from 10 years to 33 years. A distribution of the participants by discipline is located in Table 7. More details about the respondents' background is included in Chapter Four.

Table 7

Distribution of Respondents by Discipline

Discipline	No. of Faculty
Sociology and Anthropology	9
Psychology	6
Political Science	9
Urban Studies	4
Criminal Justice	2

Researcher's Role

In qualitative research, the researcher is the "instrument." As such, there are a host of issues that are unique to qualitative researchers. Marshall and Rossman (1995) divide these into *technical issues* and *personal issues* (p. 59). The technical issues are associated with how the researcher plans on gathering and deploying the resources necessary to conduct the study. This would include things like the researchers time, access to contacts or gatekeepers that ultimately provide the means to get to the data source(s), and personal investment. Marshall and Rossman (1995) refer to this last issue as "deploying the self." When considering how much of your "self" that you are willing to and capable of investing, one should consider the degree of participantness; the degree

of revealedness; the degree of duration in the field; and the degree of focus in the research question (Patton, 1990).

With respect to this research study, the degree to which the researcher is a participant in the lives of the respondents is minimal. Although I work in the same organizational context as the respondents, the data gathering process only demanded that I participate in the lives of the respondents during the interview itself. This is far more feasible and less demanding than literally living with the respondents 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The issue of revealedness is a tricky one. On the one hand, being completely overt about one's research questions and agenda could easily lead to a Hawthorne effect—where respondents adjust their behavior to conform to the research. Taken to the other extreme, complete covertness leads to a host of ethical issues not the least of which is health and safety of the respondents. Patton (1990) suggests that “Evaluators and decision makers will have to resolve these issues in each case in accordance with their own consciences, evaluation purposes, political realities, and ethical considerations” (p. 213). Based on the recommendations by the IRB, a cover letter and e-mail was composed and used to recruit the respondents (see Appendix C). Both forms of correspondence contained the same information: (a) an introduction to myself and my research; (b) a little background information on the topic; (c) a request for their participation; (d) an explanation of how I will ensure confidentiality; and (e) a reminder that their participation is completely voluntary and that they can refuse to answer any question at any time. I also reminded each respondent about the confidentiality of their

responses and the voluntary nature of the research just before each interview. A letter of consent was signed by each of the respondents prior to the commencement of each interview (see Appendix D).

In terms of the degree of duration in the field, Patton (1990) suggests that, “Fieldwork should last long enough to get the job done—to answer the research questions being asked and to fulfill the purpose of the study” (p. 214). For this study, the data collection began on October 29, 2003 and originally ended on December 15, 2003. However, upon reviewing the disciplinary breakdown of the respondents, it became clear that faculty members from Psychology were underrepresented. Based on the advice and assistance from my committee, I was able to recruit two more psychologists over the winter break and I interviewed them on February 4 and 5, 2004. The average duration for each interview was 1 hour—the longest was 1 hour and 35 minutes and the shortest was 21 minutes. A total of 31 faculty were interviewed. However, as previously discussed, one interview was dropped from the data pool leaving the total number of interviews in the study at 30.

Finally, with respect to the degree of focus in the study, one should consider how this relates to the previous dimension—duration of data collection in the field. The broader and more holistic the research question(s), the longer it will take to complete the study. The more focused, the less time is needed. The research questions that I asked were fairly focused. As a result, the time that I had anticipated for each interview and for the data collection process was right on schedule—no more than 2 hours per interview and 3 months for the data to be collected.

Other than these *technical* issues, qualitative researchers must also be sensitive to *interpersonal* issues in fieldwork. According to Patton (1990), these consist of both ethical and personal considerations—both of which stem from the fact that in qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument. According to Nachmias and Nachmias (1996), “Two ethical issues are associated with fieldwork: the problem of potential deception and the impact the fieldwork may have on the lives of those studied” (p. 492). Patton (1990) breaks these issues down even more and includes some personal considerations that researchers should entertain as well.

1. Researchers should offer some form of reciprocation. Respondents are much more willing to offer their time and share their experience when they believe that they are getting something in return. Some researchers offer financial incentives, while others offer respondents access to the data once it has been compiled. Patton (1990) warns, however, not to make any promises that you cannot keep.

2. Patton (1990) also suggests that researchers undergo a risk assessment for the respondents. This would include potential psychological stress, legal liabilities, ostracism by peers, and political repercussions.

3. As with any form of social research, researchers should obtain informed consent and guarantee respondents’ confidentiality.

4. Researchers should determine and make clear from the onset who will own and have control over the data once it is collected.

5. Researchers should also consider how the data collection techniques would affect the interviewees. Again, this would include physical and psychological stress, legal liabilities, and social or political repercussions.

6. And lastly, researchers should consider having a “confidant” whom they can use as a sounding board as ethical and personal issues arise during the research process, as many of these issues are unforeseen ahead of time.

With respect to this study, I have not experienced any ethical dilemmas or personal problems. With the exception of the one faculty member who declined to be interviewed because of fear of how it might come back to negatively affect him or her, the only other issue that arose was a faculty member who wanted to see the results before it went to the committee prior to the defense—this respondent was concerned that his/her responses, if improperly revealing, may have consequences for his/her department. In order to address this concern, I agreed to let the faculty member see the findings before I submitted it for final defense. If the respondent was able to identify any data that could be directly attributed to him/her or his/her department, I would edit accordingly. I also offered to provide the final report to each of the respondents after the defense. Most of them accepted the offer with eagerness.

In qualitative research, because the researcher is the instrument, the limitations and trustworthiness of the data collected rests largely on the competency of the researcher. In addition, the quality of the data is associated also more with the *quality* of the sample and sample design—rather than to the *size* of the sample. Patton (1990) writes, “The validity, meaningfulness, and insights generated from qualitative inquiry

have more to do with the information-richness of the cases selected and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher than with sample size” (p. 185). Later he adds, “The quality of the information obtained during an interview is largely dependent on the interviewer” (p. 279). The next section addresses some of the issues related to the trustworthiness and limitedness of the data based on the sampling design that I have chosen, as well as the contextual factors of the site that have potentially influenced the sample population.

Data Trustworthiness

In terms of *validity*, Silverman (1993) suggests that there are two forms of validation that are particularly appropriate to the logic of qualitative research: triangulation and respondent validation (p. 156). Denzin (1970) describes two types of triangulation: data triangulation and method triangulation. Data triangulation involves combining a variety of data gathering approaches such as observation, interviewing, and document analysis, often engaged in simultaneously. The virtue of this form of triangulation is that it can provide verification of a particular fact from multiple, sometimes unrelated sources. To rely on just one source of data may elicit anomalous data taken out of context. Method triangulation involves combining both quantitative and qualitative research methods again in an effort to reinforce and substantiate the findings. In this research, data triangulation was used in an attempt to validate what the respondents revealed during the interviews. For instance, one of the questions on the interview guide asks, “Does your department have a formal policy on academic freedom?” This question is followed by, “Does VCU?” In order to validate the

responses provided by the interviewees, I referred to a number of documents that are available to faculty including the Faculty Handbook. In addition, I was interested in comparing the definitions of academic freedom that were offered by the respondents to various statements on academic freedom that are contained in a number of documents that are available to these same respondents.

A second way in which a researcher can *validate* data gathered from individual respondents is particularly useful when conducting interviews. Similar to the problem that we have all witnessed when information disseminates from one party to another—some of the “facts” are lost in the translation or reiteration. Therefore, I tape recorded all of the interviews so that nothing was lost or filtered out. Furthermore, I transcribed all of the interviews myself. I transcribed each of the first 15 interviews almost immediately after I conducted each one in order to begin the data analysis and to look for potential problems before all of the data had been collected. This proved to be advantageous because one issue that arose as a result of this practice was the realization that I neglected to directly ask the first 11 respondents when they first learned about academic freedom. Consequently, I was able to contact each of the 11 respondents and rescheduled a brief follow-up session where I asked them this question.

Limitations of the Researcher

“Apart from the possible biases and errors that stem from the questionnaire instrument itself or from the sampling design, the social nature of the interview has the potential for all sorts of bias, inconsistencies, and inaccuracies” (Bailey, 1994, p. 177). This is especially the case when interviews are used. The relationship between the

interviewer and interviewee is central as to whether the data derived from the interview process is valid. Bailey (1994) describes this relationship as a “secondary relationship.” “A secondary relationship is usually functional rather than emotional. The interaction is engaged in for a purpose, often a single purpose. The interaction is likely to be courteous but restrained, and formal rather than intimate. Rather than acting in terms of the whole personality, the two participants utilize only a single facet of the personality. Since the participants often know little about each other, they tend to depend greatly upon such cues as dress, grooming, hairstyle, skin color, age, sex, tone of voice, and accent” (Bailey, 1994, p. 178).

Consequently, Bailey (1994) suggests that the interviewer should have roughly the same characteristics as the respondent. However, regardless of the extent to which the interviewer and interviewee share common physical characteristics, the dynamics of a secondary relationship are much more formal than they are informal. As such, both parties are much more likely to engage in what Erving Goffman (1959) refers to as “impression management,” which can lead to the disguising of one’s true thoughts or beliefs. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the interviewer to be aware of the nature of “the interview” dynamics in order to truly engage with each respondent and come to a mutually understood line of communication. Silverman (1993) writes, “If interviewees are to be viewed as subjects who actively construct the features of their cognitive world, then one should try to obtain intersubjective depth between both sides so that a deep mutual understanding can be achieved” (p. 95).

In addition to this general caveat regarding the nature of the interview process, one can also identify errors (or biases) on the part of either the researcher (interviewer) or respondent. Hyman (1954) lists four types of error that can be made by the interviewer: (1) asking errors, or errors that the interviewer makes by altering the questionnaire through omitting certain questions or changing question wording; (2) probing errors, which occur through biased, irrelevant, inadequate, or unnecessary probing; (3) recording errors, and (4) flagrant cheating, or consciously recording a response without even asking the question, or recording a response even when the respondent fails to answer (p. 240).

Most of these can be reduced by increasing one's awareness of each and making deliberate choices that will reduce their likelihood as well as making all of these choices and the decision-making processes that are behind them explicit and transparent. Bailey (1994) offers the following four errors that a respondent can make:

(1) deliberately lying, because the respondent does not know the answer, the question is too sensitive, or he or she does not want to give a socially undesirable answer; (2) unconscious mistakes, such as a respondent's believing he or she is giving an accurate account of his or her behavior when he or she is not. This occurs most frequently when the respondent has socially undesirable traits that he or she will not admit even to himself or herself; (3) accidental errors, as when the respondent simply misunderstands or misinterprets the question; and (4) memory failures, when the respondent does his or her best to remember but cannot remember or is not sure (p. 177).

Bailey then offers a number of precautionary measures to try to reduce these errors. "The first and second errors are most easily affected by the interviewer's appearance and manner. An interviewer who seems to be prestigious, of high status, very formal, or otherwise intimidating may arouse the respondent's caution in answering. The third and fourth errors are most likely to be caused by a faulty questionnaire than by the

interviewer, although an interviewer who has an accent, does not speak clearly, or speaks very softly can cause errors of the third type if the respondent cannot understand him or her” (Bailey, 1994, p. 177).

Heeding Bailey’s advice, I dressed in business casual wear, which is a fairly typical dress code for social science faculty on a university campus. I was seen as a peer by most of the respondents because most of them were aware that I am a fellow academic on campus. With the accidental errors in mind, I conducted two “mock” interviews with colleagues in order to become more familiar with the questions and interview guide. I also scheduled the first five interviews with faculty members with whom I was most acquainted in order to become a little more at ease with the interview process and to get a feel for the flow of the interview and to anticipate the appropriate times to probe.

Limitations in Methods and Sampling Design

To reiterate the research design and methods driving this research, I am employing qualitative research in order to examine how core, tenured faculty in the social sciences at a metropolitan university have come to define academic freedom and tenure. The following section will address many of the limitations that are associated with this kind of research. However, I will explore the more idiosyncratic limitations of this particular study in the final chapter of this study.

This being said, issues of reliability and validity are of equal importance in qualitative research as it is in quantitative research. One way of obtaining *reliability* is to use a questionnaire and interview guide from a reliable source. I created an interview guide from questions drawn from previous research in this area (McCart, 1991). In

addition to using existing interview questions, Silverman (1993) recommends: (a) thorough training of interviewers; (b) as many fixed choice answers as possible; and (c) inter-rater reliability checks on the coding of answers to open-ended questions.

Unfortunately, due to the nature of the concepts under study, the questions and interview guide do not lend themselves to “fixed-choice” answers. However, for questions that generated the most varied responses, I used my Department Chair as an inter-rater in an attempt to ensure that my coding was valid. In order for a case study to have any generalizability, it is very important to provide details of the *context* of the site from which the data is drawn. Spradley (1979) suggests researchers collect four sets of notes: (a) short notes taken at the time of the field session; (b) expanded notes written as soon as possible immediately following a field session; (c) a fieldwork journal to record problems or issues that arise during each stage of the fieldwork; and (d) a provisional running record of analysis and interpretation. Based upon the field notes that I took during the data collection process, coupled with my existing knowledge of the history of VCU, I have developed the following contextual profile of the site where the data collection took place.

Institutional Context

VCU is fairly young as a university. The academic campus can trace its roots to 1917 when the Richmond School of Social Economy was formed to help train social workers and public health nurses. In 1919, the name was changed to the Richmond School of Social Work and Public Health. In 1939, the name was changed again to the Richmond Professional Institute (RPI). Later, in 1968, Governor Mills Godwin signed a

law merging RPI with the Medical College of Virginia establishing Virginia Commonwealth University. In 1990, a new Strategic Plan was unveiled launching VCU's new mission—to not only become a leading metropolitan university—one which seeks to actively engage its host community, while at the same time, aspiring to become a Carnegie I doctoral granting research institution. Given VCU's youth and rapid growth, it should not be surprising to recognize that VCU lacks a strong history and tradition of academic culture—an observation that will be supported later by the data.

Furthermore, VCU resides in a capital city. One can easily entertain the somewhat unique circumstances and ramifications of a metropolitan university in a capital city: Everything from VCU's growth and development in the context of the physical city, to its fundamental role in economics, politics and leadership in the community—both for better and for worse. This fractious relationship has been the subject of many an article in the editorial section of the leading newspaper in the capital city.

Socio-cultural Context

When one considers VCU's institutional mission and strategic plan in the context of political and economic forces, we can begin to grasp the kind of structural factors that are shaping the ethos of higher education in many institutions around the country. We are all asked to do more with less. More students are enrolling—many of whom need additional resources and services. Class sizes are increasing along with our roles and responsibilities. At the same time, resources are more scarce, senior faculty are encouraged to retire early, and salary increases are not forthcoming. In order to make up

some of the shortfall, most public institutions have had to increase tuition rates and recruit more out-of-state students. Partly due to these factors, VCU has undergone some restructuring. A number of departments have been absorbed into two new schools—the School of Government and Public Affairs (formerly the departments of Criminal Justice, Urban Studies and Planning, Public Administration, and Political Science) and the School of World Studies (formerly the departments and programs of Foreign Languages, Anthropology, Religious Studies, International Studies and Geography).

All this being said, the current state of higher education has led to a decline in the job market for individual faculty members. Upon doing a search on *The Chronicle of Higher Education's* website, dozens of recent articles are displayed on this subject. One article, appropriately titled, *The Tightening Job Market* (Smallwood, 2002), discussed hiring freezes that emerged during the recession of 2002. “So far, the tightening of the job market has been most visible at 4-year public colleges and universities—typically those that have many entry-level positions in good years—where state cuts have an immediate impact” (Smallwood, 2002). This “tight” job market has in turn, led to a subsequent decline in job mobility. Many senior or mid-stage faculty are beginning to “settle” on establishing or developing their careers at a single institution.

A second and related trend in higher education is that institutions, especially public institutions, are hiring more adjunct and collateral faculty. This would not be an issue if it were coupled with a parallel increase in the hiring of full-time, tenure track positions. However, this is not the case. According to a recent article in *The Chronicle* entitled, “Part-Timers Continue to Replace Full-timers on College Faculties,”

(Leatherman, 2000) over a 2-year period from 1995 to 1997, the number of full-time faculty hired at 4-year institutions went down from 69% to 67.4% while the number of part-timers hired went up from 31% to 32.6%. According to Richard Moser (as cited in Leatherman, 2002), a national field representative for the National Association of University Professors, this is “the worst expression of the corporatization of higher education.” Although this gives the institution more flexibility within its largest expenditure—faculty salaries, it also has the potential to decay and demoralize the institutional culture in many universities.

In addition to the economic forces that are shaping higher education there are a number of political forces at work as well. First, American society has not been the same since the terrorist attacks in New York on September 11, 2001. The event itself was traumatic enough to leave an indelible mark on the psyche of all American citizens. However, the repercussions of this event on our social institutions and the civil liberties upon which they are based have left many in academia more guarded than usual.

Data Management and Analysis

In qualitative research, data management and analysis occur simultaneously and cyclically. As data are collected, certain categorical schemes will emerge. The data should intuitively fall into one or another category. However, some data may not fit into a category, or data may appear to belong to multiple categories. Therefore, it is important to shuffle (or reshuffle) the data in order to obtain the best fit and to consider alternative categories in order to capture the widest possible range of data. Many of the themes or concepts that emerge are ones that have recurred in other, similar studies. Here again lies

the purpose of analytical induction—theories, hypothesis, processes, and concepts from other research projects may be applicable in the current study. Consequently, I relied heavily on the work of McCart (1991), Keith (1996), and Ambrose (1990) to help inform and shape the analytical framework of my data set.

Once the researcher has maximized the degree to which the widest range of data “fits”—providing an in-depth, qualitative account of the *nature* of the data, content analysis can be used to yield a quantitative account of the extent of the phenomenon of interest. In the case of this research study, I examined the *nature* of this subcultures’ definition of academic freedom and tenure and the *extent* to which it is shared both within this population, and in comparison with other subgroups researched in aforementioned studies.

As more data were collected, these categories began to show relationships with one another—to the point where patterns or themes began to emerge. As certain categories became exhausted or saturated, data collection and management was steered into other directions—directions not necessarily considered at the outset of the research project. This process is illustrative of the relationship between inductive and deductive reasoning that is characteristic of analytical induction research. This reasoning is very important and should be documented in field notes or journal entries to be revisited at a later date. According to Patton (1990), because there are no straightforward tests for reliability and validity, nor any firm “ground rules” for drawing conclusions, “analysts have an obligation to monitor and report their own analytical procedures and processes as fully and truthfully as possible. This means that qualitative analysis is a new stage of

fieldwork in which analysts must observe their own processes even as they are doing the analysis. The final obligation of analysis is to analyze and report the analytical process as part of the report of actual findings” (Patton, 1990, p. 372).

The data were managed and analyzed using a software program known as NUD*IST. This program allowed me to easily identify text units, code them, recode them, and then collapse the coding schemes into more inclusive categorical frameworks. More specifically, once I transcribed each of the 30 interviews—resulting in 455 pages of text data, I imported each one into the software program as a text file. Each text file was assigned a number corresponding with the interview number. Then I cut and pasted the response to each question from each of the respondents into a “node” (or sub-file) that I named after the question from which the response came (i.e., I opened each of the 30 interviews and cut and pasted each respondent’s answer to the question, “How do you define academic freedom?” into a node that I named “academic freedom definitions”). Upon completion, I had 36 nodes—one for each question in the interview guide. However, I dropped four of the questions because I considered them either irrelevant to my research or redundant (question 16, Do you believe that your engineering and liberal arts colleagues value academic freedom in the same way; question 22, Do you perceive any conflicts between your academic freedom and those of your colleagues; question 27, Do you feel free to teach or pursue any research interest that you wish; and question 36, What is your definition, again?). I soon added two more nodes that came from a line of probing questions that became critical to understanding the background of my respondents. These two questions were “What do you think is the purpose of academic

freedom,” and “When did you first learn about academic freedom?” I asked these probing questions right after I asked, “How do you define academic freedom?”—as such, they became questions 9b and 9c, respectively. As a result, the total number of nodes on the first run through the data was 35—one for each question on the interview guide.

I then referred to my original five research questions and identified the questions on the interview guide that corresponded with each of the research questions. Tables 8 through 12 illustrate how the 35 interview questions were grouped and coded according to their relevance to the five research questions.

Once the data set were organized in this way, it was fairly easy, although time consuming, to create new nodes and rename old ones—identifying and recording the key concepts, phrases, and meanings. The whole process resulted in the construction of a “tree node” organizational system. Using this concept of a “tree node,” consider the concept of academic freedom as the trunk of this research project. From this trunk stems five main branches—the five research questions driving this research. Each of these main branches then stems off in many directions, some overlapping with other branches, while others lead off into directions of their own.

Presentation of the Data

Because this research involves both quantitative and qualitative data analysis, I will present the data in two different ways. On the one hand, I use tables to present the content analysis of the key terms, phrases and text units that resulted from the coding schemes that emerged as I analyzed the data. In addition to this quantitative analysis, I also use quotes from the respondents that I deem to be exemplary of the sentiment

Table 8

How Do Core Faculty in the Social Sciences at Virginia Commonwealth University Define Academic Freedom?

Interview Guide Question Number	Question
9	How would you define academic freedom?
9b	What do you consider to be the purpose of academic freedom?
11	Do you think that academic freedom and professional autonomy are the same things?
17	Should faculty members be allowed to select their own course content and textbooks for their courses?
23	Do you think that academic freedom is more or less of an issue for younger or older faculty?
24	Do you believe that academic freedom is more or less of an issue for faculty of different ranks?
35	Now that you have had a chance to talk about academic freedom for a while, would your definition still be the same?

Table 9

Do These Same Faculty Perceive Academic Freedom to Be a Significant Feature of a Career in Higher Education?

Interview Guide Question Number	Question
2	When did you decide on an academic career?
3	Why did you choose an academic career?
7	Were faculty freedoms to teach and conduct research an influence on your choice of an academic career?
8	Have these issues been significant issues in any way throughout your career?
15	Do you think that academic freedom is a significant feature of an academic career?

Table 10

Do These Same Faculty Perceive Any Existing Threats to Their Academic Freedom?

Interview Guide Question Number	Question
10	Can you give me any examples of what you would consider an academic freedom issue?
12	Do you think that faculty at VCU expect too much freedom in their work environment?
13	Have you experienced any academic freedom restrictions, threats or violations at VCU?
14	Have you known of any academic freedom violations at VCU?
18	How do you believe the VCU administration would react to a faculty member who took a controversial position?
19	Do you think that VCU would be more or less supportive than other institutions?
20	Do you believe your department would protect or support a colleague who took a controversial opinion?
21	Do you believe it should?
25	Have you experienced any indirect or direct pressure on your choice of research areas at VCU?
26	Some academics are concerned about the growing relationship between academia and industry. Do you have an opinion concerning this relationship?
30	Do you see any threats to academic freedom existing in contemporary American society? How about VCU?
33	Do you feel that sufficient protections exist for academic freedom?
34	How do you see academic freedom fitting into the future of American higher education?

Table 11

How Do These Faculty Define Academic Tenure?

Interview Guide Question Number	Question
28	As a faculty member, what functions does tenure serve?
29	Should tenure be eliminated? Replaced with something else?

Table 12

How Did These Faculty Learn About Academic Freedom and Tenure?

Interview Guide Question Number	Question
1	<p>What type of institution did you do your undergraduate and graduate work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Was it public or private? * Was it a research-oriented university or a liberal arts college? * Approximately how big was it (student enrollment)?
4	What was your first academic appointment?
5	At what rank did you enter the profession?
6	Was there any orientation (formal or informal) for new faculty when you entered academe? Did senior faculty provide mentoring?
9c	When did you first learn about academic freedom--under what circumstances?
31	Does your department have a formal policy on academic freedom?
32	Does VCU?

contained in each category. It should be noted, however, that in many cases the interview questions yielded very homogenous answers and in these cases, there was little need to qualify their responses. On the other hand, some of the questions yielded very different kinds of responses which made it difficult to quantify their responses. In these cases, I spent much more time gleaning out important details.

The next four chapters will present the findings one research question at a time. The data will be presented in the order of the original five research questions. Hence, Chapter Four will begin with the last question, “How do core faculty in the social sciences at VCU define academic freedom?” Chapter Five examines the question, “Do these same faculty perceive academic freedom to be a significant feature of a career in higher education?” Chapter Six covers two questions, “Do these same faculty perceive any existing threats to their academic freedom?” and “How do these faculty define academic tenure?” Chapter Seven addresses the question “How did these faculty members learn about academic freedom and tenure?” Chapter Eight will summarize the major findings that pertain to the original five research questions. In addition, it will discuss some of the unanticipated findings that emerged from this research. Lastly, I will examine some of the policy implications for institutions of higher education as well as possibilities for future research in this area.

Chapter Four

FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM

This chapter presents the data that were generated from asking the respondents questions about how they perceive academic freedom. The questions from the interview guide that generated these data are listed below in Table 13.

Table 13

Questions Relating to Respondents' Perceptions of Academic Freedom

9	How would you define academic freedom?
9b	What do you consider to be the purpose of academic freedom?
11	Do you think that faculty professional autonomy and academic freedom are the same thing?
17	Should faculty members be allowed to choose course content and textbooks for their courses?
23	Do you believe academic freedom is a more or less significant issue for faculty of different ages?
24	Do you believe academic freedom is a more or less significant issue for faculty in other academic ranks?
35	Now that you have talked about academic freedom for a while, would your definition still be the same?

Question 9: How Would You Define Academic Freedom?

First and foremost, I asked the respondents how they would define academic freedom. Based on McCart's (1991) research, the concept of academic freedom has in its broadest sense, four component parts—research, teaching, limitations (both institutional and ethical), and professional responsibilities. The first two are most commonly attributed to academic freedom. Academic freedom is usually defined in terms of guiding one's research choices, or in terms of guiding the content or methods of one's teaching. What can be less obvious is that, as with any freedom, there are limits—moral, ethical, legal, as well as institutional. Furthermore, as with other freedoms, there are certain responsibilities. According to the AAUP's Statement on Professional Ethics, in the case of academic freedom, tenured faculty have a number of professional responsibilities to their profession, their students, colleagues, institution and to their community (see Appendix A).

As you can see from the data presented in Table 14, virtually every respondent associated academic freedom with the freedoms to teach (30) and conduct research (29)

Table 14

How Would You Define Academic Freedom?

Component of Academic Freedom	No. of Faculty
Research	30
Teach/Publish	29
Limitations	12
Responsibilities	16

in the areas of their own choosing. However, less than half (12) mentioned any limitations on the aforementioned freedoms and just over half (16) mentioned that there are responsibilities that are associated with academic freedom.

My purpose for asking this question was to try and ascertain the degree to which faculty understand the complexity of academic freedom. Those who view it very narrowly, often associating it with First Amendment rights, are more likely to define it in terms of the right to teach whatever they want or the right to pursue any research area that they want—in essence, the right to do whatever they want, academically, within legality. It is important to note that I repeatedly asked the respondents if they wanted to add anything else once they defined it for the first time. It was obvious that many of the respondents were thinking out loud and were putting it in words for the first time. Consequently, some of their responses were well over a page of single-spaced text.

Out of the 30 respondents who participated in the study, 4 defined academic freedom very narrowly. The following respondent defined it strictly in terms of research, “Well, the idea is that you should be able to pursue research questions where ever they may lead, whatever outcomes they may produce. You shouldn't be intimidated or threatened by political pressure or any other kinds of pressure...in general...I guess that's what I assume is freedom.” The remaining three included references to research and *teaching*. One remarked, “I guess it's the freedom to...research in my own area that I find stimulating and to teach in the form and teach the content of my courses without the worrying about somebody coming in and telling me I'm not doing something right.” Another respondent offered this definition, “Well, academic freedom in my

understanding of it is the capacity to follow a line of research interests unimpeded by administrators or any other university agent, and I guess that could be defined pretty broadly but you know the essential goal in academic freedom I think is to eliminate all impediments to the pursuit of any particular pathway to knowledge.” It is my interpretation that the respondent incorporates teaching implicitly by the last observation—that the essential goal in academic freedom is to “eliminate all impediments to the pursuit of any particular pathway to knowledge.” A fourth respondent replied, “It’s the freedom to explore ideas in any direction they go and to engage in the exchange of ideas with colleagues and students...the free exchange of ideas.”

Looking at the responses that appeared to have the broadest definitions, there were four respondents who included aspects of all four dimensions of academic freedom. Perhaps the most eloquent of the four noted: “I think academic freedom...embedded in that idea is the notion of the ability to pursue questions that you think are important and necessary...even if colleagues or administrators might not concur with that...but the caveat is that there are also demands we need to fulfill as faculty...obligations to the university and to our community that can’t be completely ignored in the view of academic freedom and the same goes for teaching. I think that it’s important to understand that there are some freedoms in terms of how you approach the course and readings you require and assignments and things like that, but there is also material that needs to be taught that is expected...there is a contract-implicit, once students enter the university they have course descriptions of the things they are taking and expectations about what the content of the course will be. So, I think that that has to be taken into consideration

when you think about academic freedom...both sides are important. I don't think you can just say 'Well, I am just going to go off and do this and ignore these obligations or these other considerations,'...so there is a balance there." Another respondent describes academic freedom a little differently, but appears to address each of the four dimensions, "I think I would define academic freedom as the cultural space created by a series of alliances...some of those allies would be the university, colleagues, faculty senates...faculty administrations...accrediting agencies, civil liberties groups, and professional associations. All have a stake in preserving a sphere of control over individual faculty. And then there are some political groups and some elements of the administration and some popular opinion, some media groups that view this as excessive and seek to constrain it...and so the interaction of that set of alliances, both pro and con, creates a shifting space within which individuals and a community function, and I think that's what we call the sphere of academic freedom."

The remaining 22 faculty members included both teaching and research and then incorporated either some reference to limitations or professional responsibilities into their definition. With respect to limitations on academic freedom, one respondent replied, "Basically, it is the freedom to pursue...areas of research that are of interest to you as the researcher without severe restrictions being placed on you...obviously there are some practical and realistic limitations that exist everywhere." Another respondent was a little more specific, "Well...now that I think about it...it should include research as well as teaching. But I have always thought of it in terms of the freedom to decide on your course content and method of teaching and to educate students on the topic in the best

way you think possible and nobody would have control over what you did in the classroom. But now that the topic has come up, I think the university should...and its mission states that applied research is important ...so, I mean, you've got academic freedom to do whatever kind of research that you think is important but we only reward certain kinds of research.”

Other respondents emphasized responsibilities or obligations that are associated with academic freedom in their responses. One respondent said, “One ought to be able to inquire on any topic freely, and you should be able to teach freely and legally. I think the teacher has a responsibility, however, to be accurate to teach what one is expected to teach...that is, if I am teaching cognitive psychology, I shouldn't be talking about politics but that is more of a responsibility of the professor rather than something that is written down as the law.” Another replied, “Well, I would define academic freedom as the freedom to pursue lines of inquiry in the classroom and through research outside the classroom, as well as professional work, in socially responsible ways. It is not the freedom to violate canons of professional ethics or of doing sloppy research...and again it is based on being responsible, on following all of the canons of ethics and what good research and scholarship requires.”

In sum, the respondents in this study are in consensus that academic freedom applies to both teaching and research. However, there is no consensus that there are limits to academic freedom or that there are professional responsibilities that govern the exercise of academic freedom. At the very least, these were not salient issues for close to half of the respondents in this study.

Question 9b: What Do You Consider to Be the Purpose
of Academic Freedom?

The data from the responses to the question regarding the purpose of academic freedom are presented in Table 15. In this question, I chose not to use any pre-existing categorical schemes to organize the data. Therefore, the four response sets emerged during the coding process. Some of the respondents included more than one purpose in their answer. However, unlike the previous question where I was interested in the breadth of the respondents' knowledge of academic freedom, in this question, I was primarily interested in the number of purposes mentioned, as well as the priority attributed to each purpose based on the number of respondents who mentioned the purpose.

Table 15

*What Do You Consider to Be the Purpose
of Academic Freedom?*

Purpose of Academic Freedom	No. of Faculty
Cultivate Learning	18
Cultivate a Body of Knowledge	14
Cultivate Society, Democracy	9
Pursuit of the Truth	6

The majority of the respondents indicated that the main purpose of academic freedom was that it cultivated learning by exposing students to a variety of perspectives regardless of how popular or controversial they are. One respondent captured this

sentiment in the following passage: “I think the purpose of academic freedom is to help young people and to help our colleagues to develop an inquiring mind, an analytical mind, a mind that is always searching and helps you in terms of always thinking. I always like to run into people who have points of view which are different from mine because it makes me reinforce...I mean rethink my positions and makes me perhaps adopt a different attitude about something. So, I think academic freedom is critical to the whole learning process...and I think academe represents a situation where you...and I know this is trite, but you never, ever really stop learning. And I think a good academician is one who always has an open mind to different points of view so I think it is critical in terms of the whole academic experience.”

Another respondent offered this perspective: “I think it is basically for the pursuit of knowledge and stimulating teaching, so that when a student comes into the university they are exposed to a broad range of views and opinions and different perspectives—especially if you are talking about politics and political science rather than just having, you know, biases confirmed and getting a single view on anything and that is why it is important in research because your research I think, also informs your teaching.” I asked another respondent, “Well, what is the purpose of espousing unpopular theories?” To this, the respondent replied, “Sometimes I do it just to get my students thinking...get them to respond...get them to say something...anything...stop being a lump...because I think ultimately what we are supposed to be teaching them is critical thinking. And so they have to be able to hear differing perspectives and be able to make judgments about that

based on some knowledge base. So, one purpose is being able to teach unpopular theories.”

Also included in the *cultivation of learning* category were respondents who mentioned that addressing controversial subjects in the classroom somehow enhances learning. However, if they alluded to the pursuit of controversial subjects in their research, or how eliminating external influences can reduce biases in research, then they were coded as *cultivating a body of knowledge*. One respondent suggested: “Well the goal of any research is to expand the field and if advancing the field is controversial then controversy is to be expected. Philosophers of science have discussed this for eons...this is the paradigm change or paradigm shift and academic freedom allows you to push the envelope. And there is also the personal and moral issue about how far...depending on what you are doing, like stem-cell research...cloning people, maybe one needs to think about that, I mean there are ethical issues as well. But I think academics are generally pretty good about this...I mean we are taught ethics...at least most of us have been taught ethics and teach ethics, and think about the moral issues that goes along with good research...that are inherent in it...and we make these moral judgments all of the time.”

Another respondent alluded to the importance of reducing bias in the production and dissemination of knowledge. The respondent noted, “I think its critical to maintaining an atmosphere in which knowledge can be pursued without any kinds of restrictions in terms of the value of the knowledge, the political significance of it.” I then asked, “Well, why is that important?” To which the respondent replied, “Well, it’s important because most disciplines are interested in the expansion of their knowledge base and so that can't

happen if there are any restrictions on what it is that you are going to do as a researcher. But then the other issue is, that I think is important is, that no one can know in advance what the significance of any particular body of research will be and so things that may have been seen at one point in time as irrelevant or too controversial to pursue often are discovered *ad hoc* as important lines of research that contributes in some really significant ways to the development of the knowledge base.” Another respondent had a similar reply but offered a little more of an explanation, “I consider the legitimate purpose of academic freedom to be the opportunity for faculty to research issues and reach conclusions that flow logically and reasonably from the data without concern for the political propriety of those findings.” Again, I asked why that is important, and the response was, “It contributes to the notion of value-free research...it contributes to the notion of the researcher being able to view the data, analyze the data, and draw conclusions without the uncertainty of the response to those data...as long as the conclusions flow from the data then one should be comforted in that notion and not worry about the impressions of others...and I believe that to be the purpose of academic freedom.”

Several respondents included references to both the cultivation of knowledge and learning. Along these lines, one respondent said, “As I see it, the purpose is to encourage the cultivation of knowledge, the growth of new ideas, creative expression of all kinds. Without academic freedom, I don't think knowledge would expand nearly as rapidly as it does...of course, you could also talk about, and I think it's important to talk about, personal initiative taking at the same time. It's not just for the purpose of expanding

knowledge for knowledge sake, it's also to create the conditions that are conducive to individual development and growth whether it produces knowledge or not. So I guess I would make those two things paramount in my mind in trying to identify the purposes.”

Nine of the respondents said that academic freedom functioned to *cultivate a democratic society*. One respondent put it rather succinctly, “I’m going to frame it in the larger sense, the purpose is to help to promote a high quality of democracy...so its to ensure that you do have diverse points of view that you have...the necessary constructive criticism...and so this is one of the means to trying to ensure that the citizens of society are given a divers array of view points and at times constructive criticism. So to me, academic freedom is one of the means to try and bring that about.” Another respondent explained, “Oh, I mean, I think the broad purpose of academic freedom is really kind of a million quasi-utilitarian purposes...which is to say that if you have freedom of inquiry, in the long run, we are all going to be better off because what you find is that things that are unpopular and things that may not be in any particular time period and any particular culture seen as reasonable turn out 20, 50, 100 years down the road to be conventional wisdom. And that, I think, is the purpose of academic freedom, is that in some ways to protect the freedom of inquiry on the grounds that in the long run we all may well benefit from it very much like Mill defended liberty in his great work.”

Six of the respondents included some reference to the *pursuit of truth* in their replies. One respondent said, “Intellectual inquiry...if we are going to find out the truth about things, we need to be able to be free to inquire into anything at all and if we are going to let the truth be known, then you need to be able to speak about it.” When

another respondent suggested that the purpose of academic freedom was to protect free speech, I asked, “Is there a difference between the First Amendment rights to freedom of expression and academic freedom? The respondent clarified, “The difference between free speech and academic freedom is that the latter is the pursuit of truth, [whereas with] free speech you can spout off and speak your mind but that is not in the pursuit of truth. And academics, I think, have a nobler calling than just to just do whatever they want that's true...and so why you need tenure is to protect the pursuit of truth...of letting the unfettered academic inquiry to lead to whatever conclusions are reached...unpopular though they may be...and that's why we have tenure.”

In sum, it is clear from the data that the respondents in this study believe that academic freedom serves a number of purposes. What is interesting is that so few of them acknowledge any connections that academic freedom might have with the broader social benefits of a healthier democracy and a more unfettered search for truth.

All of the remaining questions in this chapter were asked in order to explore some of the nuances surrounding academic freedom. Because academic freedom is such a nebulous concept, asking faculty to consider where academic freedom begins and ends in a variety of circumstances relating to faculty roles and responsibilities will allow us to ascertain whether these faculty share common perceptions about how academic freedom is exercised in their daily lives.

Question 11: Do You Believe That Faculty Professional Autonomy and
Academic Freedom Are the Same Thing?

It became pretty clear early in the interviewing process that many faculty members have a hard time distinguishing between academic freedom and professional autonomy. According to De George (1997), “Academic freedom has three aspects: institutional autonomy, student freedom to learn, and faculty freedom to teach and research” (p. 5). Professional autonomy, on the other hand, is more associated with the degree to which one governs his/her own professional work environment. For instance, academic freedom grants you the right to teach in the method of your choice, but it does not mean that you can teach whatever you want, whenever you want—starting classes late, letting them out early, etc. Therefore, I asked faculty, “Do you think that faculty professional autonomy and academic freedom are the same thing?” The results are displayed in Table 16.

Table 16

*Do You Believe That Faculty Professional Autonomy and
Academic Freedom Are the Same Thing?*

Response	No. of Faculty
Not sure	4
Yes, they are the same	6
No, they are distinct	20
Neutral	12
Autonomy†	6
Academic Freedom‡	2

One-third of the respondents indicated that they thought these concepts were the same, or they weren't sure because of their lack of familiarity of the term professional autonomy. The following is an exchange that I had with a respondent who eventually concluded that the two concepts was one in the same. I am including this bit of dialogue because I think it is indicative of the aforementioned confusion:

Respondent: "Ok, we should have professional autonomy as far as our academic work is concerned...it depends on how you mean to express that...so, for example, [pause] it s perfectly OK to do research in sex topics or sexually explicit or whatever your area is and you should have the professional autonomy to do...to follow that research however it goes, but its not the same as having a bunch of sexually explicit pictures plastered all over your office and if your colleagues complain about it, not taking them down or keeping your door shut or something like that...because that's a move from the area of professional autonomy to sexual harassment in some way because you are offending your colleagues and there is a policy on that so you need to work within the guidelines of the policy...is that clear?"

Interviewer: "Well, not exactly...it sounds more like you are talking about what academic freedom is or isn't without giving much attention to what professional autonomy is or isn't. I am more interested in the relationship between academic freedom and professional autonomy."

Respondent: "Ok, well then, what do you mean by professional autonomy then?"

Interviewer: "What does it mean to you?"

Respondent: “Well, it means that I can do whatever I want for the most part as long as I don't step outside the bounds of what's agreed upon when I was hired at this job...it also means that I can do whatever kind of research that I want and teach to the best of my ability without people interfering with it...on the other hand, if I cancel all my classes because I don't feel like going and say that I have professional autonomy that's not right, that isn't what it means.”

Interviewer: “That also sounds like your definition of academic freedom, which is why I am still confused as to whether you identify a difference between the two.”

Respondent: “Not really, not to me.”

The remainder of the faculty (20) indicated that they thought that academic freedom and professional autonomy were distinct from one another. Approximately two-thirds of this group (12) thought that these concepts were distinct and their definitions were fairly accurate. One faculty member said, “No, I don't think that they are the same thing. By professional autonomy, what that conveys to me is the way that you structure your work routine...in terms of how much time that you put into your teaching, how much time do you put into your research and how much time do you put into public service...its how do you define your role in terms of faculty autonomy, ok...which is quite different than the issue of academic freedom—the ability to enunciate your ideas and advocate them perhaps.” This response was mirrored by most of the faculty in this category. However, another faculty member put it this way, “They are closely related but not exactly the same...because I think academic freedom is in many ways a communal concept...its not simply an individual idea...its about trying to create a climate of free expression so its not

just one individual person and my autonomy pretty much means that I am free to pursue and do some of the things I want to do and that's a little different from academic freedom.”

Several faculty said that these concepts were distinct but as they articulated their responses, they seemed to confuse the two concepts. One of these respondents offered this observation: “Professional autonomy and academic freedom...I think they are different in subtle ways...professional autonomy I think is the freedom to choose projects that you find most important and interesting...to choose service work both in the community broadly defined and within the profession that you find most important...in other words, professional autonomy gives faculty the latitude to choose where they focus their intellectual attention and interests...and academic freedom I think has a whole lot more to do with freedom of ideas within the realm of those things that you choose...the freedom to come at those topic areas that you chose to focus on from a wide, wide variety of different political, ideological, and religious, cultural perspectives.”

An interesting thread that emerged from this question is that a number of faculty went so far as to assess the degree of freedom that each concept extends to them in their daily work. Six of the respondents suggested that faculty members tend to have more freedom with professional autonomy than they do with academic freedom. The following response captures this sentiment: “No, I think that they are highly correlated but not exactly the same. For example, I think that faculty autonomy is an issue of not being bothered...don't bother me with this because I have a good idea and I want to think about it and go forward with it and develop this painting or this research or what have

you. Academic freedom, I think, should apply to every level of education. For example, the adjunct faculty here at VCU, as I understand it, do not have academic freedom the way that professors do and I think that that is unwise...they are teaching, they have their degrees—their PhD's, and since they are technically collateral faculty, or part-time faculty, or whatever it is, they don't have the kind of academic freedom that they should. I have never heard of anybody being killed by an idea and that's it...nobody got killed by a theory...and I think that they are different in that faculty autonomy means that you leave me alone and you let me work, academic freedom is the foundation on which that autonomy rests...at least partially.”

Although the following respondent does not come right out and say it, I think the response implies that many faculty abuse their autonomy more than their academic freedom: “A lot of faculty take the autonomy thing to its ultimate...you know, I am just responsible to myself and to hell with everybody else. Well, no, there are a lot of responsibilities...for one thing as a scholar...I am responsible for sharing what I have learned with my work. Also as a way to learn and to go about my inquiry, you know, I have got to have this interaction with others...who will challenge me for one thing...but also with students. I mean one cannot talk about a university without talking about students for heaven sakes. Autonomous sometimes is the scientist that thinks that students get in the way...students are here to learn and to interact with the scholars...that, to me, does not say autonomy. That, to me, is a reflection of a community.”

Only two of the respondents indicated that they thought that academic freedom afforded more freedom than did professional autonomy. One of respondents said this:

“If autonomy means the capacity to teach and do whatever you want, I don't think that's consistent with academic freedom. I think one can limit autonomy in some ways that doesn't necessarily limit academic freedom. Now, if we're teaching a course in American politics, I think the unit and the school has the right to say, these are the themes that we believe are core and central to this course as a faculty...not any individual mandating it...but I think the faculty have the right to say we expect these themes to be covered and if someone teaches that class and doesn't cover those themes, I think the faculty have the right to evaluate that individual poorly and negatively in terms of rewards and in terms of continuation at the university and it is not a violation of their academic freedom. What's happening there is that their autonomy is limited because what we are saying is that there is a faculty driven mission to this class and in terms of being responsible to students, we want to ensure that certain material is imparted and that we are going to be accountable for what we teach. That doesn't mean that you can't still express a point of view this way or that way about materials in the class. What it does mean is that there is a certain limitation on autonomy for the greater good of the students and the university that some people might claim as a violation of academic freedom, and I don't believe it is because there is no intent to prevent anyone from saying anything or pursuing a line of inquiry. The intent is to say that the faculty have developed a course and that the material in that course ought to be taught during the time period that the faculty member is before the students...so, it's a limitation on autonomy, it is not necessarily a limitation on their academic freedom.”

In sum, it appears that the majority of the respondents see a distinction between academic freedom and professional autonomy. However, one-third of the respondents appear to lack a full understanding of these concepts and how they affect a faculty member's work in different ways. Also, there remains some disagreement about the relative standing of each in terms of the degree to which they affect a faculty members daily work experience.

Question 17: Should Faculty Members Be Allowed to Choose Course

Content and Textbooks for Their Courses?

I was also curious whether faculty members believed that they should be free to choose their own course content and textbooks for their courses. Table 17 displays the results to this question.

Table 17

*Should Faculty Members Be Allowed to Choose Course
Content and Textbooks for Their Courses?*

Response	No. of Faculty
Absolutely	11
Within some limits	19*
Curriculum Limits	16
Professional Limits	3
Societal Limits	3

Note: Some of the faculty gave more than one limitation

Approximately one-third of the faculty said “absolutely” and offered no qualifications. The remaining two-thirds did offer some limits to this choice. Most of them cited curriculum limits. One respondent put it this way, “Yes, with the exception...occasionally an introductory course is in one of the fields where certain things have to be covered in order to make later material understandable, which is especially true in the natural sciences where each course builds on the previous course, and so you have to have some control over the previous courses so the students are properly prepared for the later courses.”

Another respondent said, “Sometimes, but I wouldn't say always. I think, again, there's a contract that's implicit...students matriculate to the university and they have a set of courses that they need to take for their degree and those courses are described in terms of their content in the catalogue. That content was voted on by university committees...so, within limits there are ways to select what you want to emphasize and textbooks and all that...but, you know, I don't think you can completely ignore what you are supposed to be covering in a course. I would want, for example, I would want the ability to choose my own textbook and no one has ever told me in this department that I had to use a particular text, but I know that sometimes there are advantages when you are teaching five sections of something to share the same text. So I think there are two sides to that.”

Three of the respondents indicated that faculty members are free to choose course content and textbooks for their courses but that these choices would ultimately be subject for review by their peers. Therefore, faculty members would be held accountable for

their choices. One faculty member described it as an issue of competency, “Well, it gets back to the issue of whether you are competent. I mean if you are teaching a course on statistics and you've assigned *Playboy* as the textbook, that's incompetent. I would never tell my faculty that they should use one text or another...as long as they were doing a competent job. I think it is absolutely up to them, but if they are incompetent then you have to step in.” Another faculty member put it this way, “The short answer is ‘yes.’ The footnote would be...with the understanding that course content, syllabus, pedagogy, unusual methods and the appropriateness and currency of course content is a portion of evaluative materials during the annual evaluation process—be it merit-based or whatever it is—and promotion and tenure processes. So, the answer is ‘yes,’ but the qualification is with the understanding that there is a price to be paid if the materials are inappropriate. And then there is another caveat having to do with illegal use of materials or inappropriate use of materials or using appropriate materials in an inappropriate fashion. That those sorts of things ought not to wait until the end of the cycle—the evaluation cycle.”

Three faculty members said that they believed that society has a role in shaping choices in course content and textbooks. One respondent said, “I can't imagine doing it any other way [chuckle]. Well, I guess I can...there are restrictions. If academic freedom is freedom within responsibility, who are you responsible to and what are you responsible for...there has got to be a conversation between what society finds acceptable and what faculty find acceptable and that is a legitimate conversation...and so I have sympathy

with both sides of that argument...and so I think that is a place where in a state institution, you have to have a conversation about it.”

Once again, the majority (two-thirds) of the respondents are in consensus that there are circumstances where faculty members should not have complete authority to choose their own textbook and course content. The remaining one-third of the respondents maintain that faculty members should have complete authority over the choice of their course content and textbook.

Question 23: Do You Believe Academic Freedom Is a More or Less
Significant Issue for Faculty of Different Ages?

The next two questions examine whether faculty members believe academic freedom is related to either age or rank. Table 18 presents the data from Question 23.

Table 18

*Do You Believe That Academic Freedom is More or Less of an
Issue for Faculty of Different Ages?*

Response	No. of Faculty
More of an issue:	12
More of an Issue for Younger Faculty	6
More of an Issue for Older Faculty	6
Less of an issue:	15
No (no explanation)	2
Rank/Tenure is More Important	4
Individual Values are More Important	2
Cohort Experiences are More Important	7
Don't know	3

Upon a first look at the data it is clear that the respondents in this study have very different opinions about the relative significance of academic freedom with faculty of different ages. Half of the respondents (15) indicated that they did not think that academic freedom was related to age. However, seven of the respondents did suggest that they believed that cohort experience could play a role—especially for those people who went through school during the 50s, 60s and 70s. One respondent said, “A lot of younger people don't know what AAUP is, or what it stands for, and a lot of the older faculty, especially the ones that were here in the 60s, you know that were academics in the 60s, have a very clear idea about what it's about...and then there is [*sic*] people in the middle who some do and some don't...so yeah, I do think age makes a difference.”

Another respondent made a similar remark, “Yeah, maybe so...assuming that the...that us older folks are more of the 1960 generation and in some cases might be more rebel rousers and so on and that maybe...and I haven't done any surveys on this but maybe the younger generation are much more career oriented and less wider or broader issues oriented so it might be an age difference.” Even though each of these respondents makes a reference to age in their reply, the responses were coded as a cohort difference because of the clear associations with a particular period in time. Another respondent alluded to a cohort difference as well; only in this case, it was the younger faculty's experience with political correctness that may have sensitized them to academic freedom. This respondent replied, “Well I would guess that younger faculty with all of this political correctness stuff...that younger faculty might be more sensitive to it in the sense

that they might try to avoid controversial topics while they are assistant professors but apart from the general cohort differences, I don't think so.”

A couple of faculty members thought one’s willingness to exercise or defend academic freedom was more related to one’s individual values or characteristics. One respondent said, “No, I don't because I think when you are young you have a certain set of values and issues that you are dealing with and as you get older they change but in both you can look for new things that may be controversial...so I don't see any difference.” Another said, “I don't think you can make an age generalization, I just think it depends on the individual.” Four of the respondents said that they thought tenure or academic rank was more related to academic freedom than was age.

Twelve of the 30 respondents indicated that they thought that academic freedom was related to age. However, these 12 were split in half as to the nature of the relationship. Six of the respondents suggested that they believed that as faculty grew older, they were more likely to take chances—to exercise academic freedom. One respondent put it this way, “I think as people age, the things that become very important to them become very clear...and they know and they have a better sense of what they want to investigate and do and follow more than they do earlier on in their career. So in that sense, I would say yes...plus the salary compression and everything else that goes on...you lose some of the other benefits of being a faculty member and academic freedom is one of those things that remains. So, I think that it would become a bit more important for older faculty.”

Another faculty member offered this perspective, “Well, this is just a guess, but I think that older faculty aren't so worried anymore about what other people think and therefore perhaps, the right word would be, they tend to use more freedom just because they are just not as worried.” Another remarked, “I think younger faculty, from what I have been seeing, given the pressures that are on them now, and they are far greater now than when I started, are much less likely to rock the boat. I think it really...much of this falls to older faculty to really to raise the tough questions. I just don't see that from younger faculty...they are playing it safe.”

The other half of the faculty in this category had the opposite point of view. They felt that as faculty members age, they become more complacent. According to these respondents, younger faculty members are more likely to test the boundaries. One respondent put it this way, “I think with age...people become more complacent and less idealistic...they become more wedded to accepting the status quo...and they may well become tired in terms of academic freedom.” Another respondent said, “I think age does something to you...it mellows you. I don't get nearly,...now at my age,...as emotionally involved in things as I did 20 years ago. I kind of roll with the punches...I go where things are going as long as they don't mess with what I'm doing” One respondent said this about age and academic freedom, “Well, with all other things being... I would think that academic freedom would be more important to younger faculty and more irrelevant to older faculty...all other things being equal. The older are more likely to acclimate...there is a reason why we have more juvenile crime than we have geriatric crime [chuckle] and deterrence literature supports this notion. Punishment, or the threat

of punishment, is more effective for a more mature person than it is for a less mature person. There is a degree of impetuosity that I think is not a bullion sort of definition, it's a linear process and the more one tends to one extreme then the more likely they are to acclimate and to be deterred by the threat of not just punishment but the uncertainty of what ramifications might flow from that action. So, older faculty are more likely to be careful...and younger faculty are more likely to be impetuosity."

Question 24: Do You Believe Academic Freedom is a More or Less Significant Issue for Faculty in Other Academic Ranks?

Based on the responses to this question, it is fairly clear that the respondents associate academic freedom with tenure more so than with rank, age, or even cohort (see Table 19).

Table 19

Do You Believe Academic Freedom with Tenure is More or Less of an Issue for Faculty of Different Ranks?

Response	No. of Faculty
No	1
Yes	28
Rank	5
Tenure	23
Job Security	17
Perceived Job Security	5
Individual Factors	1
Don't Know	1

Twenty-three of the 30 faculty indicated that they thought academic freedom was primarily associated with tenure—those that have tenure have academic freedom, nontenured faculty lack academic freedom. Furthermore, the majority of these faculty (17) believe that it is the job security—or the perceived job security—of tenure, that affords these faculty the security to exercise academic freedom and pursue controversial research. The following is a typical response in this category, “Rank only so far as tenure is concerned and generally tenure comes with the...I see very little distinction between a full professor and an associate professor. I think that is an artificial difference...tenure is the key factor and the ability to speak your mind and I don't think the title between an assistant and associate where tenure is concerned, makes any difference.”

Another respondent replied, “Yes, absolutely...I think the big issue there is tenure...that's what it comes down to...that is why tenure is so important it does give you protection in a way that nothing else does and no matter how enlightened the institution is that your at, or department that your in, if you don't have tenure, its always a big question mark. If you are involved in something controversial, how will that be perceived...how will that be used...tenure is such a vague process [chuckle] this murky process...regardless of what might be said overtly, all kinds of things come into consideration when it comes to tenure. So I think junior faculty...especially in situations when it is sort of marginal and people's opinions can play a role that really does become a potential issue in a way that just isn't the case for tenured faculty.”

Another respondent said, “Well, I think the purpose...and this is academic freedom and tenure in universities tends to be tied together...at least they are certainly

related. And if you are a pretenured professor and you get too radical...you have no protection. You can say whatever you want but you may not get to keep your job when it comes up time for review. So I would think that people at the entry level would...should anyway, be more concerned about...they should keep themselves under control more. I mean, that's just prudent." This advice was offered by a number of respondents. One said, "Well I think people who are not tenured are much more circumspect...or should be." I asked, "When you say should be, do you mean for practical reasons or philosophical reasons?" The respondent replied, "Practical reasons...not philosophical reasons. You should be able to conduct research without fear of reprisals at any rank, but I don't think it is wise if you are just an assistant professor." One respondent, who recalled an old mentor, also expressed this sentiment very well, "Um, my guess is that untenured faculty are afraid to rock the boat. I can remember the guy who wrote the *Myth of Mental Illness*...Thomas Szasz. I can remember him telling me that he had the *Myth of Mental Illness* written before he got tenure and he sat on it until after he got tenure...so I think that...well, I know for a fact that before I got tenure, I kept all my ducks in a row. I just published in good Sociology places...you know you do the things that you know will get you tenure and then after you get tenure you can do other things if you want to...or you feel like you have more freedom to."

Five of the faculty members believed that rank was most closely associated with academic freedom but again, they were split in terms of their logic. Three respondents indicated that junior faculty are more likely to test it—exercise it. One said, "A faculty member who has gone through the process and has attained the rank of full professor, for

example, is likely to not have done egregious things and they have focused their research in an area that, while it may be controversial, that controversy has been tested and resolved. Gouldner, quite controversial and a senior faculty member, said some important things but he did it throughout his career and was rewarded for it. Younger faculty are more likely to test sometimes inappropriate borders or things that are likely to be very controversial because they have an interest that may not be mainstream. So, I would suspect that there would be differences and they would flow along the line of less senior faculty needing the protection or enjoying the protection and using the protection of academic freedom more frequently than senior faculty.”

A respondent representing the opposite point of view described more in lines with cohort differences, “Yes, I think that, again its correlated with age, its primarily because more advanced faculty have been around longer and they have seen the real confrontations to academic freedom which did occur in the 60s and 70s and others have just heard about it...they haven't lived it and you know, if you haven't lived it then you don't understand it and you don't understand the nuances and subtleties.”

One faculty member believed that academic freedom was not associated with rank at all. This respondent said, “No, it's important for everybody...because the freedom is the same whether you feel like you have it or not...its there. The institution of the AAUP is the same whether you have tenure or you don't have tenure.” To this I asked, “Sure, but there is also a degree of faculty governance at each institution that could either broaden or narrow the scope of academic freedom...would you agree?” The respondent replied with a resounding, “No!” Then I asked, “Do faculty with tenure have more

academic freedom than those who don't?" The respondent replied, "No, I don't think they do."

Question 35: Now That You Have Talked About Academic Freedom
for a While, Would Your Definition Still Be the Same?

At the end of the interview, I asked each respondent, "Now that you have talked about academic freedom for a while, would your definition still be the same?" The vast majority replied something like, "I don't know, I don't remember what I said..." and then we both would chuckle. A little over two-thirds (21) replied in some way that they were happy with their previous definitions. Nine of the respondents indicated that they had become more aware of certain dimensions of academic freedom through the course of the interview and, consequently, wanted to add more emphasis on these dimensions to their respective definitions. Only a couple of the respondents wanted to emphasize professional responsibilities or teaching in their updated definition. One respondent said this about improving upon his/her definition. "Now I would phrase it in more of a positive light in the sense of saying my definition of academic freedom would be broadened and stated more positively so as to bring out that academic freedom is very important to the well-being of the individual as well as the well-being of society, and that this individual in having academic freedom is clearly serving the larger good and so I would make more links with that. But that is why I said I would have a lot of misgivings if faculty depended on the university solely for academic freedom. To me its just like the other freedoms of society...what does it say up here, 'He only earns his freedom in his life who takes everyday by storm.' And so that is pretty much how I see it...its an ongoing

struggle...we have to be vigilant about it...and when we come to feel that it is something that we take for granted...then I think we have a problem.” Another one wanted to emphasize research, “I think when you started talking about, in the beginning, about careers and I kind of reflected about what had happened to me...before I had come in here I hadn't thought that it really was so integrated with research...and it is...so I think that has made me more aware of that”

Because this was the last question of the interview, a number of the respondents volunteered their over-all feelings on the subject matter. One respondent said, “No, I think it is the same as it was when we started...the ability to speak the truth with out having to worry about retributions or what you see as the truth without retributions...to pursue knowledge for knowledge's sake. I think my definition stays the same. After having talked though, I am more discouraged than I was when I started.” Another respondent said, “No, except that I'm kind of depressed...it doesn't paint a very rosy picture.” A third respondent explains why his/her views on the subject, regardless of how accurate, matters: “It hasn't changed, but I have become more cynical through this past hour or so because I've realized some things that I haven't really raised to the level of consciousness, and if I'm wrong...it doesn't matter if I'm wrong. “W. I. Thomas once said that what men believe to be real becomes real in its consequences,...and my perception is that it is threatened here and that would have been my perception before you came in had I been required to articulate some of the things that you are doing. So you are sowing the seeds of discontent through this process. Now, what if you find that VCU is a hot bed of controversy and academic freedom is being questioned, its efficacy is being questioned,

are you going to send it to the “Richmond Times Disgrace” and have them publish it?” (chuckle).

Finally, one of the respondents actually seemed to be a little encouraged by the interview process. This respondent ended on this note, “I have found this very interesting...we need to have more of these discussions throughout the university.”

The majority of the respondents who wanted to add or emphasize something in their definition were primarily concerned about the current limits or threats to academic freedom. Several of these respondents mentioned a heightened awareness of the more covert threats to academic freedom. One said, “When I hear the term academic freedom, I usually think of the overt kinds of elements that we've been talking about and I don't know if I think about these other things in terms of academic freedom necessarily. I think about them in terms of the *corporatization* of the university...but in fact, they are I suppose, a part of academic freedom, and I should be more conscious about incorporating it into my definition somehow.” Another offered this reply, “I guess the whole business model...the idea of the introduction of collaterals and what that could mean for higher education is important...it is really an important consideration. I guess I would add that to whatever it was I said an hour ago” (chuckle).

Lastly, a couple of respondents found the interview process helpful in thinking about the differences between academic freedom and First Amendment rights of free speech. One respondent said this, “Well, I guess thinking about the...well now I can't even remember how I defined it to begin with but [chuckle]...the ability to say and think and pursue ideas that one wants to pursue without fear of any kind of retribution and to

emphasize that that protection has to do with the workplace as well as society at large and as well as the police state...or the police function that the public sector has...so I think in some ways talking about it kind of emphasizes that. Maybe the job connection to it is the way that it goes beyond the First Amendment rights that some others in society might have.”

Review

In sum, the data presented in this chapter reflect the breadth of meaning that respondents attribute to academic freedom. Although, when asked to define the concept, the vast majority of respondents associated academic freedom with both research and teaching (30 and 29, respectively), there was far less consensus on whether there are any professional responsibilities or limitations associated with academic freedom. A little over half (16) of the respondents said that professional responsibilities should restrain faculty freedoms, and a little over one-third (12) said that there are additional limits on a faculty member’s academic freedom.

When asked what they considered to be the purpose of academic freedom, their responses fell into four categories that seemed to graduate from a micro level to a macro level. Almost two-thirds of the respondents (18) said that they thought the primary function of academic freedom was to cultivate learning. Most of them couched their responses in terms of their own learning while others mentioned student learning as well. About half of the respondents (14) said that they thought the main purpose was the cultivation of knowledge. Nine faculty members thought that academic freedom was a

principle factor in the cultivation of a democratic society. Only six respondents said that they thought academic freedom served the pursuit of the truth.

When asked if they thought that academic freedom and professional autonomy were the same things, four admitted that they weren't sure—in each case because they admitted they did not know what professional autonomy was. Five of the respondents said that they were the same things. A little over two-thirds said that they thought that the two concepts were distinct in some way. Of these respondents, 13 described academic freedom as only governing one's research and teaching while professional autonomy had more to do with one's general work style (i.e., how one budgets one's time; how one uses resources, etc.). These 13 respondents also indicated that they did not see any difference in the degree of freedom either concept afforded. However, 6 respondents said that professional autonomy afforded more freedom these days while only 2 respondents said that they thought academic freedom offered more opportunity than did professional autonomy.

The respondents also had mixed ideas about whether faculty members should be free to choose their own course content and textbook. A little over one-third (11) said “absolutely”—faculty should be free to do so without exception. Nineteen respondents did offer some limits to this freedom: 16 said that this could be limited by curriculum committees, 3 offered professional limits (i.e., peer review or evaluations), and 3 said that society should play a role in shaping both course content and textbooks.

The next two questions that I asked pertained to whether the respondents thought that academic freedom was more or less of an issue for faculty of different ages or ranks,

respectively. Regarding the first question, the respondents were split. Three admitted that they did not know. Twelve of the respondents said that they thought age does play a role, however, they were split as to how. Six thought that academic freedom was more of an issue for younger faculty because they didn't have it and they would need to be more guarded. The other six said that they thought it was more of an issue for older faculty because they have it and use it more. Fifteen respondents said that academic freedom had nothing to do with age. Two of these did not offer an explanation at all. Four felt that rank played more of a role than age. Two said that individual factors like "courage", or "impetuosity" were more likely to play a role. Seven attributed any relationship that academic freedom had to age with cohort experiences more specifically.

When asked the next question about whether academic freedom was more or less of an issue for faculty of different ranks the respondents were in much more consensus. Only two said that there was no relationship. One did not know. Four respondents said that they thought rank itself was important. Simply put, the higher your faculty rank, the more academic freedom you have at your disposal. Well over two-thirds (23) thought that tenure was the critical rank and that academic freedom hinged solely on the acquisition of tenure. When asked why, 22 of the 23 said it had to do with either true job security, or perceived job security.

I concluded each of the interviews with the following question, "Now that you have talked about academic freedom for a while, would your definition still be the same?" A little over two-thirds of the respondents said yes, their definition would remain the same. Seven of the respondents said that they became more aware of certain

dimensions of academic freedom as a result of the interview process. Two of the respondents said that they would emphasize the research side of academic freedom while 4 of them said they would emphasize the teaching side more. Two said they place more emphasis on professional responsibilities while 5 said they would place more emphasis on the limits.

Discussion

How Do Core Faculty in the Social Sciences at VCU

Define Academic Freedom?

It is clear from the data that the respondents in this study associate academic freedom with the freedom to teach and conduct research. It is also clear that over half of them do not necessarily fully understand the limits to academic freedom and the subsequent responsibilities that are associated with academic freedom. My general concern is that this has the potential of leading to the abuse, misuse and neglect of academic freedom.

With respect to the limitations on academic freedom, I want to explore two that are particularly relevant in today's academic milieu—institutional and professional. As institutions of higher education are faced with economic uncertainty and hardship, many of them are turning to strategic planning as a means of carving out niches. VCU is a good example. In 1990, VCU launched its first strategic planning project. Prior to this point in time, VCU was known for its liberal arts tradition, as well as its medical research and professional schools. However, as a result of the strategic planning in the early 1990s, VCU defined itself as more of a metropolitan university with an emphasis on

community-based research, collaborative research, and service learning. Clearly, some of VCU's schools, departments and disciplines were more predisposed to being successful in this model than others. The School of Business, School of Medicine, and a newly established School of Engineering were better able to conform to this plan than was the College of Humanities and Sciences, for instance. The bottom line is that faculty in the social sciences were being strongly encouraged, although not directly coerced, to modify their research agendas and to become more like "entrepreneurs." What is important here is that the institution has every right to steer faculty into the direction of the new institutional mission. I am reminded of one of the respondents who likened academic freedom to the Bastille in *A Tale of Two Cities*, the respondent said in an actor's tone, "You are as free as any other man within these walls." Still, many of the faculty in this study felt that being strongly encouraged to conform to the institutional mission is an infringement on their academic freedom—especially when they were recruited during a time when the institution had a very different mission.

The other dimension of academic freedom that was under emphasized in the interviews was professional responsibility. Academic freedom, like other freedoms, has a certain degree of responsibility associated with it. According to a document entitled, *Academic Rights and Responsibilities*, which was drawn up by the VCU Faculty Senate and approved by the Board of Visitors on November 18, 1976, "Since the overall mission of the University cannot be achieved without a harmonious interaction among the components of the academic community, the faculty members, enjoying extensive freedoms, must reciprocate with equally high standards of academic responsibility."

These responsibilities include, but are not limited to, academic honesty, respect, and tolerance of unpopular positions, and the extension of academic freedom to those who are not protected by tenure. These, in concert, establish an academic community that fosters collegiality.

Not only did the interviews reveal that professional responsibility was all but absent from the respondents' perceptions of academic freedom, they also provided evidence of the consequences of its absence. There was a general consensus among the respondents that the academic culture at VCU is unhealthy. Many of them commented on the lack of respect, lack of collegiality, and the fact that nontenured faculty are very vulnerable due to the unwillingness of others to "go to bat" for them. I will discuss this in further detail in a later section, but suffice it to say that if a faculty body does not recognize the institutional limitations on academic freedom and the associated responsibilities that are tied to it, the institution in question will not only fall short of its mission, but it will also face difficulties in recruiting and retaining quality faculty.

It is also a little alarming that the majority of the respondents did not explicitly associate the purpose of academic freedom with a larger social good. Eighteen of the respondents indicated that academic freedom enhanced learning, and 14 said that it contributed to the development expansion of knowledge, but only 9 said that academic freedom was good for a democracy, and only 6 said that it facilitated the pursuit of truth—arguably the very cornerstone of a democracy. Granted, whether these respondents believe that academic freedom serves a social good or not is rather insignificant and has little affect on whether it actually does or not. However, one of the

central themes that emerged from this research is that faculty in general, and faculty here at VCU in particular, have failed to champion academic freedom to the general public. One of the threats to academic freedom, and tenure, that I will discuss in a later chapter is the lack of public support. As long as the public thinks that these are job perks and that they have no intrinsic value, then the future of both are suspect at best. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the professorate to communicate, if not demonstrate, the “transcendent” value of academic freedom to the general public.

Chapter Five

SIGNIFICANCE OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Where the previous chapter explored how the respondents in this study define academic freedom, this chapter examines how significant academic freedom is to these respondents. The first three questions explore the factors that led to each of these respondents to enter academia in the first place. I was primarily curious whether academic freedom was an alluring factor in their decision. If not, then perhaps academic freedom became significant at some point during their academic career. Finally, I asked them directly whether in hindsight they think academic freedom is a significant feature of an academic career. To explore this issue, I asked a number of questions listed below:

Table 20

Do These Same Faculty Perceive Academic Freedom to Be a Significant Feature of an Academic Career in Higher Education

2	When did you decide on an academic career?
3	Why did you choose an academic career?
7	Were faculty freedoms to teach and conduct research an influence on your choice of an academic career?
8	Have these issues been significant issues in any way throughout your career?
23	Do you think that academic freedom is a significant feature of an academic career?

Question 2: When Did You Decide on an Academic Career?

Table 21

When Did You Decide on an Academic Career?

Response	No. of Faculty
Childhood	1
Undergraduate	12
Graduate	7
Career Move	10*

Note: Two respondents went back to graduate school late in their careers and decided at that time to remain in academia. Even though the decision was made during graduate school, they were coded as career moves.

As you can see from the data in Table 21, the respondents in this study decided to pursue a career in academia at different stages in their lives. One respondent actually said that he/she had decided on a career in academia early in childhood. This respondent recalled the following experience from his/her childhood, “When I was about 4, there was nothing in our house to read except for school books that my cousins brought home and I had read the first grade book and that wasn't enough. So in a rural, small town, I just went down the road to the school house and got sent home three times in a week, and on the fourth time I went in my underwear and the teacher said that if I wanted to come to school that bad that I could stay as long as I didn't cause too much trouble and I didn't until it came time to read. When the first graders would read and make mistakes, I would correct them. At that point the teacher called me up to her desk and told me that there was only enough room for one teacher in the classroom and ‘that's me’ ...and it was about

that time when I made up my mind and I said, 'one day!'" This was actually one of the few responses to this question that offered some context. The vast majority of responses were short and to the point. For instance, 12 respondents indicated that they decided to pursue a career in academia sometime during their undergraduate work. Typical responses included, "Oh, early during my undergraduate education." Or, "When?...I would say probably my senior year in college as an undergraduate." One respondent said, "When did I decide? I'm not sure there was a moment when the sun shown down [chuckle]. I had an insight...it just sort of occurred to me that I'd like to be an academic when I was an undergraduate."

Seven of the respondents indicated that they made the decision (or, more accurately, the decision made them) sometime in graduate school. One respondent had this to say, "Oh, I guess I was 25, working as a [wait-person] and realizing I had no future. If you mean when did I decide to be an academic for real, I'd say the first time I taught a class as a graduate student." I had this exchange with another respondent, "I always told people that I didn't want to be an academic...I'm serious, it's true. It wasn't a career choice in the sense of, 'I really want to be an academic and this is what I'm working towards.' For me, it was a question of could academia give me a place from which I could do interesting research." To this I asked, "Approximately what time in your career did you determine this to be the case?" The respondent replied, "The middle of graduate school maybe." However, these two were the exception. The remaining five respondents said something to the fact that they recall ever really making a decision, it just kind of happened by default. One respondent quipped, "Never, still haven't" (and

then chuckled). Another respondent said, “Did I decide that or did it just happen? [chuckle]. I guess I kind of decided...well I decided toward the end of my Ph.D. program because I remember a conversation with my faculty advisor because I had an opportunity to take a job with the federal government and he discouraged me from doing that because he said if you take a job with the federal government then you may never get into teaching, and so I guess I figured then that maybe I had better take the university route...so toward the end of my graduate work I'd say.”

Question 3: Why Did You Choose an Academic Career?

Next, I asked them *why* they decided on a career in academia. Some of them offered the “why” in the previous question and when this was the case I asked them to reiterate their reason(s). Table 22 presents the results to this question.

Table 22

Why Did You Choose an Academic Career?

Response	No. of Faculty
Personal Interest	5
Attracted to Lifestyle	6
Passion for the Discipline	5
Passion for Academic Work	15
Calling	6

Note: Some respondents had more than one reason for choosing a career in academia.

As you can see from the data, the respondents in this study disclosed a variety of reasons for pursuing a career in academia. Only half of the respondents (15) indicated

that they experienced a passion for academic work early on in their post-secondary education. One respondent said, “Well, you’re allowed to...in fact you are encouraged to in most settings...I’ll have to qualify that but I will have to do that later...to think, write, read, all of the things that I love to do and teach which I love to do less, but its OK and you are really your own boss...its like being an independent contractor in a protected setting.” As this response suggests, many of the respondents included more than one reason why they chose a career in academia. Another respondent had this reply, “I really was...that I so much liked the academic environment that I wanted to stay in it. I liked a lot of different aspects of it...but, in general, I like the process of research, teaching, and living fit together...why change it if you like it?” Still another summed it up in this way, “It was an iterative process, I have no idea how you are going to code all of this stuff, but it was an iterative process. My masters degree, as I had suggested, was intended to better prepare me for the world of work in my elected or selected career area...but I thoroughly enjoyed research and I enjoyed the brief opportunities to teach at the masters level so that made it more attractive to go into academia than not so it wasn't a...I wasn't struck blind on the road to Damascus...I was simply stepping along in the process until I decided to pursue a Ph.D. And at that point, the options were fewer but academe was open.

Other respondents (6) were clearly enamored with the academic lifestyle. One respondent said in no uncertain terms, “I liked it.” To this, I asked, “What did you like about it?” The respondent replied, “Um [pause], Ok...you get to keep doing new stuff your entire life...it’s never dull...you get your summers off...and people pay you to travel

to exotic places and learn about things and teaching is fun...so, there you go...what's not to like?"

Another respondent said, "Well, it seemed to offer the things that I was looking for in a career most—autonomy, control over my time, and to focus on my work—and you know, the inspiration of the discipline that I was trained in. It seemed like it would be a good thing to play some role in disseminating that perspective." Yet another respondent unabashedly remarked, "I think for the luxurious reason that many people do and that is it gives you...it pays the bills, it gives you stability, and an enormous amount of autonomy and freedom to investigate things that you are interested in. My hope was to really use that as kind of a launching pad to do other things."

Five respondents indicated that they were simply following their own personal interests at the time. One respondent remarked very succinctly, "Because it interested me." When I asked why the respondent replied, "It just did...nothing else caught my attention." Another respondent said, "Truthfully [chuckle] because, basically because I was going to school and I was going to go as long as I could...until they kicked me out...and that was what you did in an academic field. There is much more emphasis now in our field on, say, applied careers but none then. I mean it was just assumed that once you got out you would go into an academic career and if you didn't you were considered a failure."

Five respondents also indicated that they chose a career in academia because of their passion for their respective discipline. One respondent said, "Most—autonomy, control over my time, and to focus on my work—and, you know, the inspiration of the

discipline that I was trained in.” It seemed like it would be a good thing to play some role in disseminating that perspective.” Another had this to say, “Um, again, I really think it was the interest in the subject matter...wanting to learn more about it...so I wanted to learn...and I can't really remember why I liked the idea of teaching. I love teaching, it's probably what I love most about my job but I honestly, at the moment, can't remember sort of when I decided why I really wanted to do that...I did do a couple of substitute teaching stints along the way there in high school and I enjoyed that but...what I wanted to do and what I imagined being interesting was learning about issues and teaching and I guess that is all I can really remember.”

Finally, six of the respondents indicated that they were motivated by a “calling.” Even if they didn't say the word “calling” in their response, I coded it as such if they made some reference to serving to promote social change or progress in some way. One respondent said, “Well I have always been interested in social change, and I guess I view this as a job that is involved in educating but also social change...particularly the things that I teach are oriented toward eventual social change for the better. I saw it as a career that could be directed toward positive social change.” In a similar vein, another respondent said, “Really for those reasons and I'll elaborate just a little bit more. You know, everyone of us has to get in touch with what is it that I do...what gift has God given me, and I believe that teaching and training is something that I'm equipped to do. So that I needed to...it seemed like a natural thing for me to do and I have sort of confirmed that and have really enjoyed the career.” Some of the respondents were very clear about their “calling.” One respondent replied, “I selected it because I thought that

one, it came closest to meeting my own interests, which I saw as being intellectual in nature, and then secondly, I felt that that was...I'll use a word that you don't hear very often, my calling. I thought it was my forte and that was confirmed to me when I started in graduate school in [their discipline of choice] as a teaching assistant.” Another respondent said, “When? When I was 19 and actually, I perceived it to be a calling...so as I think about it, I kind of had this epiphany when I was 19 and I knew what I wanted to do.”

Question 7: Were Faculty Freedoms to Teach and Conduct Research
an Influence on Your Choice of an Academic Career?

Later during the interview I asked each of the respondents, “Were faculty freedoms to teach and conduct research an influence on your choice of an academic career?” The results to this question are presented in Table 23. Almost one-third of

Table 23

*Were Faculty Freedoms to Teach and Conduct Research
an Influence on Your Choice of an Academic Career?*

Response	No. of Faculty
No	9
Yes	21
Indirectly	8
Directly	13

the respondents (9) indicated that these freedoms had nothing to do with their choice to pursue a career in academia. Several respondents replied rather quickly and succinctly,

“No, I never considered that an issue one way or another.” Another said, “No, I don't think that was a salient concern that drove me to pursue this profession.” A third respondent said, “It never occurred to me...I mean if I were an academic and I would be free to do something that I wasn't free to do otherwise...it honestly didn't occur to me.”

Twenty-one of the respondents said “yes,” these freedoms were an influence on their choice but only 13 said “directly,” the other 8 said “indirectly.” Regarding the respondents who claimed a direct influence, one said, “Yeah, very much, very much...in other words I have always viewed my role in terms of teaching, and I have always felt that any good professor should contribute to the professional literature, and so I think the opportunity to hopefully in my case innovative and imaginative research was a major reason why I went into the academic world and stayed in it...and although I don't mind teaching, and I like teaching, I would not feel like a complete person if I didn't have the ability to engage in ongoing research.”

Another respondent said, “Yeah, the academic freedom has always been important and definitely, I knew that you could pursue, as an undergraduate, topics that were controversial.” A third respondent said this, “They clearly were...your perception coming in is always different from what it is like once you actually get here, so things evolve over time but clearly those were an influence yes.” A fourth respondent described the pull of academic in this way, “Oh, yes, absolutely...and again, the idea that unlike in the private sector which is really my only other major option given the kind of work that I did on my dissertation. I wanted to be able to choose the research questions that interested me most and not that were driven by the market.” A fifth respondent elaborated

a bit on his/her own experiences, “Yeah, clearly I think just the fact that untenured faculty are under tremendous pressure...yet, within those demands that are made on you as a young teacher, one is the freedom to go about your work any way that you wish...and I have always enjoyed that kind of freedom and independence. No one is telling me what I must do and how I should do it. I could go about developing my research and I could go about my classroom work...I could go about my professional service, the way I wished...and so I was very attracted...and I will tell students who are thinking about teaching that that's one of the benefits of the professorate. Now that could be a problem because some faculty, you know, are so autonomous...you know, they do their own thing and there's no sense of connection to the community itself. I've always felt that I was part of the community and not just simply on my own and autonomous, divorced from everything else.”

Eight of the respondents indicated that the freedoms to teach and conduct research had an indirect influence on their choice. For instance, one respondent said, “Well in a sense, yes...as I said with intellectual inquiry is something that you need to be free to be able to pursue what you want to do...so in that sense, yes...but nothing specific.” Another respondent put it this way, “It probably was in the sense that I value that and always did. I don't believe that I particularly focused on that and said ‘Wow this freedom is something that I really want to take advantage of,’ you know it wasn't exactly like that. Eh gee, I always knew from the early days in college that one of the great things about being in college is that you can work on your own projects and do what you are interested in. So, I guess the way I might have phrased it if you hadn't put it that way is...the

freedom to pursue your interests and to develop a research agenda or whatever, or explore areas that you find challenging...so, its real different from always being told what you should work on...I liked that from the start.”

Question 8: Have These Issues Been Significant Issues

in Any Way Throughout Your Career?

I followed the previous question with, “Have these issues been significant issues in any way throughout your career?” The responses to this question are presented in Table 24.

Table 24

Have These Issues Been Significant Issues in Any Way Throughout Your Career?

Response	No. of Faculty
No	8
Always assumed I had them	5
Never really tested them	3
Yes	14
Yes (without explanation)	4
My work is controversial	5
They have become more significant over time	4
They became significant once they were threatened	1
Mixed	8
It was, which is why I am leaving	2
Research-yes/Teaching-no	3
They are limited due to lack of resources	3

Eight of the respondents said “no.” Five of the 8 indicated in some way that they took them for granted—always assuming they had them. One respondent said, “No...not in the sense of making any decisions about...well I guess I kind of assumed that I had the freedom to do what I chose to do so there was no active thinking about that beyond the assumption.” Another respondent echoed this sentiment, “Issues of freedom? There hasn't been any issue for me because I have always had that freedom and I've never been challenged to do anything differently.” A third respondent elaborated on their response, “I don't really see that...I mean I just see that by and large...If I had to say what the concern that I would have at universities would probably be that there is so much academic freedom that there is sometimes irresponsibility that takes place...that people...irresponsible in ways that affect students...that sometimes the same course is taught in such different ways that a student wouldn't even know whether they are taking a course...whether they are taking the same course. Now I think that is less common in the sciences than it is in some of the social sciences and the humanities...but I think that if I had any concern about academic freedom it wouldn't be its restriction, it would be the impact of its extensiveness on responsibility to students and responsibility to the mission of the university.”

Several (3) of the respondents who had answered “no,” added that they really never tested academic freedom during their careers—their work was never very controversial for academic freedom to come up. One respondent said, “Not so much to me because again, I have not tested the edge of the envelope so I don't know that I have experienced any self-quizzing or introspection about whether I could do that as a faculty

member or could not as a member of the public.” Another admitted, “No not really, my research is pretty basic stuff...nothing real controversial about it. I know there are fields where that can become an issue but not with mine.”

Over half of the respondents (16) indicated that these issues—the freedom to teach and conduct research—have become more significant throughout their respective careers. Of these 16, 4 simply said “yes” and offered no additional explanation. Five respondents indicated that their work was controversial and that this contributed to their appreciation level. One respondent said, “Yes, I knew that some of the topics that I pursue or study might not be applauded or rewarded by mainstream academic organizations what have you...so yes, it’s sort of a perennial issue.” Another said, “For me, very...because of the kind of work that I do...definitely.”

Other respondents said that these issues have become more controversial over time. Four of the respondents made this observation. One claimed, “Yeah, I think the... in fact, become more important as time goes on...you realize that you have the opportunity to shape your own direction within some limits and you realize as you talk to people in other fields that they frequently don’t.” Another respondent offered, “Yes. I have been able to change and evolve and hopefully expand over the years...and my research as well as...I do a lot of applied research and that certainly has been beneficial to me, and I think something that I involved the community in and students, and I think that has evolved and gotten stronger over the years so it certainly has been important to me.” Lastly, one of the respondents indicated that these issues became significant as a result of a specific academic freedom issue. Unfortunately, any reference to it on my part would

reveal the department and potentially the faculty who were involved so I will refrain from any further discussion of this particular response.

Question 15: Do You Think That Academic Freedom is a
Significant Feature of an Academic Career?

The final question in this line of inquiry required them to reflect on whether they thought academic freedom is a significant feature of an academic career. The responses to this question are presented in Table 25.

Table 25

*Do You Think That Academic Freedom is a
Significant Feature of an Academic Career?*

Response	No. of Faculty
Yes	24
Yes (without explanation)	6
It's critical to a career	9
It's critical to the profession	6
Particularly in some professions	3
It Should Be	6

Twenty-four of the respondents said “yes.” Of these, six offered no additional commentary. Nine said rather emphatically that it is critical to an academic career. Six said that it was critical to the profession. Three respondents said that it is critical to some professions—the social sciences in particular.

Finally, six said that it *should* be a significant feature to an academic career, but they expressed some reservations as to whether it is as significant as it could be. One respondent said, “I think it should be...but I sure wouldn't make the blanket statement that it is...because I think it varies a lot with individuals...but I think it should be.” Several respondents observed that freedom becomes more significant when it is under some degree of threat. “You see freedom at a time when it is challenged...you don't see freedom when its not challenged...so, has there ever been more academic freedom than there is now? Well, maybe there was a lot more during the Vietnam War when a lot of academics were opposed to it...because it was being questioned, you know...I would say that you almost don't see it unless it is challenged.” Another respondent quipped, “We still need prophets. I think a lot of us have become priests and priests simply tend the temple.”

Review

To review, the respondents in this study expressed a variety of reasons for pursuing careers in academia. Roughly two-thirds (19) of the respondents decided that they would pursue a career in academia at some point during their college years—both undergraduate and graduate. It is probably safe to say that they were “turned on” as a result of either personal or vicarious experiences associated with learning. However, one-third of the respondents made career moves. In many of these cases the respondents expressed some dissatisfaction with working in “the real world” and were lured back to higher education—largely because of the very freedoms that are the subject of this study.

Almost all of the respondents indicated that they were motivated by a “passion” for some aspect of academic life—some were passionate about the nature of the work, others were passionate about the nature of the profession. Two-thirds of the respondents indicated that the freedoms to teach and conduct research were an influence, either directly or indirectly, on their decision to pursue a career in academia. Many of these respondents also indicated that these freedoms became even more significant throughout their careers as they were confronted with the issues associated with academic freedom in their daily lives. Those who indicated that academic freedom was not significant to them throughout their career did so because of the fact that they simply were not engaged in controversial areas. Finally, all of the respondents indicated that they thought academic freedom was, or should be, a significant feature of an academic career.

The next chapter examines what these respondents consider to be the current threats to academic freedom—both here at VCU and across the country. In addition, it examines what they consider to be the primary protections for academic freedom. Toward this end, academic tenure is examined.

Discussion

Do These Same Faculty Perceive Academic Freedom to Be a Significant Feature of an Academic Career?

Perhaps it is no surprise that the respondents in this study do perceive academic freedom to be a significant feature of an academic career. If they were not drawn to a career in the academy by the virtue of academic freedom, they certainly grew to appreciate it once they were here. However, there are some indications that the faculty in

this study are a little skeptical as to how long academic freedom will remain significant. If the current trends continue, then their skepticism is well founded. If universities continue to hire more collateral and adjunct faculty with annual contracts, then academic freedom will obviously not be a significant feature of their career. In addition, if tenured faculty members are indeed to become more like entrepreneurs, then their academic freedom is only as significant as the amount of money that they bring to the university through grants.

Chapter Six

ACADEMIC FREEDOM: PERCEIVED THREATS AND PROTECTIONS

This chapter reviews the results of the data gathered on faculty perceptions of current threats to, and protections for, academic freedom. These data were generated by asking 15 questions (see Table 26) that covered a wide range of issues regarding potential threats to academic freedom, as well as potential safeguards. The questions were meant to explore a variety of ways in which academic freedom can be exercised, threatened, and protected in the context of a professor's daily work. The data associated with the first 13 questions address the research question, "Do these same faculty perceive any existing threats to their academic freedom?" The data generated from the last two questions in Table 26 will address, "How do these faculty define academic tenure?"

In order to present the data in a more logical and manageable fashion, I have grouped the questions into four distinct categories: (a) perceived threats, restrictions, or violations of academic freedom in general; (b) focused questions on faculty and administrative neglect or abuse of academic freedom; (c) research steering; and (d) perceived protections of academic freedom.

Table 26

Questions Relating to Respondents' Perceptions of Existing Threats and Protections for Academic Freedom

Perceived Threats, Restrictions, or Violations of Academic Freedom in General

Question No.

- | | |
|----|---|
| 10 | Can you give me any examples of what you would consider an academic freedom issue? |
| 13 | Have you experienced academic freedom restrictions, threats, or violations? |
| 14 | Have you known of any academic freedom violations at VCU? |
| 34 | How do you see academic freedom fitting into the future of American higher education? |

Faculty and Administrative Abuse or Neglect of Academic Freedom

- | | |
|----|--|
| 12 | Do you think faculty expect too much freedom in their work environment? |
| 18 | How do you believe the VCU administration would react to a faculty member who took a controversial position? |
| 19 | Do you think that VCU would be more or less supportive than other institutions? |
| 20 | Do you believe your department would protect or support a colleague who took a controversial position? |
| 21 | Do you believe it should? |

Research Steering

- | | |
|----|---|
| 25 | Have you experienced any indirect or direct pressure on your choice of research areas? |
| 26 | Some academics are concerned about the growing relationship between academia and industry. Do you have an opinion concerning this relationship? |

Perceived Protections for Academic Freedom

- | | |
|----|---|
| 33 | Do you feel that sufficient protections exist for academic freedom? |
| 28 | As a faculty member, what functions do tenure serve? |
| 29 | Should tenure be eliminated, replaced, or enhanced in any way? |
-

Perceived Threats, Restrictions, or Violations of
Academic Freedom in General

*Question 10: Can You Give Me Any Examples of What You Would
Consider an Academic Freedom Issue?*

This first question could have easily been addressed in Chapter Four which explores how faculty in the social sciences at VCU define academic freedom. However, the data generated from this question also reveal what these faculty members regard as possible threats to academic freedom and in what contexts do these threats manifest themselves. Furthermore, because the question is so open-ended, it made sense to begin this chapter by examining the results to this question as a means of laying the groundwork for the rest of this chapter. The results are presented in Table 27.

Table 27

*Can You Give Me Any Examples of What You Would
Consider an Academic Freedom Issue?*

Examples of an Academic Freedom Issue	No. of Times Mentioned
Teaching (Publishing)	47
Classroom Expression	21
Professional Expression	19
Course/Curriculum Design	7
Research	17
Politics	6
Unpopular/Controversial Subjects	6
Research Steering	4
Property Rights	1
Don't Know	1

Note: Some faculty mentioned more than one issue.

As one can clearly see from the data, these respondents couched academic freedom issues far more in the context of teaching than they did with research. Forty-seven of the academic freedom issues raised by these respondents were teaching related; 17 were research related; and one could not think of a single issue. Because the question asked for “examples” of academic freedom issues many of the respondents offered more than one—resulting in a total of 63 examples.

Teaching

With respect to teaching, the first round of coding identified the responses in terms of the *context* in which these expressions took place. Expressing ideas in the classroom, course and curriculum design outside of the classroom in preparation for teaching, and professional expression outside the classroom were all easily identifiable categories.

Classroom Expression. The majority of teaching examples fell into the first category of classroom expression (21). All but two of these examples related to the discussion of unpopular or controversial ideas and perspectives in the classroom. The most common issue(s) that were considered controversial related to political correctness—or incorrectness (i.e., sexuality, gay rights, sexism, feminism, and racism). For example, one respondent said, “Well my students tend to be very conservative so when I talk about issues surrounding homosexuality, for example, I see people cringing. But I think that is something they need. I use those often to get students to argue and to think about their arguments and to think about the positions they are taking and why they are taking them...and so, it can be construed by some as an evil thing and by others, an

appropriate way to get students to move in their thinking.” Another respondent remarked, “It’s become kind of a cliché to talk about political correctness, but there is certain terminology that you can’t use in class and I think that is really unfortunate...it kind of limits learning.”

Other issues that were deemed controversial by some of the respondents involved religion and U. S. foreign policy. One respondent said, “I have also been reported to the Board of Visitors for teaching against the Bible. The issue concerned discussing zero population growth [chuckle]. Apparently, zero population growth is in violation of the Bible because the Bible says ‘go forth and multiply.’” Another respondent offered the following observation, “Well I think the freedom to discuss issues like terrorism is a very good current example...that analyzing the political interests that the United States and its allies have in the Middle East and the cultural history of that area and the basis of their resistance to Western control is not the kind of framing of an issue that many audiences want to hear and so that would be an issue where the question of loyalty versus academic freedom would come up.”

Other than the 19 examples of controversial subject matter, 2 respondents provided somewhat unique examples of academic freedom issues in the classroom. One respondent suggested that expressing an idea that has nothing to do with the subject of the course is a misuse of academic freedom—an example that I coded as “teaching irresponsibly.” A second respondent said that the taping of lectures was an academic freedom issue because it could potentially cause instructors to censor themselves for fear of having their words used against them at a later date.

Professional expression. The category that had the next most frequent number of examples (19) was professional expression. These examples consisted of expressions or utterances that take place outside of the classroom but remained on campus and took place in the course of one's professional work. The most frequent example (10) offered by the respondents in this study pertained to what I coded as "external politics." One respondent said, "Sure, opposing U. S. intervention in Iraq...and if an administrator would question a faculty member for something like that, that would be an issue of academic freedom." Another said, "I mean I could imagine any kind of opposition to U. S. policy would be an issue...you know we're in an era where everybody is supposed to march in line behind [our government]. It's unpatriotic to criticize the current administration."

Other examples (7) were couched in terms of "internal politics." One respondent offered the following observation, "I think there is pressure to conform in academic units. In many instances there isn't an environment of collegiality and engaged controversy in academic units. Once people figure out who's on what side of what kind of ideological line then people stake out ground. We are not modeling in our academic units what it means to be an engaging, spirited, free, intellectually challenging academic environment because sometimes in those units people may feel that they might not want to express their ideas if they are a junior faculty member...I think most faculty members would step back and kind of think about how this will endanger tenure or promotion." Where the previous quote alludes to how speaking your mind as a junior faculty member may affect one's promotion and tenure, other respondents suggested that criticism of institutional

leadership may lead to a diminution in the resource flow to one's department. One respondent said, "I think clearly there are some hesitance [sic] on the part of faculty to speak their mind in certain situations...when they think that speaking their minds may negatively impact their unit. I think people are very concerned about the flow of resources...and to recognize that powerful people control the flow of resources."

Two of the examples provided did not reference external or internal politics in any way. For instance, one respondent said, "It is certainly conceivable that without academic freedom being a virtue of university life, certain attitudes that people express or directions that they pursue could get them into real trouble." One respondent framed his/her response in terms of faculty self-governance, "...faculty not being involved in decision making in all areas of academic life that pertains to themselves and students- which is everything. I mean I think we should be everywhere and involved in every decision-making process."

Course/curriculum design. The third set of examples of academic freedom issues related to teaching had to do with the "inappropriate" pressure to shape the content of one's course or curriculum. The respondents in this study provided seven examples. One respondent said rather succinctly, "One, which I have been involved in is having someone above me in a higher rank dictate what goes on in the classroom—what I should teach and what I should not teach and how I should teach it or how I shouldn't teach." Another respondent remarked, "If somebody were to prescribe the curriculum...I believe that is the faculty's responsibility and that administration needs to keep its nose out of it other than approval of programs and that sort of thing. I mean ultimately they do have to

have some kind of control over resources and where they go and that sort of thing...but, you know, an appropriate faculty role is to design a curriculum, pick the resources, and deliver them.”

Research

In addition to the 45 teaching examples of academic freedom issues, the respondents in this study offered 17 research-related examples. Any reference to one’s research agenda, choice, or topic area, was included in this category. Again, the dissemination of one’s research through publication, teaching, or collegial meetings was coded as teaching.

Politics. Six of these examples made direct reference to conducting research that was critical of U. S. policy—in particular, U. S. policies stemming from 9/11. One respondent remarked, “I think more recently what's begun to really trouble me is congressional investigations of research that's being done on international studies programs...they are now calling for oversight out of the Patriot Act.” Another respondent said, “Research that would tend to show that the current federal administration has taken the incorrect path with respect to homeland security. That would be very unpopular...it would be imminently unfundable, yet it would be important to disseminate to the people.”

Controversial research. The respondents also provided six examples of academic freedom issues that dealt more with controversial research in general. One respondent offered this observation, “I’m talking, for example, about very controversial research... dealing with race intelligence and all of this kind of stuff and to what extent I should

cancel myself by even not...I don't even want to go there. Well, why am I afraid to go there, why am I afraid to do that? How much am I captive to political correctness? I believe in what it represents...but to the point of really not pursuing the truth, you know, that's a tough one...and I admire those who do it, I really do. I'm just not as courageous as they are" (chuckle). Another respondent quipped, "The one that bothers us right this very minute is the inability of researchers to do work on areas such as human sexuality." Another respondent voiced a concern about congressional oversight on HIV/AIDS research.

Research steering. A third category that emerged is a category that I coded as "research steering." Four examples were offered that shared the same theme, "any effort to try and shape the content or direction of a scholar's research." One of the respondents described the issue rather eloquently, "Well, I think with my experience the critical issue is not so much the content of peoples' knowledge search but what ultimately will be seen by the institution as contributing in some way to the financial viability of the institution, and so research that has the greatest likelihood of funding is given priority and on the same token anything that is not seen as likely to generate resources—financial resources for the university is not encouraged and in fact, discouraged."

Property/intellectual rights. A final category related to property rights. Surprisingly, only 1 example was offered out of the 30 respondents in this study. This example centered around the idea that because the university can claim the rights to both intellectual and physical property—even though it may have been produced off-campus

or during off-hours—faculty members may be apprehensive about pursuing certain “innovative” directions.

*Question 13: Have You Experienced Academic Freedom Restrictions,
Threats or Violations?*

The next question I asked was much more direct and to the point. I asked the respondents if they had experienced any academic freedom restrictions, threats, or violations at VCU. The results to this question are presented in Table 28.

Table 28

*Have You Experienced Academic Freedom
Restrictions, Threats, or Violations?*

Response	No. of Faculty
No	11
Yes	21
Teaching	18
Research	3

Note: Two of the respondents gave more than one incident.

A little over one-third of the respondents (11) indicated that they have not experienced any academic freedom restrictions, threats, or violations at VCU. The remaining two-thirds (19) said that they have (two of the respondents provided more than one incident resulting in 21 incidents). The majority of these (18) were directed toward their teaching. Half of these occurred within the classroom while the other half took place outside the classroom in the form of professional expression. Most of these

incidents involved students who either threatened or undermined the academic freedom of the professor who was attempting to discuss or present material on controversial subject matter. Unfortunately, I cannot provide any details on the individual circumstances for fear that I may violate the confidentiality of the respondents because of the subject matter that they teach. However, the following comment does capture the sentiment of most of the faculty in this category, “Yes, I was challenged...threatened by a student for how I chose to present particular information in a developmental course...but I have also just thought twice about...and sometimes chosen not to present information because of the heatedness of the topic.”

Other respondents suggested that their academic freedom to teach was threatened or undermined by the administration. One respondent said, “We've got one right now that I would perceive as an academic freedom issue which is a requirement that you order your books through the VCU Bookstore. What happens is that it impinges on my ability to teach my classes...and anything that impinges on my ability to teach my classes is an interference of academic freedom. I tried to use the VCU Bookstore for about 15 years and I never had a semester clear of some issue with some class where they didn't have the books or they didn't have enough books.” Another respondent said, “When I was first hired at VCU, there was obviously some expectation that I was going to be a real friendly, warm and fuzzy type that would be happy to teach zillions of undergraduate introductory students and make them love me so that they would all line up in ranks and be majors and stuff like that. And when it turned out that I wasn't that sort of person at all, I was forced...not forced because I didn't do it, but definitely force was applied to me

to teach differently in order to make students happier...and the thing that was really bad about it was I wasn't being asked to teach better, which I could understand I mean that makes sense. I was asked to teach easier which is not the same thing as teaching better.”

Where nine of the teaching incidents took place within the classroom, the other nine took place outside of the classroom in the context that I have coined “professional expression.” Approximately half of these incidents occurred when faculty members’ ability to express themselves was threatened or undermined by the administration. Again, I must avoid details to protect confidentially, but I can say that these incidents fall into two categories: one pertained to the administration’s desire to expand the campus into a particular neighborhood, and the other pertained to the recent reorganization of several departments into two new schools. The other half were incidents where individuals who are external to the university attempted to silence, discredit, or end the employment of several faculty members who took controversial positions on a number of public policy initiatives.

Question 14: Have You Known of Academic Freedom Violations?

The next question that I asked was more anecdotal. I asked the respondents if they know of any academic freedom violations at VCU. The results to this question are presented in Table 29.

A little under one-third of the respondents (9) indicated that they did not know of any academic freedom violations at VCU. However, 21 of the respondents did acknowledge that they were aware of an academic freedom violation. It is important to note, however, that some of the respondents referred to the same incidents in their

Table 29

Have You Known of Academic Freedom Violations?

Response	No. of Faculty
No	9
Yes	21
Teaching	5
Research	4
Undermined Academic Freedom	5
*Undermined Someone's Career	7

Note: Many of the respondents referred to the same case in their response.

responses so we should not treat these data as 30 unique incidents. Of these, five incidents involved faculty members who were engaged in teaching. One incident was more of a “classroom” issue. According to one respondent, “Well, I know of some instances in which there have been restrictions that are direct...the kind of supervisory control in which some faculty have been told, do not do certain things, do not talk about certain things or certain issues in the classroom.” The other four all pertained to some sort of professional expression where the faculty person was sanctioned in some way. One respondent said, “I’ve heard of a person, for instance, who questioned what the president did about something and then that person was subject to some sort of harassment—alleged harassment.” Another respondent piggy-backed on the previous question regarding personal threats, restrictions, or violations and offered this elaboration, “We stood up, you know, and said what we needed to say, but I think all of us felt after that that we weren’t really anxious to stand up again and so, on other issues that have come up since then, while they have all been more minor than that and less significant, we have not said stuff just because we have definitely felt an implied threat, and it wasn’t even implied in that situation, it was quite strong and I think that it carried over into how we feel...or how we ended up feeling.”

Four of the respondents indicated that they were aware of academic freedom violations that were directed to a faculty member’s research. Once again, though, because of the controversial nature of the research, I am not in a position to reveal any details. Suffice it to say that these faculty members felt like their research was directly

constrained by the administration because of nature of the subject area. Two of these four respondents referred to the same incident.

Five respondents did not reveal any specific allegations; rather, they claimed that they were aware of how academic freedom was undermined by the academic culture that pervades the campus. Two of the leading accusations are the lack of collegiality and the preponderance of sexual harassment. One respondent remarked, "I do know of the existence of conflict between people with different perspectives and some instances where I think that collegiality is violated...that is, collegiality in the sense of shared authority. I do think that I have been a witness to the fact that in some departments, people who may hold views that are different from those who think they are in positions of authority...and that rankles me since in collegiality we are all supposed to be in position of authority. I see that all the time...they hinder their ability to have an equal chance to influence the departmental decision-making."

With respect to sexual harassment, several respondents mentioned that they were aware of students who were harassed by faculty members; students who were assaulted because of their sexual orientation; faculty members whose perspective or research agenda was not treated as "legitimate" by their colleagues or administrators. I asked one of the respondents to elaborate on how harassment of any nature affects academic freedom, "Well for one thing, it's a little difficult to teach your class or conduct your research when you are in fear for your life or well-being. In other cases, you may be emotionally and physically drained from having to constantly look over your shoulder or defend your work or perspective."

In the final category, seven respondents indicated that they were aware of an incident in which the fairness of a faculty member's tenure and promotion review was in question. Six of them mentioned the same incident where a female economics professor, who happened to be a Marxist, was denied tenure. Each of the respondents shared with me that they had doubts about the sanctity of the review process and that suspicions pervaded the entire occasion. One faculty member discussed the issue in more generic terms, "You're on line to get tenure and someone tells you that you are not, or they don't tell you anything, and you wonder is it because..I mean there are ways, justifiable ways that the administration can say no, this person just isn't meeting the criteria here...but you know that these things are going on which contributed to them not meeting the criteria so...it's a hard one to prove. So yes, I would say that I know of them but I cannot prove them....and that is the issue."

Question 30: Do You See Any Threats to Academic Freedom

Existing in Contemporary American Society?

Toward the end of the interview, I asked the respondents whether they see any existing threats to academic freedom in contemporary American society? I followed that question with, "How about here at VCU?" The results to these questions are presented in Table 30.

As one can see from the data, the respondents in this study identify three key threats to academic freedom both abroad and locally here at VCU. Not surprisingly, they are political, economic (market forces), and as a consequence of these, the adoption of the corporate or business models of governance by institutions of higher education as

Table 30

Do You See Any Existing Threats to Academic Freedom in Contemporary American Society? How About Here at VCU?

Source of Threats	American Society	VCU
Political	23	20
Corporate Model	19	23
Market Forces	17	17
Public Opinion	5	2
Religious	3	0
Institutional Culture	1	12
No Threats	0	2

they try to do more with less. Other pieces of data that stand out in Table 30 are that over one-third of the respondents (12) believed that academic freedom at VCU was threatened by an unhealthy institutional culture. Again, more than likely due to the “top down” corporate model of governance that they attribute to VCU—a theme that has been explicit throughout their responses.

Although politics, market forces, and the adoption of the business model by institutions of higher education are inextricably linked, I will present the data on them independently in an attempt to analytically distinguish them from one another.

With respect to political threats, the respondents expressed two main concerns—for education abroad and at VCU. On the one hand, 13 respondents said that they were gravely concerned about political ideology restricting academic freedom on campus. The vast majority (10) were concerned about the conservative right and the current administration’s climate of “chilling dissent.” The following is just a sample of their concerns: “Whoa, yeah, all over the place...politically, legally, I mean everywhere...the things that I mentioned earlier about the Patriot Act, congressional oversight of research agendas and curriculum and stuff like that...it’s coming down the pipe and that is just terrifying...it’s just really, really terrifying.” “Oh yeah...oh my God, the conservative right wants to get rid of it...they think universities are filled with flaming radicals who are stupid and should all be shot if they had their way...I’m surprised Bush hasn’t tried to do something about it [chuckle]. I guess he hasn’t thought about it because he’s too busy with Iraq. If he thought about it, he probably would have tried to get rid of it.” Even conservatives expressed concern as is evidenced by the following passage, “You know,

again it's...I hate to keep coming back to saying that it's a conversation but there are obviously people who are very conservative politically...and I am very conservative politically but not this conservative, that they would restrict what ideas get taught and what research gets done. I don't think in our society with our liberal democratic background that will ever become the majority voice and, therefore, I value, as an academic, hearing that voice and entering into a debate about that. I don't think that debate...I don't think that side of the debate will carry the day but to squelch that on the altar of academic freedom, well we would lose a lot more...that would be another freedom of expression squelched so you know, I can't see stopping that.”

A couple of respondents said that they were concerned about the “neo-liberals” and the “thought police” clamping down in the name of political correctness. Only one of the respondents in this category framed his/her concern in terms of ideology in general and not a particular ideology. Because this respondent’s concern was so well articulated, I felt obliged to include it here as well, “Well, the thought police...First Amendment issues...again from both sides of the ideological spectrum—both the left and the right—not that people cannot speak out, but that people become unwilling to bother to speak out because they just don't want to deal with the consequences of it when they know that their thoughts and comments will elicit a firestorm of ideological irrational expression either from the left or from the right. The reasonable moderate center that I think is the silent majority...as a verbalized political force, I think it is just dropping away.”

The rest of the respondents who expressed concerns of a political nature framed their concerns more in terms of educational policy. Many of them were concerned about

budget cuts and the desire to streamline education into more “practical” directions. One respondent remarked, “Yeah, there have been a number of members of the General Assembly who have talked about examining tenure.” One respondent suggested that the current political climate has reduced the function of higher education to “the creation of a sexually-repressed, paternalistically-oriented, ideologically-conditioned, passive, submissive, technologically-trained, workforce.”

As I suggested earlier, the political climate, in part, has contributed to the market forces, which in turn, has contributed to many public institutions adopting a business (or corporate) model of governance. Around two-thirds of the respondents expressed concerns about how a business model could potentially undermine, or worse, restrict academic freedom. The following passages reflect their concerns: “I think that what kind of leads to a chilling effect is what we have already talked about, the business model, the funding, the grantsmanship, becoming more entrepreneurial...all of that is part of the business model.” “I think that one of the things that has diminished academic freedom on the VCU campus is the effort by the administration, for largely financial reasons as I understand it, to encourage—strongly encourage—external funding and partnering with state or corporate organizations which have a different—a very highly directed research mission as opposed to the disciplinary construction mission of academic disciplines—and so in terms of...to me, the whole direction that the university is moving in, in fact, diminishes that space that I call academic freedom,” and “Oh yeah, the whole budget crunch...I don't know if you would call that overt or covert...the idea that...well you see it with this early retirement...they are just about walking you out the door because

what they want to do is hire collaterals in the place of senior, highly paid, tenured faculty...and so to save money, you know...if we didn't have tenure, all of us old-timers would be out on our butts....people are being hired as collaterals with all of the same expectations but with no security and for the most part a lower salary.”

All of this, in turn, contributes to an “unhealthy” academic culture—where morale and collegiality is diminished. Over one-third of the respondents (12) expressed their concerns about the cultural climate at VCU. As one respondent put it, “Well, I think that the way that the restructuring was done...from the top down, as opposed to being faculty initiated, served to intimidate faculty and faculty feel less in charge than they ever have. I think morale is affected by it. I mean it was clearly a top down...and faculty input was really not solicited in a meaningful way. I think it is stifling to academic freedom.” Another remarked, “The thing that I am increasingly concerned about is the reduction in the percentage of the faculty members who have tenure because I think that that contributes as much to people’s readiness to speak out or be proactive.”

*Question 34: How Do You See Academic Freedom Fitting
into the Future of American Higher Education?*

The last question that I asked regarding potential threats to academic freedom was “How do you see academic freedom fitting into the future of American higher education?” The results to this question are presented in Table 31.

As one can clearly see from the data, the respondents in this study are not very optimistic at all. Only two respondents said that they believed that the worse was behind us and that academic freedom would improve in the near future. Five respondents

Table 31

How Do You See Academic Freedom Fitting into the Future of American Higher Education?

Response	No. of Times Mentioned
Improve	2
Stay the Same	5
Get Worse	23*
Corporate Model Until/Unless Faculty Become Vigilant	13
As Socio-cultural Climate Persists/Spreads	12
Tenure Undermined	8
	4

Note: Some of the respondents gave more than one response.

suggested that things have leveled off and that academic freedom would remain in its current state for some time to come. However, well over two-thirds of the respondents (23) expressed their belief that academic freedom would deteriorate even more in the years to come. The primary rationale for this is their belief that the business model has just begun to take hold.

What we are currently witnessing in the most “vulnerable” institutions will slowly pervade into other institutional types until the institution of higher education itself becomes more of a business. The following passage reflects these respondents’ concerns: “Another dangerous trend that I see going on in terms of the university per se is that there is certainly a movement to hiring more adjuncts and part-time faculty...faculty who come in off the streets to teach a course or two and they are not going to be the types that turn around protecting academic freedom. They are here to teach a course or what have you...so the absolute number of tenure and tenure-track faculty declining, is going to provide you with less of a reservoir to protect academic freedom. The tendency of universities like this one to go out and hire not only adjuncts but so called collateral faculty that they hire on a year to year basis, who lack any ability to get tenure, and whose contract is at the mercy of the administration provides a dangerous direction in terms of academic freedom. “The changing nature of the university into more of a corporate institution where control clearly lies at the top and is administratively driven and that the notion of faculty governance has been more of a window dressing and so forth...I think that bodes for us a tremendous challenge to academic freedom.”

Almost an equal number of respondents directed some of their criticism at the colleagues who appear to be abdicating their responsibilities to protect and support academic freedom. As one respondent put it, “Was it Churchill who said that the price of democracy is eternal vigilance and so I would assume that if it is going to be important then it is only going to be because people now are agitating for it, advocating for it.” Another respondent had this to say, “I guess I am almost as critical of my colleagues—or some of them—as I am the administration. I say to myself, you know, these people have a Ph.D. Weren't they ever socialized into the value of academic freedom and the notion of a marketplace of ideas? Where along the road did they become so submissive to the role of money as opposed to the role of ideas...and that really bothers me. It seems to me that any Ph.D. person ought to have the ability and the desire to speak their minds in a measure of civility. I don't mean going around throwing bombs, but with a measure of civility...that any faculty member should have the right to criticize the dean...that's what a university is all about. So I think my comment earlier was very apropos, 1,400 faculty and how many controversial ideas?”

Furthermore, as another respondent observed, “The fact is that there is not as much of a critical tradition in graduate education as there used to be and so a lot of people who come out of Ph.D. programs now don't come out of programs where they are taught to question everything.” Therefore, as the new cohort of faculty members enter the academy, they are ill-prepared to exercise, support, or defend academic freedom.”

Eight respondents made reference in one way or another to the socio-cultural climate as a growing threat. In their minds, as public opinion grows more and more

skeptical, if not cynical, about the nature and function of higher education and the faculty therein, administrators will more and more likely capitulate—after all, in a business model, the customer is always right.

Lastly, four respondents suggested that in this climate, the tenure system would continue to come under attack and may eventually dissolve or become replaced by something else. Even if tenure is not formerly redacted, it could become undermined as fewer and fewer tenure tracks are filled. As one respondent put it, “Well, I think that without tenure it’s hard to say that you have academic freedom. And as universities become increasingly places where nontenure faculty teach, it portends poorly for what could happen. I mean right now, there is still a critical mass of tenured people, and so I think the ethos of academic freedom is there because of this critical mass...as this critical mass shifts to nontenured faculty, that won't be there...and that's really scary.”

Faculty and Administrative Abuse or Neglect of Academic Freedom

Question 12: Do You Think Faculty Expect Too Much

Freedom in Their Work Environment?

One of the possible threats to academic freedom occurs when faculty abuse or misuse their freedom. As someone once said, “All it takes is a few bad apples to ruin it for the rest of us.” This prompted me to ask the question, “Do you think that faculty at expect too much freedom in their work environment?” The data resulting from this question are presented in Table 32.

I must admit, what I thought was a fairly straightforward question, elicited surprising results. Two-thirds of the respondents (21) indicated that they did not think

Table 32

*Do You Think That Faculty Expect Too Much Freedom
in Their Work Environment?*

Response	No. of Faculty
No	21
No (no explanation)	10
They do not expect enough	11
Yes	5
Teach irresponsibly	4
Too much autonomy	1
Mixed	3
Don't Know	1

that faculty at VCU expected too much freedom. However, there is more here than meets the eye. Ten of these 20 respondents provided an unqualified “no” to the question, although 2 of them did sound quite sarcastic in their responses. For instance, one remarked, “Nooo! [chuckle] are you kidding...I don't know if I have ever come across someone who was expecting too much...no.”

The remaining 11 respondents, however, were quite animated as they qualified their answers. Each of them suggested that faculty at VCU do not expect enough academic freedom. Some of their responses were quite critical of the VCU faculty using words like “wimpy,” “cowardly,” and “spineless,” while others were critical of the administration. The following response is indicative of the sentiment conveyed by these respondents—and it has been significantly abbreviated. “This is a top down institution...pure and simple it's top down. The way that we order life at VCU is in my view an absolute contradiction to what an academic community is supposed to be. It is the exact opposite of what you would want where you would have respect for others, that there would be a real sense of community where peoples' ideas would be valued. It is top down...it is bottom line...it is management as opposed to education...I mean they have bumped up against it and bumped up against it and then they say it's hopeless and that's what often leads to kind of the autonomous faculty member. You just finally give up and you withdraw because the environment in which they are operating is so oppressive...an oppressive environment in terms of decision making, collegiality, a sense of community, of our being knitted together...students, faculty, administrators, staff...we don't have that...we really don't...it's a pretty toxic environment...and our faculty are very passive

and they are afraid to speak up. That's the interesting thing that we're talking about....freedom of inquiry and all of that. It's partly that there has been a long perdition of faculty members who will speak up without being zapped or humiliated or put down...and faculty kind of take cues and as a result they don't say anything. Just having some sense of labor solidarity in this thing would cut that kind of repression and intimidation out but there is not a lot of cohesion amongst the faculty and so therefore, when someone does speak out, they become a good target.”

Where most of the respondents expressed a great deal of blame on either faculty or the administration, there were a couple of respondents who suggested that expectations were low amongst the faculty because of sheer ignorance. One respondent remarked, “No, in fact, I think a lot of them don't understand it well enough to take what freedoms they should have.”

Five of the respondents replied that “yes,” they thought that faculty at VCU did expect too much freedom. Four of these 5 indicated that they thought that this primarily resulted in teaching irresponsibly in the classroom. One respondent said, “I think that faculty generally paint academic freedom in too broad terms and they operationally define it as the opportunity to go into the classroom and do whatever they choose, which is not the way that I define academic freedom.” Another respondent remarked, “A concern that I sometimes have, and an area that I think perhaps academic freedom or judgment on the part of the faculty should be, is imposing an ideological perspective on students, and I think that happens on some occasions and so I think that is an improper exercise of academic freedom.” One of the 5 respondents suggested that faculty at VCU

do not expect too much academic freedom, rather, they expect too much autonomy—“faculty don’t want any more academic freedom, they just want to be left alone to do whatever the hell they want.”

Three of the respondents expressed mixed opinions about the question. The responses in this category did not appear to have any pattern. One respondent said that it varied by department. Another suggested that in terms of research, “no,” but in terms of teaching the answer was “yes.” A third respondent indicated that it varied by length of time in the profession—senior faculty expected more academic freedom whereas junior faculty did not expect enough.

Question 18: How Do You Believe the VCU Administration Would React to a Faculty Member Who Took a Controversial Position?

The next question that I asked also generated some interesting, unanticipated data. I asked the respondents how they thought the VCU administration would respond to a faculty member who took a controversial position. The results to this question are presented in Table 33.

Only seven respondents said that the VCU administration would have “no problem” with a faculty member who took a controversial position—regardless of the position. Twenty-two respondents said it would depend on the circumstances. Each of the seven who said “no problem” did so without hesitation or qualification. The following response was typical, “Oh, faculty members here take controversial positions all of the time and I have never heard of any legitimate evidence of that having ever been used against anyone...or of that ever being a problem at any point down the line.”

Table 33

How Do You Think the VCU Administration Would Respond to a Faculty Member Who Took a Controversial Position?

Response	No. of Faculty
No Problem	7
Depends, not well if:	22
It was directed to VCU's administration	15
It was outside of a faculty member's expertise	3
The issue was politically incorrect	2
It was directed toward a major donor	2
Don't Know	1

The vast majority of the respondents (15 out of 22) who said that it would depend on the circumstances indicated that they thought the VCU administration would react very negatively, if not harshly, to a faculty member who was critical of the administration itself—the leadership or direction of VCU. Here are just some of the remarks by these respondents: “Yeah, it was kind of like that...hmmm...on the other hand, if in fact you are raising questions about what is happening to curriculums, faculty teaching loads, quality of classrooms, stuff like that, we should be free as a faculty to raise those kinds of concerns and I think we would be totally squashed and silenced;” “I think it would depend on the subject...in some areas if its controversial and limited to a few scholars who debate these kinds of things, it would be of no consequence. If it challenged the actions of the university relative to something, then that's a different matter. In the latter, it could pose big problems”; “It depends entirely on what...if it was something that the administration cared about, they would react very negatively and violently...and find a way to make it hurt. Otherwise, I don't think they would do a thing, I mean if it wasn't something they cared about, I don't even think they would notice”; “Poorly, very poorly. This is as politicized an administration as I think I have ever seen...and the more politicized the administration is then the more anxious they are when one takes a position that may reap some criticism.” I asked the respondents why they believed the administration would react this way. One of the more common responses was that VCU is so young and aspiring that actions would be taken to minimize any negative publicity—one respondent referred to it as an inferiority complex. Others alluded to the fact that we are in a state capital and the pressure to lead through consensus is paramount.

Other circumstances that the respondents said would draw negative attention from the administration involved faculty who take positions that are well beyond their own background or expertise. Or faculty who might take politically incorrect positions that would draw negative publicity to the institution. Lastly, some respondents said that faculty would be sanctioned if they were critical of a major donor. One respondent said, “When Phillip Morris was under fire, the president came out quite strongly and quite publicly and said something to the effect of ‘they have been very good to us and we are not going to desert our friends in times of need’...and so, I think at that point, statements and actions by the faculty pointing out the role of tobacco companies and American health would not have been particularly welcome.”

Question 19: Do You Think VCU Would Be More or Less

Supportive Than Other Institutions?

I followed up this question by asking the respondents whether they thought the VCU administration would be more or less supportive of other institutions. The results to this question are presented in Table 34.

Four respondents said that they didn't know. Three respondents said that the VCU administrative would be more supportive of a controversial faculty member than other institutions. Eight respondents said that they thought the VCU administration is typical of most universities. One respondent remarked, “I think most universities would be pretty supportive of academic freedom and I think that we stand with most universities.” However, half of the respondents (15) said that they thought that the VCU administration would be less supportive than other universities. These respondents

Table 34

Do You Think That the VCU Administration Would Be More or Less Supportive Than Other Institutions?

Response	No. of Faculty
More Supportive	3
Typical/Average	8
Less Supportive	15*
Culture, Youth, Reputation	12
University Type	5
Don't Know	4

Note: Some respondents gave more than one reason.

offered a variety of reasons (some respondents provided more than one reason). The most prevalent reason (12) offered is that VCU lacks a rich academic cultural tradition. One respondent put it this way, “Well...I think there is potentially a greater chance that would be an issue for VCU as a third level institution...where the culture that supports academic freedom is less developed than it may be at a first tier institution with a long history and so, you know, I mean...I think one of the critical dimensions of this whole issue of how to sustain academic freedom is the faculty's role in articulating that and so if faculty for any reason can't or won't articulate those issues then there is a threat.”

Another respondent described the situation in the following way, “Well I think that goes back again to the culture and the institutions that you have operating in a university. If you have a strong faculty culture with a strong faculty senate that really weighs in, or a strong AAUP, I mean the AAUP here is basically missing in action and has been for decades, I think...then, what that does over time, that strong institution, it really tempers the way that administrators and other people would react...they just don't think that it is OK for them to act in certain ways. Here, they have learned over the years that they can do whatever they want and nobody is going to say anything that's effective against it...so, again, I think it very much depends on what kind of institutional structure you have at the university. A third respondent put less emphasis on the history and more on the current leadership, “The problem with VCU, like many schools, is that it is more top down as opposed to a faculty run institution...at a faculty run institution then I think you have a different atmosphere.”

A small number of respondents (5) indicated that the VCU administration is less supportive because of the type of institution it is. The following statement captures the sentiment of the responses in this category, “I speculate that this might be true...that your big, state universities might be more inclined to have a CEO, bottom line, economic dollars mentality than your small, private, well funded institutions.”

Question 20: Do You Believe Your Department Would Protect or Support a Colleague Who Took a Controversial Position?

The next question I asked the respondents was whether they believed their departments would protect a faculty member who took a controversial position. One would assume that faculty members have more allies in their own department or discipline than they necessarily would in the administration. The results of this question are in Table 35.

Table 35

Do You Believe Your Department Would Protect or Support a Colleague Who Took a Controversial Position?

Response	No. of Faculty
No	3
Yes	18
Depends	7
Which Department	3
Position	3
Personalities	1
Don't Know	2

Three of the respondents said “no.” When I asked them whether they thought that it should, they each said “yes,” unequivocally. Almost two-thirds of the respondents (18) provided an unqualified “yes” to both questions. Seven respondents indicated that it would depend. Three of these faculty are affiliated with more than one department and said that it would depend on the department. Three other respondents said that it would depend on the position taken. Each of these respondents resides in a department that has either recently been absorbed by a new school, or is in a state of flux. Hence, they admitted that they simply weren’t confident that their colleagues would come to the defense of another at this point in time.

Question 21: Do You Think That It (the Department) Should?

After asking each of the respondents whether they thought their department would protect or support a colleague who took a controversial position, I asked them if they thought that it should. Each of the 30 respondents said unequivocally that it should.

Research Steering

*Question 25: Have You Experienced Any Indirect or Direct Pressure
on Your Choice of Research Areas?*

The next set of questions was asked in an attempt to ascertain whether the respondents have felt any pressure to conduct, or avoid, certain research agendas. The results of this question are presented in Table 36.

A little over one-third of the respondents (11) said that they have not experienced any direct or indirect pressure on their choice of research at VCU. Four of the respondents indicated that they that they did feel direct pressure. Three of these

Table 36

Have You Experienced Any Indirect or Direct Pressure on Your Choice of Research Areas at VCU?

Response	No. of Faculty
No	11
Yes/Direct	4
Pre-Tenure	3
Institutional Mission	1
Yes/Indirect	15
Fundable Research	12
Subject	2
Bureaucracy	1

respondents said that it was during their promotion and tenure line that they felt this direct pressure. One of these respondents remarked, “Oh sure, I remember...at tenure, when the committees writes the report on you...that kind of summarizes what has come before plus makes recommendations for your future and it is described as kind of a trajectory that he thought that I should be going on and, of course, I ignored it and continue to ignore it because it doesn't interest me. And it's like I mentioned earlier, the pressure is for mainstream, acceptable, research.” One respondent said that he/she felt direct pressure to conform to the strategic plan of their particular unit.

The following passage reflects his/her take on the relationship between institutional mission and academic freedom, “I mean yeah, there is going to be that kind of pressure at times but it doesn't necessarily mean that it's a violation of academic freedom. I think units within the university have the right, again, to decide that here is a place that we want to go...we think that there is an opportunity here so we are going to make a strategic decision to go to that place and we are going to try and provide a set of incentives to encourage people to contribute if they would like to. That doesn't take away anybody's academic freedom, but it certainly is a mission-oriented decision that would seem to me appropriate for the university to make. And at the same time, I think what you have to distinguish is between an attack on academic freedom and sort of a growing mismatch between someone's individual interest and the interests of the community with which they are primarily located or something like that...which is possible.”

Half of the respondents said that they have experienced indirect pressure on their choice of research. The preponderance of respondents in this category said that it

primarily had to do with the pressure to pursue fundable research. Given the financial problems that many state institutions are facing, faculty members learn pretty quickly that their unit is not only more likely to survive by bringing in more grant monies, but that they may even prosper. The following passage captures the sentiment of the faculty in this category, “Yeah, I think the messages are somewhat conflicting and somewhat ambiguous, but I think there is certainly, a fairly pervasive and strong indirect pressure to pursue research agendas that have a significant probability of external funding and I am sure you are going to hear that a lot. And if you go to an administrator and say ‘But the area that I am working in is not one that is highly amenable to external funding, are you saying that you want me to give that up?’ Their response is immediately ‘Oh no, of course I am not saying that.’ But in a certain sense, they are saying that because they would like to have whatever work is done shaped in that direction and that is more possible for some areas than for other areas. And one of the things that is interesting about that is that, to some extent, some faculty have embraced that position without recognizing the implications of it. At the same time, I think there are some faculty, myself included, who feel that the university is in a uniquely bad financial and political climate and that we should make, on a voluntary basis, some efforts to help the university through this time...but I think there is a difference between faculty agreeing that we need to pull together for the welfare of the institution and pressure from administration to shape the research agendas of faculty. I think that does have the effect, consciously or unconsciously, of diminishing what I am calling academic freedom.”

Two respondents said that they felt an indirect pressure to shift the content of the research areas. One of them said that this happened very early in their career when the work that he/she was doing was not all that popular—popular in the sense that not that many people were interested in it at the time. The second respondent said that he/she feels an indirect pressure from colleagues who believe that he/she should be doing work in areas that will enhance the political and social standing of his/her particular persuasion. Lastly, one respondent said that he/she feels an indirect pressure to pursue research that is less bureaucratically complicated. According to this respondent, “One of the discouraging things about trying to conduct any research has been the way that it gets administered at the university and then trying to keep track of your research grant...it’s a misery...the way things are administered...the financial end of it and getting it passed people and now the IRB. But I mean even before that, there were a lot of other kinds of problems, you know, you don’t want to spend money that you don’t have but you can’t trace it, you don’t know where it is, you are keeping you own set of books but you don’t know what they are doing, and I don’t think sometimes they know what they are doing.”

Question 26: Some Academics Are Concerned About the Growing

Relationship Between Academia and Industry. Do You Have

an Opinion Concerning This Relationship?

In order to pursue this line of inquiry a little further, I explained to each respondent that some academics are concerned about the growing relationship between academia and industry. This is particularly relevant for faculty who work at metropolitan universities like VCU. According to the Declaration of Metropolitan Universities, “Our

research must seek and exploit opportunities for linking basic investigation with practical application, particularly in the institution's host community" (p. 6). Therefore, I asked the respondents, "Do you have an opinion about this relationship?" The results to this question are presented in Table 37.

Table 37

Some Academics Are Concerned About the Growing Relationship Between Academia and Industry. Do You Have an Opinion About This Relationship?

Response	No. of Faculty
No Concerns	3
Mixed	11
As long as everything is above board	5
Depends on how one defines academic freedom	2
Only as it pertains to property/intellectual rights	2
Concerns are disciplinary specific	2
Concerns	16*
Compromise institutional mission	7
Compromises faculty ethics	6
Narrows the effective scope of research	4

Note: Some respondents expressed more than one concern

As you can see from the data, only three respondents had no concerns at all. Eleven respondents said that they had mixed feelings about the relationship. Each of

these respondents indicated that they had some concerns based on potential negative consequences but that this same relationship also offered a great deal of opportunity as well. Five of these respondents suggested that there is potential for negative consequences and as such, it would be imperative for all aspects of the research to be “above board.” The following passage is indicative of these respondent’s concerns: “I don't have any overarching opinion that it's necessarily bad or necessarily great or anything like that. What I do believe is that it is very important to prevent the violation of academic freedom, that the rules by which both sides are operating on be addressed up front prior to the time that you are in the middle of a project so every body knows what the publication rules are. It always seems to me that...industry, because of proprietary information, has a right perhaps to limit...when it is going to be published or delay something for a while...although in the science areas, that could be more sticky than in the social sciences. But at the same time, I don't think that the industry should have any kind of review capability that tells people that they can write this but they can't write that. I think they have the right to review, they don't have the right to change...so, my concern about those relationships is that we address them very clearly and in an up front way to protect academic freedom prior to the time that it would become an issue.”

Another respondent offered the following as a consequence to limited oversight, “I don't necessarily see a problem in the abstract. I think the problem perhaps arises in the concrete where you really are no longer talking about an academic enterprise but just an arm of the industry, or the, or that you are actually doing things that are unethical,

which I have seen happen. I have seen academics become whores because of whose paying them, its just real obvious.”

Two respondents said that that the relationship between industry and academia is fairly disciplinary specific. It is their opinion that the professional schools are more affected by these relationships than the social sciences. In addition, two respondents suggested that if there are going to be problems associated with this relationship, they are likely to involve property rights as well as disclosure rights. One of these respondents summarized the issue as follows, “Well, it can be tricky. The tradition in academia is that scientific discoveries be open and published, whereas industries obviously want to keep industrial secrets secret you know, at least for a period of time until they have a patent. Both are legitimate interests but they can certainly come into conflict. So if someone is working on an industrial-based grant in pharmacology and they discover something significant, they might not be able to publish it because it might touch on a drug that they might be working on for the company and that would certainly put that person in a conflict. But they are both legitimate interests and sometimes as legitimate interests do, they can come into conflict.”

Lastly, two respondents addressed the question on more of a philosophical level. They said the issue really depends on how one defines academic freedom to begin with. As one of these respondent mused, “Well, there are different definitions of freedom. If the university has stated that one of its goals is to be a partner in the community at large...if that is the mandate, then one meaning of freedom is the freedom to do certain things within an agreed upon context. Another way of thinking about freedom is the

freedom from constraints, and I think that's the more traditional definition of academic freedom...that the job of the faculty member is to pursue disciplinary development and to be free from constraints that would inhibit that...and by that definition, I think the direction that this university is taking diminishes academic freedom.” The other respondent mirrored this sentiment and added that this issue reminded him of the Bastille in *The Tale of Two Cities*, “You are free as any other man within these walls.”

Over half of the respondents (16) expressed genuine concerns for this relationship. Seven respondents said that as industrial/academic relationships grow in numbers and in degree, the mission or tradition of a “liberal” educational institution is compromised. The following passage captures this concern: “Oh yeah...I mean this goes way back to the 60's...how some universities were literally at the beckon call of the defense industry and there were big grants coming in and you see this even earlier during the Manhattan project during the Cold War turning research to the interest of national defense and the expansion of the American empire. And, of course, we have read stories about the research grants from Philip Morris. What is that going to tell us about what kind of constraints there may or may not be on smoking and all of that? And you know, the university has got to be very, very careful that the funding that it gets from private business, or from any foundation, or from any other source, does not close off inquiry. That, again, strikes at the very heart of the university...it happens, but it ought not to.”

Another area of concern is faculty ethics. Six respondents indicated that they were concerned about how this would compromise the scientific objectivity of the researcher. The following comments were made by the respondents in this category: “I

can see where it would be very easy to be co-opted by money and how that could exert an influence on what you might say,” “Yes, I could write a book on it...I think it is a corrosive phenomenon...I've witnessed it personally.” “I do and I guess the best way to articulate them is that I'm concerned that faculty sometimes compromise what I think are principles and they don't have to...I'm not blaming industry because industry is doing what industry does you know...I'm blaming faculty who fall for that or get sucked into that kind of thing.”

Lastly, four respondents said that they were concerned that this relationship would ultimately narrow the “effective scope” of research. In other words, basic research would be replaced by applied research. The following passage is indicative of the responses in this category: “The entrepreneurial nature of this institution, and many in this institution, including the president and others, has produced in my opinion an emphasis toward funded and fundable research at the exclusion of not fundable research or nonfundable research. So the coin of the realm is bringing in external dollars-whether they are contracts, whether they are grants, whatever they may be, and sometimes research does not coincide with funding choices and funding cycles. So in that regard one's choice of research areas is limited, and actually that is precisely what I was thinking about when I answered a previous question...so you framed them nicely and linearly. But I think that that is a way of life here and I don't sense that it is a way of life everywhere and perhaps it is based on this time for this place and the dire fiscal situation that we find ourselves in, but it is still framing the choices of the faculty.”

Perceived Protections for Academic Freedom

*Question 33: Do You Feel That Sufficient Protections
Exist for Academic Freedom?*

The final set of questions explored the respondents' perceptions about whether they believe that there are currently sufficient protections for academic freedom. The results to this question are presented in Table 38.

Table 38

*Do You Feel That Sufficient Protections Exist for
Academic Freedom?*

Response	No. of Faculty
Yes	5
No	11
Academic Culture	8
Bureaucracy	3
Not Sure	14
Never Tested	8
Overt Yes/Covert No	3
Varies by Faculty/ Institutional Rank	3

Only five of the respondents replied “yes.” A little over one-third of the respondents (11) said “no.” Of these, eight said that the critical protection for academic freedom in any institution is a healthy academic culture. Three respondents indicated that they believed that as the bureaucracy grows in academia—ironically, often in an effort to

shore up academic freedom, it winds up doing more harm than good. One respondent said, “No because so many places have come up with these modifications to the tenure process...this post-tenure review so it strikes me as though...it has somewhat weakened it...undermined it.”

The remaining 14 respondents said that they weren't sure if there were sufficient protections. Eight of these admitted that they never really tested their academic freedom so they did not feel qualified to answer with any assurance. Three respondents said that they felt like there were ample protections for overt threats—the manifest attempts to squelch inquiry often by people or groups who are outside of academia. However, they confessed that they were not sure that there are sufficient protections for the covert or subtle threats that currently exist (i.e., those that emanate from within the institution) perhaps the result of a business model of governance.

Lastly, three respondents indicated that the protections are sufficient in certain institutions and with certain ranks of professors. In other words, the more “prestigious” institutions and professors are protected, whereas junior colleges and professors are less protected.

The final two questions examine the respondents' perceptions of the nature and purpose of tenure. Academic tenure is viewed by most academics as the primary method of granting and protecting academic freedom.

Question 28: As a Faculty Member, What Functions Does Tenure Serve?

The results to this question are presented in Table 39.

Table 39

As a Faculty Member, What Functions Does Tenure Serve?

Response	No. of Times Mentioned
Job Security	23
Protects my Academic Freedom	23
Protects Controversy	12
Strengthens the University	8
Contributes to Life-Long Research	3
Credential	2

Note: Because the question asked for functions, many respondents gave more than one answer.

The data suggest that the respondents in this study believe fairly strongly that tenure serves a dual role—to provide a degree of job security that permits them to exercise their academic freedom. A little over one-third of the respondents recognize that tenure also serves to protect faculty who exercise their academic freedom to pursue controversial subject matter. Less than one-third (8) suggested in addition to personal benefits, tenure also served to strengthen the university. As one respondent put it, “It’s not, however, that university professors use their tenured status to present or recite

unpopular points of view...the main function of tenure is to strengthen the university as a marketplace of all different kinds of ideas.” Another respondent remarked that, “Maybe it also gives the institution a certain amount of continuity. I mean you can't just every 10 years decide you are going to be about something new and get rid of everybody and then bring in a whole new crop of faculty. So it provides continuity for the institution.” Almost all of the faculty in this category mentioned that without tenure, universities would have to resort to salary competitiveness, which would ultimately harm many of the less-endowed institutions.

*Question 29: Should Tenure Be Eliminated, Replaced,
or Enhanced in Any Way?*

Lastly, I asked the respondents whether they thought tenure should be eliminated. If so, should it be replaced by something else? If not, could it be enhance in any way? The results of this question are presented in Table 40.

Table 40

*Should Tenure Be Eliminated, Replaced, or
Enhanced in Any Way?*

Response	No. of Faculty
Yes, it should be eliminated, or replaced	3
Maybe	3
No	24*
Leave It Alone	6
Improve Ratio	5
Improve Faculty Reviews	16

Note: Some respondents provided more than one response.

Three of the respondents said that they thought the tenure system should be replaced with a long-term contract system. One respondent quipped, “Yeah, I think it should be eliminated. I think it's a source of friction between the nonacademics and the academics and it's a source that, you know, we are holding on to nothing but the power to say daggumit, we've got the power to hold on to this. So I don't think it serves the purpose that it did before.” Another respondent offered this observation, “It would be very rational for a university to go to a nontenured, multi-year contract system rather than a tenured system. I think a university handicaps itself...a university is an economic institution...in comparison to other institutions a university really handicaps itself—ties its hands behind its back, in terms of its ability to be flexible...getting a faculty body that is so tenured up that there is no room to maneuver...no room to change folks.”

Three more respondents said that they were willing to eliminate tenure in principle, but that in reality, it would be very difficult. As one respondent put it, “You know if you got rid of tenure, and I am not a fan of tenure, but if you got rid of it, state by state it wouldn't work at all. So, I wouldn't want to be in a state that first got rid of tenure because what it would mean is that your state would be defined as anti-education and you would lose a lot of people...you would lose more people because you couldn't pay them competitive salaries than if you would if you changed the system nationwide.”

Twenty-four of the respondents indicated that they were not willing to eliminate tenure. Six of them said that we should leave it as is—the benefits far outweigh the costs. Five of the respondents wanted to enhance tenure by increasing the number of tenure lines---establishing a larger ratio of tenure to nontenure positions in order to shore up the

system. A little over half of the respondents (16) wanted to enhance the tenure system by improving the review policies and procedures. Two of these respondents suggested that many of the problems that have been associated with tenure could be alleviated by making the review processes—be they pre or post-tenure—more transparent. One respondent remarked, “One of my good friends told me that ‘ambiguity never serves the interests of the vulnerable.’” A second respondent echoed this sentiment and added that more attention to mentoring would be a major improvement—especially for minority faculty.

Four of the respondents indicated that more attention to the tenure review process itself would reduce the need of post-tenure review. In sum, we should focus more attention to teaching, less attention to politics, and more attention to the rewards structure. In essence, academia rewards the mainstream instead of the mavericks. One respondent said, “What you have is a reward system here where if you are a faculty member who is looked upon as being manageable...if you are looked upon with some measure of suspicion then you are never going to gain that kind of position...and if you are promoted to the rank of a chair, then you get the 12-month salary, plus you get an immediate increase in your salary, bonuses, and then what do you become...you really become a part of the establishment and then what happens here is that some of those that get promoted to chair positions...their career and their livelihood becomes very dependent upon the institution...they are not marketable elsewhere and their newly won status as chair and the remuneration that they receive, a 12-month contract with bonuses, makes

them very dependent upon the university hierarchy...so they become even less willing and able to defend something called academic freedom.”

Eight of the respondents were in favor of a post-tenure review system. One respondent remarked, “Just as drivers’ licenses ought not to be forever...there should be opportunities to revisit the issue and determine whether one is doing what a tenured faculty member ought to do. Now, if not that doesn't mean that there is penultimate year after penultimate year and then terminal contracts are issued but, much like the third year review...I guess is the way I see post-tenure review operating.” Another respondent said, “I think that they should be accountable for continuing to be productive members of the academic community. So tenure as way of protecting academic freedom I am in favor of and it should not be eradicated but tenure as complete job security whether you are doing your job or not is not something that I am in favor of.”

Lastly, two respondents were not in favor of post-tenure review at all. One likened it to double jeopardy, “kind of like the Megan Laws for rapists...you served your time but you come back out and you have to sign up on a list so that everybody still knows...so in some ways you are still paying the price. People may be surprised that I as a feminist would have that kind of a concern but I do.” Another had this to say about post-tenure review, “I could see pressure coming down from the administration. In the post-tenure review process that would be somehow in some sort of curious, devious way brought up and used to encourage this person to resign from the university. So you have to ask the question...why is it...you've got 1,400 faculty members here...why is it that there is so little controversy out there in terms of ideas? It's a pretty bland

situation...you've got 1,400 minds and most of them have Ph.D.'s whatever that means, and we have so little controversy in the world of ideas. Why is that? There must be some institutional impediment...first of all, some people die intellectually...that is one thing...but there must also be some institutional, systematic impediments to why people don't speak their minds.”

Review

In sum, regarding faculty perceptions about current threats, restrictions and violation of academic freedom, the respondents in this study couch academic freedom issues more in terms of teaching than research. When they have experienced an academic freedom restriction, threat, or violation, it occurred while teaching more than in any other context. They perceive the primary threats to academic freedom to political and economic forces, both of which lead to a corporate model of governance, which they also view as a major threat. In addition to these general threats, these respondents also view an unhealthy academic culture to be a significant threat to academic freedom at VCU, in particular. Furthermore, they are not very optimistic about the future of academic freedom in American higher education.

When I asked the respondents about internal threats—one’s that are often attributed to either faculty or administrative abuse and misuse of academic freedom, they believe that the faculty at VCU have neglected their responsibilities regarding the exercise, support and defense of academic freedom. They also believe that administrators are also guilty of neglecting to support and defend academic freedom—and at time, even discouraging it.

This perception was also reflected when I inquired about the nature of research agendas at VCU. The respondents believe that the administration is more supportive of mainstream, applied research and far less supportive of innovative, basic research. They also believe that this agenda has the potential to compromise the ethics and scientific professional standards of faculty members as they chase grant money and major funding instead of ideas.

Lastly, the respondents attribute individualistic functions and benefits to tenure—both job security and their own personal academic freedom. Very few of them attribute much social or institutional value to tenure. In addition, the majority of the respondents do not want to eliminate tenure, rather, they would support a more transparent, stringent, and refined review process for tenure review coupled with periodic post-tenure reviews.

Discussion

Do These Faculty Perceive Any Existing Threats to Their Academic Freedom?

Again, it is pretty clear from the data that these respondents harbor concerns about the current state of academic freedom in today's colleges and universities, as well as its future. They expressed concerns about the typical overt threats that have continued to make headlines from time to time in places like the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. These overt threats come from outside groups that attempt to curb the exercise of free inquiry. Political groups may outright attack professors asking for their dismissal because of alleged threats to national security. Religious groups may do the same in the name of morality. Or business group or the general public may crack down on the notion of free inquiry over concerns of economic waste.

What is more troubling is the apparent rise of covert threats to academic freedom and tenure. By covert I mean there are social forces that tend to undermine academic freedom as opposed to directly attack it or those who would exercise it. Instead of blatantly punishing someone for what they teach or research, as was the case during the McCarthy era in the 50s, the anti-war protests in the 60's, and the wave of political correctness throughout the 80's and beyond, the covert threats that the respondents in this study identify have the subtle effect of narrowing the effective scope of what we can teach, research and publish. Recognizing that there are always limits to academic freedom, which of the following has the potential of serving a larger social good, working in an environment that is analogous to a football stadium or a broom closet?

Of the covert threats, the one that is arguably the most insidious is the business model of institutional governance. The business model has been adopted by many institutions of higher education as a means for coping with economic hardship. The threats that manifest themselves from this model, according to the respondents, are threefold. First, the business model has turned scholars into entrepreneurs. Instead of chasing intriguing ideas and controversial subjects, academics are pressured into chasing money.

Second, in an effort to trim and manage the largest expenditure in higher education, faculty salaries, administrators are using early retirement packages to lure senior faculty into early retirement and if they fill the position, they do so with nontenure, contractual faculty. Again, many of these faculty are hired because of their grant writing ability and not necessarily for their contribution to learning or a body of knowledge.

Furthermore, even if they were, they are not protected by tenure so at best they would be reluctant to pursue controversy or uncharted territory and at worse, if they did they would be very vulnerable.

A third consequence to the business model is the effect that it has on the faculty culture. A top down management style might be effective in the corporate world for keeping employees on task and for promoting productivity, but in higher education it has a stifling effect on faculty creativity and morale. One of the persistent messages in the respondent interviews in this study was the low morale, coupled with resentment and retrenchment. These are not conducive mindsets for scholarly communities.

How Do These Faculty Define Academic Tenure?

The respondents in this study tended to define academic tenure in terms of protecting their own academic freedom. Although this is consistent with the traditional notion of academic tenure, what concerns me is the apparent absence of any sense of obligation to protect the academic freedom of those who are not protected by tenure. Again, this was a consistent theme in the interviews, the respondents believe that junior or nontenured faculty should be careful because they lack the protection of tenure and they lack the support of their tenured colleagues.

A few of the respondents questioned whether tenure actually served this function anymore. Each of them suggested that tenure should be eliminated and replaced with a contractual system. However, my concern mirrors that of De George (1997), "Without a tenure system there is a strong likelihood that safeguards for academic freedom will be seriously diminished. The university as a business, with authority coming from the top

and faculty serving at the sufferance of the administration, is a model that some, perhaps many, colleges and universities would adopt” (p. 27).

Many of the respondents also expressed concern about the faculty tenure and post-tenure review procedures and how the review processes themselves have the tendency to either undermine academic freedom, or squelch it altogether. They said that the tenure review process actually suppressed academic freedom because of the danger associated with how controversial work might be judged. Most of the respondents said that faculty on tenure lines should “play it safe” and pursue mainstream teaching methods and research areas. Controversial research and teaching could have the potential of backfiring and actually preventing one from obtaining tenure. Others were equally skeptical of post-tenure review procedures. They expressed concern that post-tenure reviews could potentially undermine academic freedom in one of two ways. On the one hand, some of the respondents suggested that until and unless the post-tenure review has any teeth, the kind of abuse or neglect of academic freedom that the public has often complained about would continue (i.e., maverick professors, stealth professors, and the deadwood argument). On the other hand, if the post-tenure review process had shark’s teeth, or became an administrative tool for reprimanding faculty who are not “team players,” then the process would squelch academic freedom. Hence, the answer is somewhere in the middle.

Chapter Seven

RESPONDENT BACKGROUND

The data presented in this chapter pertain to the respondents' background. Seven questions in the interview guide addressed issues related to the respondents' background (see Table 41). In particular, I was interested in when the respondents first learned about academic freedom and under what circumstances. In addition to presenting the data on the respondents' background, this chapter will also present the data that were generated from the document analysis.

Table 41

How Did These Faculty Members Learn About Academic Freedom?

Question No.	
1	What type of institution did you do your undergraduate and graduate work?
4	What was your first academic position?
5	At what rank did you enter the profession?
6	Was there any orientation, either formal or informal, for new faculty when you began in academe? Did senior faculty provide mentoring?
9c	When was the first time that you became acquainted with academic freedom? Under what circumstances?
31	Does your department have a formal policy on academic freedom?
32	Does VCU?

The data suggest two important characteristics of the sample. First, they come from a wide variety of academic backgrounds. Secondly, very few of them have had any formal orientation or mentoring that would have helped them adjust to the institutional context in which their careers would evolve.

Question 1: What Type of Institution Did You Do Your

Undergraduate and Graduate Work?

With respect to the first question, the responses varied. Fourteen of the respondents did their undergraduate work at a private liberal arts institution ranging from 2,000 students to 12,000 students. Ten of the respondents did their undergraduate work at a public, research-oriented institution ranging in size from 3,500 to 45,000. Four of the respondents did their undergraduate work at a private, research institution and two went to a public, liberal arts institution. With respect to graduate school, 23 of the respondents said they went to a public institution while 15 said they attended a private institution (8 of the respondents attended both a private and a public institution during their graduate work). Again, Institutional sizes ranged from 3,500 to 55,000.

Question 4: What Was Your First Academic Position?

When asked what was your first academic position, 18 of the respondents said VCU was their first appointment. The remaining 12 respondents came from various institutions from around the country, the names of which will remain undisclosed so as to protect the confidentiality of the respondents. What is important here is that over half of the faculty in this study (18) have spent their entire career at VCU. In other words, in terms of their professional academic experience, VCU is all that they have to go by.

Question 5: At What Rank Did You Enter the Profession?

Twenty-six of the respondents indicated that they entered the profession as an assistant professor. Four said they entered as visiting professors before they landed their first full-time appointment.

Question 6: Did Senior Faculty Provide Mentoring?

The next two-part question generated a little more detailed responses, therefore, tables will be used to help present the data. The first question I asked was, “Was there any orientation program, either formal or informal, for new faculty when you began in academe?” That question was followed by, “Did senior faculty provide mentoring.”

Table 42 presents a summary of the responses.

Table 42

Was There Any Orientation, Either Formal or Informal, for New Faculty When You Began in Academe? Did Senior Faculty Provide Mentoring?

Response	No. of Faculty
<u>Orientation</u>	
No	26
Yes	4
Formal	2
Informal	2
<u>Mentoring</u>	
No	11
Yes	19
Formal	4
Informal	15

Twenty six respondents replied that they had no orientation program when they accepted their first appointment. Out of the remaining 4, 2 attended a formal program and the other 2 participated in a more informal program. The formal orientation programs seemed to consist of a half-day program where faculty learned a lot of logistical and bureaucratic aspects of their new institution. One respondent quipped, “There was like a half-day of orientation and the dean at that time was a very nice man and he and his wife had all of the new faculty over to their house for dinner...that’s probably more orientation than there is now” (chuckle). When I probed and asked about whether it was geared toward academics at all, the respondent replied, “Nah, it was logistical.”

An example of an informal orientation program is offered by the following respondent: “Well, there was a little bit of an informal orientation program. I think when I first started the chair of the department, who was...who had a gruff exterior but he really had a warm heart...and um, what did he say, my orientation program was basically, you need to publish something that gets your name in lights...learn how to teach your course and stay current, and don't date the secretaries...that was pretty much what he said [chuckle]...that was my orientation.”

When asked about whether they had any mentoring during the early years of their first appointment the majority of the respondents said “yes”—19, 11 said “no.” Of the 19, the vast majority—15 said that the mentoring that they had experienced was more informal in nature. The remaining four had participated in formal programs. Two of these respondents said that they had participated in a program at VCU known as Faculty Advancement and Mentoring Enhancement (FAME). The other two respondents

participated in a program at VCU that came out of the Center for Teaching Effectiveness where an award-winning professor would meet with the junior faculty on a weekly basis to discuss issues related to teaching and faculty development.

The 15 respondents who said that they had received informal mentoring offered mixed reviews of the usefulness or effectiveness of the mentoring. The majority of these respondents did not offer a judgment whatsoever—they simply described it as an informal process. One respondent said, “Well I am sure somebody would say that there is some things that you don't do or something like that but there wasn't any prolonged or continuous type of program.” Another respondent put it this way, “So, while there was no formal mentoring program I got plenty of support from my colleagues in the department.”

Some of the respondents did indicate that they had positive experiences with the informal mentoring that they had received. One respondent said, “I had a number of people in the department who were willing to share their syllabi with me for example...and talked with me about student climate and sort of expectations. We had an informal peer evaluation program where we had faculty come review your course or review your materials and that kind of thing.” Another respondent described his/her experience in the following passage: “Well, to be frank about it, one of my graduate school professors taught at the university so I just simply...to him about what he thought would be good goals for a junior faculty member...what should I strive to do in the first couple of years and things of that sort. So that was mainly what I sought in terms of counseling. So, in that sense, I think I was very fortunate that I had a very supportive

department...I think when they hired me they were very supportive...one of my old professors said you shouldn't hire anyone unless you plan on tenuring them.”

Other respondents suggested that the informal mentoring that they had received had been somewhat unrewarding. One respondent put it this way, “I don't know if I would call it mentoring, it was kind of informal advising and in the hallways...and in my opinion it was always the wrong advice.” Another respondent said that he/she had received more mentoring from professional associations and faculty in other departments than from their own department. Later in his/her response, the respondent expressed frustration with the quality of mentoring, “I don't know...it's a secret how you get promoted and tenured and we are going to tell that to some people and we are not going to tell it to others. In fact, I speak candidly...I say things like, ‘If you are not being given research opportunities in your department...if you are not being invited to collaborate on research...if you are not being offered opportunities for leave...if you are not being encouraged to apply for different kinds of grants...if there is someone who is the editor of a journal that's right in your area and they haven't asked you to do a piece for them...those are signals...those are definite signals.’ Because, in fact, when an institution or department means to tenure somebody, they give them clear signals of support that they want that to happen. And when they are ambivalent about it, they don't do that for you. They give you work loads that are impossible and committees and other kinds of obligations that will make it very difficult for you to do your research, and they will pat you on the back and they will smile in your face and tell you how much they appreciate you and how wonderful you are but in the end, they will say that you didn't do enough

research to get through and you are sitting there saying 'but you never gave me any time to do it.' So with my junior faculty members, I don't ask them to do things..I say to them, 'If you want my advice, drop this...you have permission to do that...no, you do not have to show up to these meetings,' because for junior faculty who are just not familiar with the culture of academia, they don't know...they think it is important to be polite and nice and decent...but you do not get tenured on nice, polite and decent...that's a long answer to mentoring." Still another respondent volunteered that it was the responsibility of the new faculty member to seek out advice or mentor-like relationships, "I would seek it out...and I would do that ..but there was little...one had to take the initiative to do that and I did."

Question 9c: When Was the First Time That You Became Acquainted

With Academic Freedom? Under What Circumstances?

The last three questions that I asked relating to the respondents' background pertain to when they originally became acquainted with academic freedom, and whether they are familiar with the policies governing academic freedom at VCU, respectively. The responses to the first question follow. It is clear from the data that none of the respondents had any first hand, direct experience with academic freedom. Although they all became familiar with academic freedom at various points in their academic career, it was always indirect, either vicariously through the experiences of other important academics in their networks, or through a process that has been described as osmosis—picking up bits and pieces through newspaper or journal articles, or through hearsay and rumor.

Perhaps the most revealing characteristic of these data is the fact that every single one of the respondents learned about academic freedom very informally and through the experiences of others. Another factor that emerges from the data is the fact that most of the circumstances where these respondent's learned about academic freedom was during the decades of the 50s, 60s and 70s. For the four respondents who became acquainted with academic freedom prior to college, it was largely due to the fact that they came from academic families.

For respondents who learned about academic freedom as either undergraduate or graduate students, their stories are fairly similar. One of the respondents who learned about it as an undergraduate said, "During the 60s, there were such blatant violations of freedom of expression that the concept of academic freedom, I think, was something that permeated institutions. The idea that there ought to be an academic environment where people were free and, in fact, encouraged to engage in the discussion of controversial ideas without threat of censorship, or reprimand of some sort for expressing those ideas...so, I guess my first understanding of it were shaped in the sort of student protest movements of the 60s and the idea that the academy ought to be some place where you can engage these ideas." Responses are presented in Table 43.

Table 43

When Was the First Time That You Became Acquainted With Academic Freedom? Under What Circumstances?

Response	No. of Faculty
Prior to College	4
Vicarious	4
Undergraduate	7
Vicarious	4
Osmosis	3
Graduate School	15
Vicarious	9
Osmosis	5
Formal	1
Post Doctorate	4
Vicarious	1
Osmosis	2
Informal Mentor	1

Another respondent described this turbulent period and how it influenced academia rather poignantly, “I had a professor as an undergraduate...actually two, who had been black-listed by McCarthy and that is why they were at this small liberal arts college rather than at a bigger university...which was great for me because they were tremendous teachers. That was kind of my introduction to notions of academic freedom. At this college they could teach whatever they wanted and students just flocked to those people. Then, it wasn't all that relevant again until 1965-1966, 1967 and 1968 during the Vietnam War when I was working on my Ph.D. and, you know, the departments and the universities were so polarized and I saw a couple of people who almost lost their jobs because of opposition to the war.”

The responses from the faculty who learned about academic freedom in graduate school mirrored those who learned about it as undergraduates. Some of the issues faded, as in the McCarthy scare, while others remained “hot-topics” such as student activism and anti-war protests. One respondent said, “I'll tell you, I was a child of the 60s and I was going to graduate school in the late 60s and I was living in Washington D.C., and, you know, the whole student protest movement and all that and here you saw the clash between the student movement on the one hand and the institutional powers on the other. I was a part of teach-ins and as a student I would go to these teach-ins, in particular during the Vietnam War and then later during the Civil Rights movement, and that's when I began to learn more and more about power and how power is exercised in this society and that scholars and academicians...there is kind of a noble tradition of challenging that power often to the point of becoming very unpopular and what not. So I

guess it was out of that ferment in the 60s when I was in graduate school that I began to learn more and more about free speech and academic freedom...are we not talking about the same thing?"

Another respondent admitted, "Well you know...I mean there was always those high profile cases where you have a controversy...you know, whether it be Eugene Genovese speaking out during the Vietnam War in my home state of New Jersey when he was a professor at Rutgers and Richard Nixon saying that he should be removed from his position...or whether it be a philosopher, professor Levy, a city university who is studying race and intelligence and seen on the left wing as doing something that he shouldn't be doing. So, I think we essentially become acquainted with academic freedom in those cases where it seems to be under assault by either an external group or by internal people inside the university who don't share a particular kind of view."

If the respondents did not learn about academic freedom from the experiences of others in their own institutional settings, then they learned about it from the leading academic journals of the time. One respondent explains, "Probably just informally as an undergraduate...it would come up.. I don't think I ever read anything about it formally until the *Chronicle of Higher Education* on occasion periodically did pieces on academic freedom back in a time when the department had the money to buy it [chuckle]. And I read several articles about specific instances when academic freedom issues were raised...also *Lingua Franca* when it was publishing did pieces on academic freedom."

Four faculty members said that they did not become familiar with academic freedom until well after they earned their Ph.D. Again, in these cases, the respondents said

that they learned about it informally through conversations or by hearing about cases where a faculty member was denied tenure and the issue of academic freedom was raised subsequently.

Only one respondent in this study said that he/she had a formal exposure to the core issues in academia—including academic freedom, by virtue of a teaching practicum that was taken as a graduate student.

Question 31: Does Your Department Have a Formal Policy on Academic Freedom?

Question 32: Does VCU?

The last two questions pertain to whether the respondents are aware of any formal policies on academic freedom in their respective departments, or under the university as a whole. The results are presented in the Tables 44 and 45.

According to the data, there is a lot of ambiguity as to whether any formal policies exist regarding academic freedom. In response to both questions, most respondents admitted that they simply were not sure whether any policies exist in their department, or at VCU. Although, most of them believed that they had seen it before as an institutional policy, they were not sure what it said or where it was. Only one respondent said that he/she was sure it was in the faculty handbook. Another respondent also claimed to have knowledge of VCU's policy but wasn't able to locate it, "Yes, they have quite a tome on the whole thing...but it is in flux...it's Marsha Torr's Tome, and the only reason why I know this is because I sat on that committee. Had I not on that committee I would not have known because it is not common knowledge unless you search it out." The more typical responses expressed something like, "I'm sure it does, but I am remiss that I

Table 44

Does Your Department Have a Formal Policy on Academic Freedom?

Response	No. of Faculty
No	13
Don't Know	17
Probably	3
Probably Not	14

Table 45

Does VCU Have a Formal Policy on Academic Freedom?

Response	No. of Faculty
Yes	9
Don't Know	21
Probably	14
Have No Idea	7

haven't a ...yes, they do have it,...I remember reading parts of it, but that's been quite sometime ago." One respondent offered this interpretation of VCU's policy on academic freedom: "I am sure that they do...whether they mean it or not is a matter of some question. I think they rely pretty heavily on hiring people that already agree with them. They do not seek out challenging ideas...they do not seek out people here who are not acceptable of the line...so I do think that we probably do have an academic freedom policy but I have never heard of it. Yes, I have heard of it come to think of it, in the ethical policies of the university which attempts to discourage fraternization of faculty and students which is absurd. When I was in college I had friends who were professors and friends who were students...and in the past, I have gone out with dozens of students at VCU...hundreds even, and I will continue to do so because when I'm here, I do VCU's work...but when I am not here I do what I want. My identity, my being, is not an extension of some administrator's desire for window dressing. I am an autonomous individual...nobody will tell me that I will or will not go out with somebody or anything else like that."

Review

To summarize, the faculty who participated in this study come from a variety of institutional contexts with respect to their undergraduate, graduate, and early academic careers. A little of half of the respondents have spent their entire academic career at VCU. Although they all learned about academic freedom at different points in their academic careers, they all learned about it in rather similar circumstances—either vicariously through their mentors, role models, or peer, or from reading or hearing about

the more public cases. Lastly, the majority of the respondents admitted that they weren't sure as to whether VCU or their department has any formal policy on academic freedom.

The following section will examine the documents available to faculty at VCU pertaining to academic freedom and tenure policy. Institution-wide policies are examined first, followed by the College of Humanities and Sciences and then by school, department or program.

Document Analysis

The purpose of the document analysis is to determine the nature, extent and location of any formal policies on academic freedom and tenure at Virginia Commonwealth University. I began gathering these data in early August, 2004. I intentionally waited as long as possible to gather these data because of the recent reorganization of several departments in the College of Humanities and Sciences and the subsequent delay in rewriting or editing documents relating to promotion and tenure, and academic freedom that may result. The analysis begins at the university level and then will proceed to the College of Humanities and Sciences and then to each school, department, or program represented in the sample. As a preface to the following analysis, it should be noted that I intentionally present the information in a way that is indicative of how a new faculty member would "discover" this information.

The Faculty Handbook

The first and most logical place that I looked for policies on academic freedom and tenure is the Faculty Handbook. The handbook is no longer available in hard copy so I accessed the online version for my analysis (VCU, 2005a). As I perused the handbook,

the first reference to academic freedom was in Chapter Three on “University Governance.” This chapter outlines the two university-wide groups responsible for informing and mediating between both the administration and the faculty body—the University Council and the Faculty Senate.

According to the bylaws of the University Council, “As a corollary of academic freedom, the university community has a collective responsibility for guiding the scholarly pursuits of the university. The University Council acknowledges responsibility to communicate its views on matters bearing on academic programs and policies to those exercising authority over the institution.” Upon examining the section of the Faculty Handbook on the Faculty Senate, no references to academic freedom were present. However, I did find references to academic freedom by the Faculty Senate on their website (VCU, 2005b). I will discuss these references momentarily.

Next, I looked in Chapter Four entitled “Faculty.” The first paragraph of this document indicated that Virginia Commonwealth University’s, “Faculty Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures” document is available from the Provost’s Office. However, I did find the same document online and I will reference it in the following section (VCU, 2005c).

Faculty Promotion and Tenure Policies and Procedures

In Section 1.1 of this document, subtitled “Goal,” the opening paragraph reads: “Excellence is the original and continuing goal of Virginia Commonwealth University. A prerequisite of this goal is the recruitment and retention of a distinguished faculty. This requires the appointment, promotion, and tenure of a faculty *in a way that*

encourages excellence and creates an atmosphere of free inquiry and expression [italics added].” The following goals are outlined:

“The promotion and tenure system at Virginia Commonwealth University is designed to foster:

Academic freedom of thought, teaching, learning, inquiry and expression.

Fair and equitable treatment for all individuals.

Appropriate participation by the faculty, the student body, the administration and the Board of Visitors.

A normal succession and infusion of new faculty” (VCU, 2005c,d).

In section 1.2 the following objectives of the tenure system at VCU are outlined:

“Assessment of faculty performance to the highest attainable degree within the context and resources of the University.

Support of the goals of the University and support of the diverse missions and characteristics of its individual academic units.

Commitment to administrative management which provides for fair and reasonable allocation of time and resources.

Assurance of the financial integrity of the institution.

Sufficient flexibility to permit modifications of programs, curricula and academic organizational units to meet changing academic, institutional, and societal needs” (VCU, 2005c,d).

Lastly, in section 1.3, the document outlines the “Relationship of Schools and Departments to the University Promotion and Tenure Policy.” The following statement

represents the overall relationship: “Each school and each department of a school where recommendations for academic appointments are initiated shall establish written guidelines for promotion and tenure. The guidelines shall be consistent with the University-wide policies in this document, but shall also specify the details involved in meeting the particular goals and objectives of those units” (VCU, 2005c,d). However, as a result of the restructuring of academic units leading to the absorption of the department of Anthropology into the School of World Studies and the departments of Criminal Justice, Political Science, and Urban Studies, into the School of Government and Public Affairs, these new schools have yet to produce such guidelines. I contacted the chair of the department of Psychology who informed me that their policy does not differ significantly from the universities policy.

Academic Rights and Responsibilities

The last reference to academic freedom in the Faculty Handbook is also in the “Faculty” chapter in the subsection “Faculty Rights and Responsibilities.” Again, within the first paragraph is the reference, “The university’s official ‘Academic Rights and Responsibilities’ statement...is available from the Provost’s Office.” However, I also found it online on the VCU Faculty Senate website (VCU, 2005e).

In the first section of this document entitled “The Academic Community,” are the following statements: “Since the overall mission of the University cannot be achieved without harmonious interaction among the components of the academic community, the faculty members, enjoying extensive freedoms, *must reciprocate with equally high standards of academic responsibility* [italics added]. Membership in the academic

community imposes on students, faculty members, administrators and members of the Board of Visitors an obligation to respect each other's dignity; to acknowledge each other's right to express differing opinions; to cultivate and to cherish intellectual honesty; and to promote freedom of inquiry and expression on and off campus (VCU, 2005e).

The second section of this document, "Collegial Rights and Responsibilities of Faculty and Members of the Administration of the University," contains nine sections, the first of which is a rather extensive commentary on academic freedom. One of the remaining eight sections addresses academic tenure. The following statement resides in this section; "Virginia Commonwealth University subscribes to the widely adopted concept of academic tenure as an important means of assuring freedom in teaching and in research, thereby making an academic career attractive to individuals of ability (VCU, 2005e).

Faculty Roles and Rewards Policy

The final document reviewed for this study is the "Faculty Roles and Rewards Policy." It is germane because it articulates and outlines the potential for departmental and institutional constraints on one's academic freedom. Once again, I was able to obtain this document from the VCU website (VCU, 2005f).

In the introduction of this document is the following statement, "Faculty within each unit must create individualized work plans that are personally meaningful, *central to unit life, and consistent with institutional mission* [italics added]." Further in the document is the following elaboration, "A relevant work unit is defined as a school, department, interdisciplinary center, or specialized program that shares a collective

purpose and a collective responsibility to meet University needs in achieving its mission.” With respect to rewards, this document suggests, “faculty reward systems must not only recognize individual accomplishments but must also foster institutional goals and values (VCU, 2005f).

Review

In summation, these documents clearly indicate that academic freedom is central to the mission of this university. In addition, it is the primary responsibility of both, the faculty body and the administration, to exercise, defend, and support academic freedom on campus. Furthermore, academic tenure is the primary system by which academic freedom is honored and protected. However, along with these freedoms come professional roles and responsibilities as well as institutional or structural constraints that act as limitations on academic freedom. These facts are significant in that in the following chapters, the degree to which faculty are aware of these personal and structural restraints will determine the extent to which academic freedom is properly understood and exercised, or not.

Discussion

How Did the Faculty in This Study Learn About Academic Freedom and Tenure?

Although my sampling procedure was designed to generate a homogeneous sample—tenured faculty from the social sciences who have been at VCU for 10 years or more—their respective backgrounds were very heterogeneous. These respondents went to a wide variety of institutions of higher education. Some came from small, liberal arts colleges while others came from very large public institutions in state systems. One

could assume that when such a diverse faculty body comes to a single institution, it would be incumbent on that institution to socialize the new faculty, both formally and informally, in such a way that they are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities as members of a scholarly community. Furthermore, they should understand the institutional limitations that both shape and guide that scholarly community.

However, 26 of the respondents indicated that they did not have any orientation upon their arrival at VCU. Only two of the respondent said that they had a formal orientation and that it primarily focused on logistics (i. e., where to park; where to get a university ID; where to turn in the human resources paperwork). The significance of this is that many new faculty members spend the first year or so of their first appointment unaware of the resources, services, and opportunities that are available to them in both teaching and research. Instead of hitting the ground running, they spend their time fumbling around as they search for support for their scholarly interests.

This situation could be alleviated somewhat through mentoring. However, a little over one-third of the respondents (11) indicated that they did not receive any mentoring whatsoever. Of the 19 who did, only 4 received formal mentoring. The remaining 15 who had informal mentoring would have had to rely on their mentor to address these issues. Although many of them probably did a good job, absent any formal training or structure, the mentoring process remains hit-or-miss. The bottom line is only 4 out of the 30 respondents had a formal orientation and only 4 of them received formal mentoring. This could easily explain why the majority of the respondents did not know whether their department, or even VCU, has a formal policy on academic freedom. Furthermore,

absent any formal socialization into their new academic environments, these new faculty members will remain unaware of how academic freedom is shaped by the institutional and sociocultural context and they are left with whatever impression of academic freedom they brought with them. Hence, instead of 30 faculty members with a fairly homogenous view of academic freedom at VCU, we have 30 faculty members with very different impressions of academic freedom—some of which are downright incompatible.

For 22 of these faculty, it was during their undergraduate and graduate school experience that they first became acquainted with academic freedom. Four of the respondents became familiar with academic freedom prior to their college experience. In each of these cases, the respondents came from families where one or more of the members worked as academic (i. e., parents or older siblings). What is most revealing about the data is not so much *when* they became familiar with academic freedom but *how*. The vast majority of the respondents (28 out of 30) learned about academic freedom either vicariously—watching others as their teaching methods or research agendas were called into question or worse, through a kind of “osmosis”—absorbing bits and pieces as they popped-up in the news or at the “water cooler.” Only one respondent learned about it formally by virtue of taking a teaching practicum course as a graduate student.

Therefore, based on their limited and varied experiences with academic freedom prior to their first academic appointment, coupled with their limited orientation and socialization into the profession and their host institution, it should not surprise us that their definitions of academic freedom are limited and varied as well. The bottom line is

that the majority of the faculty in this study are not aware that academic freedom carries with it certain responsibilities and is constrained by certain professional and institutional limitations. As such, their collective ability to effectively exercise, support and defend academic freedom at VCU remains in question.

The final chapter will summarize the major findings that pertain to the original five research questions. In addition, it will discuss some of the unanticipated findings that emerged from this research, as well as examine some of the policy implications for institutions of higher education. Lastly, I will explore possibilities for future research in this area.

Chapter Eight

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This final chapter is divided into several sections. The first section will summarize the major findings that pertain to the original five research questions. The second section will offer a discussion of some of the unanticipated findings that emerged from this research. Lastly, I will explore some of the policy implications for institutions of higher education, as well as possibilities for future research in this area.

Summary of Findings

Table 46 lists the original five research questions. This first section will review and summarize the major findings as they pertain to each of the research questions

Table 46

Research Questions

6	How do core faculty in the social sciences at VCU define academic freedom?
7	Do these same faculty perceive academic freedom to be a significant feature of a career in higher education?
8	Do these same faculty perceive any existing threats to their academic freedom?
9	How do these faculty define academic tenure?
10	How did these faculty learn about academic freedom and tenure?

How Do Core Faculty in the Social Sciences at VCU Define Academic Freedom?

Virtually all of the respondents in this study defined academic freedom in terms of the freedom to pursue their own research questions and to teach subject matter in a manner of their own choosing. However, just over half of the respondents identified professional responsibilities as a constraint to one's academic freedom. In addition, just over one-third mentioned at least one limitation. Hence, although there is a strong consensus that academic freedom applies to both the classroom and to research, there appears to be plenty ambiguity as to the appropriate parameters within which faculty members should exercise academic freedom.

It is also evident that many of these respondents are not aware of the distinctions between academic freedom and professional autonomy. When I asked, "Are professional autonomy and academic freedom the same things," 4 said they were "not sure" and another 4 said "yes." Furthermore, most of the respondents linked academic freedom with cultivating learning and knowledge as opposed to cultivating a democratic society or the pursuit of truth.

Do These Same Faculty Perceive Academic Freedom to Be a Significant Feature of a Career in Higher Education?

The short answer to this question is "yes." All the respondents said that academic freedom is or should be a significant feature of a career in higher education. What is interesting, however, is that only two-thirds of the respondents said that academic freedom was a significant reason why they entered the profession. The other one-third entered the academic profession after they spent some time in a job in the "real world."

In addition, about two-thirds of the respondents indicated that academic freedom was still significant to their careers while the other one-third said that it was not because their academic work does not involve controversial subject matter. So there appears to be two important factors at work here. First, faculty are more likely to impute significance to academic freedom when their work involves teaching or researching controversial subject matter. Secondly, faculty who have spent their entire careers in academia—both as students and as professors, are more likely to find academic freedom a significant aspect of an academic career than those who enter academia at a later stage in their career.

Do These Same Faculty Perceive Any Existing Threats to Their Academic Freedom?

Again, the short answer is “yes.” However, the perceived threats are not the traditional ones. The traditional threats to academic freedom have come from external agents whose assaults are rather overt in nature. A typical case might involve a political figure or a group of citizens who pressure a university administration to fire a professor for engaging in controversial research or teaching unpopular ideas. For instance, very recently, a faculty member from the University of Colorado has been threatened for his unpopular comments about the victims in the 9/11 attacks. Again, these traditional threats come from people or groups that are outside the academy and they are typically overt attempts to have someone fired or at least censured.

The respondents in this study identified a number of inter-related forces that are threatening academic freedom and they are much more covert in nature. Instead of blatant attacks on individual faculty members, these threats are much more subtle and are

more likely to undermine academic freedom across the entire campus or institution as opposed to the academic freedom of individual faculty members. At risk of oversimplifying these threats, I will put them into two categories—political/economic forces and academic culture.

In short, political and economic forces of late have contributed to a dramatic decrease in the amount of funding and resources that are at academia's disposal. This has led many institutions of higher education to adopt a business model (or corporate model) of management. Such a model demands much more flexibility with human capital. As such, many of these institutions have shifted away from large numbers of tenured faculty and more toward collateral and part-time faculty. Many of the respondents in this study expressed the position that tenured professors promulgate academic freedom on campus and so, as the number of tenured professors drops, so does the umbrella of academic freedom.

Another consequence of the business model is a dramatic shift away from basic science and more toward funded, applied research. Many of the respondents in this study felt like their academic freedom has been compromised because they have been asked to pursue grant-funded projects. Some have gone so far as to call themselves “grant-whores.” Again, their general concern is that this not only limits what they can do in terms of research, but it also constrains what they can do with the findings. A lot of grant-funded research, by its very nature, constrains what researchers can report, as well as when they can report.

A second source of threats to academic freedom stems from an unhealthy academic culture—one that is partially a byproduct of the aforementioned business model. However, some of the blame can also be attributed to the faculty themselves failing to exercise their professional responsibilities. Many of the respondents in this study expressed a genuine concern that some of their colleagues are “wimpy” or are “disrespectful” and “uncolleagial.” As such, many of the respondents expressed a degree of disillusionment with respect to their professional work environment and have consequently retreated to their offices, or have sought a career move or early retirement.

On a final note, when I asked these respondents whether they felt that sufficient protections currently exist for academic freedom, only 5 out of the 30 respondents said “yes.” Eleven said that there are not sufficient protections as long as the academic culture is poor and the academic bureaucracy is run as a business. Fourteen of the respondents said that they were not sure if there are sufficient protections.

How Do These Faculty Define Academic Tenure?

In general, the respondents in this study define academic tenure in terms of protecting their own job security and academic freedom. A significant number said that tenure protects the pursuit of controversial subject matter. A minority said that tenure strengthens the university.

When asked whether tenure should be eliminated, replaced or enhanced, three-quarters of the respondents said that it should not be eliminated or replaced. Almost half said that it could be enhanced by addressing the review process. It is worthy to note that

three of the respondents said that it should be eliminated and an additional three said they were open to the idea of replacing tenure with long-term contracts.

How Did These Faculty Learn About Academic Freedom and Tenure?

Most of the respondents in this study learned about academic freedom in college as graduate students. In almost all of the cases, the respondents said that they learned about academic freedom either vicariously or through what many referred to as osmosis—absorbing bits and pieces through informal discussions. This is not surprising because the majority of these respondents did not receive either a formal orientation upon their arrival, or any formal mentoring. Furthermore, none of the respondents in this study knew whether their respective departments had a formal policy on academic freedom. When asked whether or not they knew if VCU has a formal policy on academic freedom, again only one-third of the respondents said “yes it does,” the other two-thirds were not sure.

This is probably the most revealing cluster of data. This goes a long way toward explaining why so many of the respondents had such limited understanding of academic freedom and its associated responsibilities and limitations. The next section will discuss some of the unanticipated findings that resulted from this study.

Unanticipated Findings

Upon reflecting on this research, I am struck by two major themes that emerged. First and foremost, I was very surprised to discover that the general mood of the faculty who participated in this study was so low. Secondly, I was surprised that such a relatively homogenous group of faculty harbored such varied perceptions of academic

freedom and tenure—a cohort whose historical and disciplinary experience would seem to yield a deeper understanding of these concepts and the role that they play in American higher education.

To some extent, a relative level of discontent is to be expected, given that most of the faculty who participated in this study have been in the profession long enough to have experienced a considerable decline in resources as well as a decline in public opinion regarding higher education and the professorate in general. Hence, given this socio-cultural climate, we should expect some discontent or disillusionment within academe. Furthermore, the social sciences appear to suffer more than other disciplines during these down turns. It appears when resources are scarce, the disciplines that can bring in more money through grants and other forms of external funding tend to get more of the institutional resources. However, there appears to be much more to this discontent than just the external social forces that are at work. In previous periods where higher education experienced a down turn in resources and public opinion, the faculty rallied together and came through a bit stronger and certainly more united (see Chapter One). Although an assessment of the state of the faculty profession is beyond the scope of this study, an assessment of the state of the faculty body in the social sciences here at the university under study seems appropriate. The faculty expressed a great deal of frustration and even appeared disillusioned at times. Much of this came out when I asked each respondent about the future of academic freedom and higher education. One respondent replied, “We are all just aching over concerns about where higher education is going and the kind of lethargy that has settled in...largely the result of the subtle forms of

the silencing and intimidation, and the comfort and security of personal autonomy that discourages people from looking behind the veil. So the loss for me of, if it ever existed, is of something called the community of scholars and that, frankly, terrifies me.”

It is painfully clear that a significant number of the faculty in this study have wilted as a result of working in this climate. A number of these faculty have either already left or are preparing to leave via early retirement or career moves. As for the rest, many of them have simply withdrawn for the most part from the academic community and are biding their time and resources—a very uncolleagial state of affairs. Whether this discontent actually undermines academic freedom is certainly subject to debate, but whether or not it exists is not. The question then becomes, what should be done about it.

On the one hand, some might argue that nothing should be done about it. Perhaps this discontent is the result of a faculty body that became spoiled during a period in time when accountability was low or absent altogether and when resources were plentiful. Now that the sociocultural climate has “corrected” itself, the faculty simply needs to adjust to the new environment.

On the other hand, looking at it from a somewhat Marxist point of view, perhaps a disenfranchised, or alienated, faculty body is easier to control and manipulate. From this perspective, the administration is likely to do little because it serves their interest to keep the contentment of the faculty relatively low—that is, if their goal is to minimize dissent, a disillusioned faculty may work to their advantage, as they attempt to steer their institution through these troubled waters.

A third approach would be to recognize that this situation exists and to also recognize that there is room for improvement, especially if the goal is to maximize the level of collegiality and collaboration as well as to improve the quality of research and teaching at this institution. From this approach, the administration should spend a significant amount of time and energy explaining the current framework within which higher education must operate. Communicate with the faculty the reasons behind adding so many adjuncts, or the necessity of grant monies as the state withdraws its financial support.

A second theme that emerged from the data was that these respondents did not share a consensus on academic freedom and tenure at VCU. It was my general assumption at the outset of this research that a fairly homogenous group of faculty would have a fairly homogenous perspective on these concepts. Furthermore, given that the sample was drawn from social scientists that have been in the profession for 10 or more years, I assumed they would have a deeper understanding of academic freedom. Suffice it to say, it appears as though I was wrong. Whether this is good or bad remains a matter of debate but the fact that their perceptions are limited and vary quite a bit is not.

Not only was I surprised that so few of the respondents identified any limitations or responsibilities associated with academic freedom, I was also surprised at how many were willing to entertain an academy without tenure. Given the small sample size, perhaps these variations are simply due to the personalities or persuasions of the individual faculty members. If so, there is little that can be done and perhaps there is little that should be done.

On the other hand, it may also have a lot to do with the socialization (or lack thereof) process of new faculty. It is widely believed that although new faculty are very well trained and educated in the content of their respective disciplines, they remain fairly ill-prepared to participate in academe as “professionals.” It is one thing to have an academy with a plurality of well thought out ideas only to rarely have them challenged, critiqued, or modified versus an academy with a plurality of ideas in spite of a great deal of exchange, intercourse and critique—it’s the difference between an aggregate of scholars and a community of scholars. In my opinion, based on the interview responses, VCU is more like the former than the later. Again, the solution, if any, involves attention and resources devoted to improving the socialization and preparation of new faculty, which would also go a long way toward improving the academic culture at VCU.

Implications for Academic Policy and Future Research

The results of this study highlight at least three areas where academic policy could be reviewed and possibly amended. One area where policy could have the widest and most dramatic impact is with the formal mentoring of new faculty members. Some of the potential benefits go beyond the scope of this study. However, a number are relevant to this study and are worth mentioning.

First, as was indicated by the data, the faculty in this study come from a wide variety of institutional backgrounds and experiences. Some have come from small, liberal arts colleges in rural areas while others came from huge, public universities in metropolitan areas. Some have taught “gifted” students in small classes while others are teaching “nontraditional” students in classes of 500 or more. Some have had the luxury

of being independent researchers while others were members of research teams, or departments that were commissioned with very specific research agendas. The point is that each college or university has its own institutional culture and unless new faculty are coming from very similar institutions, there needs to be an acclimation period or a socialization process that allows the new faculty member to become acquainted with his or her new environment and culture so as to maximize the potential for aligning one's personal and professional goals with that of the host institution. Otherwise, these faculty will likely become frustrated as they realize that their personal and professional goals are not being fully supported by the institution or department because they are not congruent with the institutional or departmental mission. Furthermore, as more and more faculty have this experience, the less likely the institutional and departmental goals will be realized, all of which makes for a very caustic and unhealthy environment that is not conducive to the exercise of, and deference to academic freedom.

I see this as an opportunity for additional research. Additional qualitative research should be done on the newest cohort of faculty in order to explore how they view academic freedom and tenure. To what extent has the senior cohort of faculty prepared the junior cohort for their professional roles and responsibilities? To what extent has this new cohort been socialized into the profession? Do they view their status as status quo or as a challenge and an opportunity?

A second area where academic policy can have a direct impact on the health of academic freedom on any given campus is on faculty hiring practices. Again, it is fairly clear from the data in this study that many faculty are gravely concerned about the ratio

of tenured faculty to nontenured faculty on campus. This is a trend that has become much more salient now that many senior tenured faculty are retiring and they are not being replaced with tenure-line appointments. Instead, the administration has chosen to hire more nontenure positions as a means of adjusting to the revenue shortfalls that have been shaping the landscape of higher education across the country. According to a recent report entitled *Tenure Status Report*, issued by Office of Institutional Research at VCU (2004), over the last 10 years (from 1993 to 2003) “the number of tenure track faculty declined by 130 and the number of faculty with collateral appointments grew by 252 [a 48 percent increase]” (p.2). Figure 1, taken directly from this report, illustrates this trend.

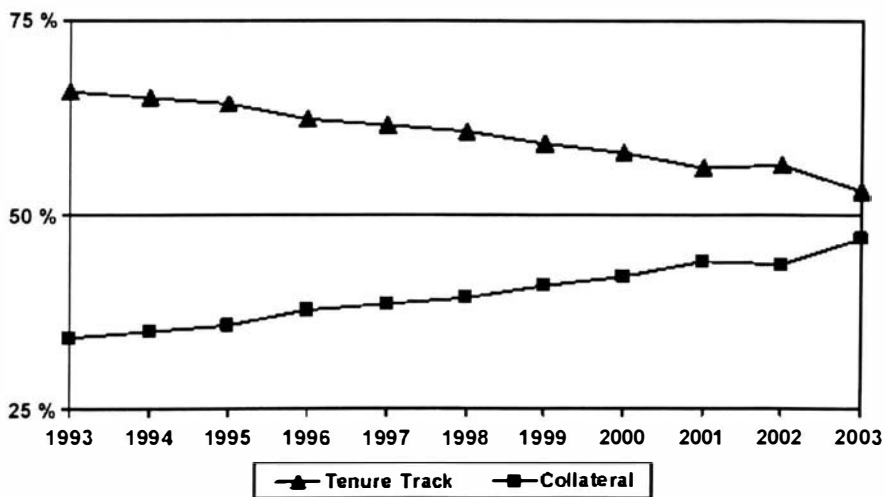


Figure 1. *VCU Hiring Patterns Over the Last 10 Years*

This trend is even more alarming if you consider the age distribution of VCU's faculty. According to Figure 2 (also taken directly from the *Tenure Status Report*), 379 tenured faculty are 55 years old or older and will probably retire within the next 10 to 15 years—this constitutes over half of the tenured faculty at VCU.

Age Distribution and Tenure Status

	Tenured		Tenure-eligible		Total		Collateral		Total	
	Num	Pct	Num	Pct	Num	Pct	Num	Pct	Num	Pct
<i>Fall 2003</i>										
25 - 34	2	1.4%	22	14.9%	24	16.2%	124	83.8%	148	8.0%
35 - 44	70	16.7%	82	19.5%	152	36.2%	268	63.8%	420	25.4%
45 - 54	273	46.4%	39	6.6%	312	53.1%	276	46.9%	588	35.5%
55 - 64	323	73.9%	11	2.5%	334	76.4%	103	23.6%	437	26.4%
65 and up	56	88.9%	1	1.6%	57	90.5%	6	9.5%	63	3.8%
Total	724	43.7%	155	9.4%	879	53.1%	777	46.9%	1,656	100.0%

Figure 2. Age Distribution and Tenure Status

If indeed the granting of tenure is a process of both recognizing and rewarding the scholarship of a faculty member as well as giving them license to continue to exercise and protect academic freedom, then it should be expected that there is a critical mass that is necessary to sustain a community of scholars. What that critical mass actually is would be beyond the scope of this research but suffice it to say that the more tenure appointments that exist, the more academic freedom is being exercised and protected. As these tenure lines ebb, so does the potential for academic freedom.

Again, I see this as an opportunity for additional research. One could explore the correlation between the ratio of tenure to nontenure appointments with the number of active or pending cases involving issues of academic freedom. Or a more indirect test

would be to look at the ratio of tenured faculty to collateral and the number of basic science versus applied science projects.

A third area where academic policy can affect academic freedom on campus is by continuously tuning the promotion and tenure review process as well as the post tenure review process in an effort to ensure that it reflects and promotes academic freedom and not politics or personalities. In addition, and even more important, regardless of how fair and appropriate the aforementioned faculty review policies and procedures are, their effectiveness is almost solely contingent on the extent to which the faculty are aware of them. The faculty review processes need to be as clear and as transparent as humanly possible. It is not enough to just post documents in public places regarding these policies and procedures and assume that faculty have read and understood them. Faculty need to be encultured in such a way that the expectations that are central to these policies and procedure become second nature. Again, this can be accomplished most effectively through the formal mentoring of new and junior faculty.

Here, additional research could examine faculty retention. It would be particularly interesting to interview tenured faculty who are leaving VCU. I know that two tenured faculty, who have already left since I interviewed them for this research, left largely because of their frustration with the administration and the general lack of academic culture. I am also aware of several senior tenured faculty members who are considering early retirement for similar reasons. A more systematic study of these “disenfranchised” faculty could reveal a number of factors that might be easily addressed—resulting in higher faculty retention and productivity.

In sum, faculty mentoring could improve all three problem areas. First, mentoring can play a central role in socializing new faculty to the academic culture and mission of their host institution thereby minimizing the likelihood that faculty will work on their own agendas in their own “silos.” The mentoring process would instead foster congruency between faculty and institutional goals and expectations as well as between faculty—fostering a more collegial academic community.

Secondly, given that university administrations are somewhat resigned to hiring nontenure track positions in an effort to stave off additional budgetary shortfalls, it becomes imperative that we retain the tenured faculty that we currently have. However, through the course of the interviews, I became aware of two tenured professors who were leaving VCU because of what they referred to as an unhealthy or insipid academic culture. Furthermore, it is equally imperative that the tenured faculty that we do have are well aware of their roles and responsibilities associated with exercising, protecting, and extending academic freedom across the university.

Thirdly, given the somewhat precarious state of tenure at many public institutions (i. e., the shrinking ratio of tenure to nontenure appointments), it is especially important to ensure that the university is making its tenure decisions on the basis of merit and not on the basis of who knew or did not know the rules, both formal and informal, beforehand. Formal and informal mentoring can assure that faculty understand their rights and responsibilities. Armed with this information, faculty can make informed decisions regarding their conduct both in the classroom and in their own scholarly work.

On a final note, if the institution of higher education is to continue to serve a liberal progressive role in America, academic freedom needs to not only survive but flourish. In order to do so, the very people who have been commissioned to champion it, must do a much better job of exercising it, defending it, and promoting it, both on and off campus. In the words of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), “freedom cannot defend itself.” Mentoring is nothing more than being a good citizen of a valued community. For universities to survive and recruit the “best of the best” this study has shown they need to take this task much more seriously than they have in recent decades.

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APPENDIX A

AAUP STATEMENTS ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Appendix A

1940 Statement of Principles on

Academic Freedom and Tenure

With 1970 Interpretive Comments

In 1940, following a series of joint conferences begun in 1934, representatives of the American Association of University Professors and of the Association of American Colleges (now the Association of American Colleges and Universities) agreed upon a restatement of principles set forth in the 1925 Conference Statement on Academic Freedom and Tenure. This restatement is known to the profession as the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure. The 1940 Statement is printed below, followed by Interpretive Comments as developed by representatives of the American Association of University Professors and the Association of American Colleges in 1969. The governing bodies of the two associations, meeting respectively in November 1989 and January 1990, adopted several changes in language in order to remove gender-specific references from the original text.

The purpose of this statement is to promote public understanding and support of academic freedom and tenure and agreement upon procedures to ensure them in colleges and universities. Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual teacher¹ or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition.

Academic freedom is essential to these purposes and applies to both teaching and research. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Academic freedom in its teaching aspect is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the teacher in teaching and of the student to freedom in learning. It carries with it duties, correlative with rights. [1]²

Tenure is a means to certain ends; specifically: (1) freedom of teaching and research and of extramural activities, and (2) a sufficient degree of economic security to make the profession attractive to men and women of ability. Freedom and economic security, hence, tenure, are indispensable to the success of an institution in fulfilling its obligations to its students and to society.

¹ The word "teacher" as used in this document is understood to include the investigator who is attached to an academic institution without teaching duties.

² Bold-face numbers in brackets refer to Interpretive Comments which follow.

Academic Freedom

(a) Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publications of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties; but research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution.

(b) Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject. [2] Limitations of academic freedom because of religious or other aims of the institution should be clearly stated in writing at the time of the appointment. [3]

(c) College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution. [4]

Academic Tenure

After the expiration of a probationary period, teachers or investigators should have permanent or continuous tenure, and their service should be terminated only for adequate cause, except in the case of retirement for age, or under extraordinary circumstances because of financial exigencies.

In the interpretation of this principle it is understood that the following represents acceptable academic practice:

1. The precise terms and conditions of every appointment should be stated in writing and be in the possession of both institution and teacher before the appointment is consummated.
2. Beginning with appointment to the rank of full-time instructor or higher rank, [5] the probationary period should not exceed seven years, including within this period full-time service in all institutions of higher education; but subject to the proviso that when, after a term of probationary service of more than three years in one or more institutions, a teacher is called to another institution, it may be agreed in writing that the new appointment is for a probationary period of not more than four years, even though thereby the person's total probationary period in the academic profession is extended beyond the normal maximum of seven years. [6] Notice should be given at least one year prior to the expiration after the expiration of that period. [7]

3. During the probationary period a teacher should have the academic freedom that all other members of the faculty have. [8]
4. Termination for cause of a continuous appointment, or the dismissal for cause of a teacher previous to the expiration of a term appointment, should, if possible, be considered by both a faculty committee and the governing board of the institution. In all cases where the facts are in dispute, the accused teacher should be informed before the hearing in writing of the charges and should have the opportunity to be heard in his or her own defense by all bodies that pass judgment upon the case. The teacher should be permitted to be accompanied by an advisor of his or her own choosing who may act as counsel. There should be a full stenographic record of the hearing available to the parties concerned. In the hearing of charges of incompetence the testimony should include that of teachers and other scholars, either from the teacher's own or from other institutions. Teachers on continuous appointment who are dismissed for reasons not involving moral turpitude should receive their salaries for at least a year from the date of notification of dismissal whether or not they are continued in their duties at the institution. [9]
5. Termination of a continuous appointment because of financial exigency should be demonstrably *bona fide*.

1940 Interpretations

At the conference of representatives of the American Association of University Professors and of the Association of American Colleges on November 7-8, 1940, the following interpretations of the 1940 *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* were agreed upon:

1. That its operation should not be retroactive.
2. That all tenure claims of teachers appointed prior to the endorsement should be determined in accordance with the principles set forth in the 1925 *Conference Statement on Academic Freedom and Tenure*.
3. If the administration of a college or university feels that a teacher has not observed the admonitions of paragraph (c) of the section on Academic Freedom and believes that the extramural utterances of the teacher have been such as to raise grave doubts concerning the teacher's fitness for his or her position, it may proceed to file charges under paragraph (a) (4) of the section on Academic Tenure. In pressing such charges the administration should remember that teachers are citizens and should be accorded the freedom of citizens. In such cases the administration must assume full responsibility, and the American Association of University Professors and the Association of American Colleges are free to make an investigation.

1970 Interpretive Comments

Following extensive discussions on the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure with leading educational associations and with individual faculty members and administrators, a joint committee of the AAUP and the Association of American Colleges met during 1969 to reevaluate this key policy statement. On the basis of the comments received, and the discussions that ensued, the joint committee felt the preferable approach was to formulate interpretations of the Statement for over thirty years and of adapting it to current needs.

The committee submitted to the two associations for their consideration the following "Interpretive Comments." These interpretations were adopted by the Council of the American Association of University Professors in April 1970 and endorsed by the Fifty-sixth Annual Meeting as Association policy.

In thirty years since their promulgation, the principles of the 1940 *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* have undergone a substantial amount of refinement. This has evolved through a variety of processes, including customary acceptance, understandings mutually arrived at between institutions and professors or their representatives, investigations and reports by the American Association of University Professors, and formulations of statements by that association either alone or in conjunction with the Association of American Colleges. These comments represent the attempt of the two associations, as the original sponsors of the 1940 *Statement*, to formulate the most important of these refinements. Their incorporation here as Interpretive Comments is based upon the premise that the 1940 *Statement* is not a static code but a fundamental document designed to set a framework of norms to guide adaptations to changing times and circumstances.

Also, there have been relevant developments in the law itself reflecting a growing insistence by the courts on due process within academic community which parallels the essential concepts of the 1940 *Statements*; particularly relevant is the identification by the Supreme Court of academic freedom as a right protected by the First Amendment. As the Supreme Court said in *Keyishian v. Board of Regents* 385 U.S. 589 (1967), "Our Nation is deeply committed to safeguarding academic freedom, which is of transcendent value to all of us and not merely to the teachers concerned. That freedom is therefore a special concern of the First Amendment, which does not tolerate laws that cast a pall of orthodoxy over the classroom."

The numbers refer to the designated portion of the 1940 *Statement* on which interpretive comment is made.

1. The Association of American Colleges and the American Association of University Professors have long recognized that membership in the academic profession carries with it special responsibilities. Both associations either separately or jointly have consistently affirmed these responsibilities in major policy statements, providing guidance to professors in their utterances as citizens, in the exercise of their responsibilities to the institution and to students, and their conduct when resigning from their institution or when undertaking government-

- sponsored research. Of particular relevance is the *Statement on Professional Ethics*, adopted in 1966 as Association policy. (A revision, adopted in 1987, was published in *Academe: Bulletin of the AAUP* 73 [July-August 1987]: 49.)
2. The intent of this statement is not to discourage what is “controversial.” Controversy is at the heart of the free academic inquiry which the entire statement is designed to foster. The passage serves to underscore the need for teachers to avoid persistently intruding material which has no relation to their subject.
 3. Most church-related institutions no longer need to desire the departure from the principle of academic freedom implied in the 1940 *Statement*, and we do not now endorse such a departure.
 4. This paragraph is the subject of an interpretation adopted by the sponsors of the 1940 *Statement* immediately following the endorsement which reads as follows:

If the administration of a college or university feels that a teacher has not observed the admonitions of paragraph (c) of the section on Academic Freedom and believes that the extramural utterances of the teacher have been such as to raise grave doubts concerning the teacher’s fitness for his or her position, it may proceed to file charges under paragraph (a) (4) of the section on Academic Tenure. In pressing such charges the administration should remember that teachers are citizens and should be accorded the freedom of citizens. In such cases the administration must assume full responsibility, and the American Association of University Professors and the Association Colleges are free to make an investigation.

Paragraph (c) of the section on Academic Freedom in the 1940 *Statement* should also be interpreted in keeping with the 1964 “Committee A Statement on Extramural Utterances” (*AAUP Bulletin* 51 [1965]: 29), which states *inter alia*: “The controlling principle is that a faculty member’s expression of opinion as a citizen cannot constitute grounds for dismissal unless it clearly demonstrates the faculty member’s unfitness for his or her position. Extramural utterances rarely bear upon the faculty member’s fitness for the position. Moreover, a final decision should take into account the faculty member’s entire record as a teacher and scholar.”

Paragraph V of the *Statement on Professional Ethics* also deals with the nature of the “special obligations” of the teacher. The paragraph reads as follows:

As members of their community, professors have the rights and obligations of other citizens. Professors measure the urgency of other obligations in the light of their responsibilities to their subject, to their students, to their profession, and to their institution. When they speak or act as private persons they avoid creating the impression of speaking or acting for their college or university. As citizens engaged in a profession that depends upon freedom for its health and integrity, professors have particular obligation to promote conditions of free inquiry and to further public understanding of academic freedom.

Both the protection of academic freedom and the requirements of academic responsibility apply not only to the full-time probationary and the tenured teacher, but also to all others, such as part-time faculty and teaching assistants, who exercise teaching responsibilities.

5. The concept of “rank of full-time instructor or a higher rank” is intended to include any person who teaches a full-time load regardless of the teacher’s specific title.³

6. In calling for an agreement “in writing” on the amount of credit given for a faculty member’s prior service at other institutions, the *Statement* furthers the general policy of full understanding by the professor of the terms and conditions of the appointment. It does not necessarily follow that a professor’s tenure rights have been violated because of the absence of a written agreement on this matter. Nonetheless, especially because of the variation in permissible institutional practices, a written understanding concerning these matters at the time of appointment is particularly appropriate and advantageous to both the individual and the institution.⁴

7. The effect of this subparagraph is that a decision on tenure, favorable or unfavorable, must be made at least twelve months prior to the completion of the probationary period. If the decision is negative, the appointment for the following year becomes a terminal one. If the decision is affirmative, the provisions in the 1940 *Statement* with respect to the termination of service of apply from the date when the favorable decision is made.

The general principles of notice contained in this paragraph is developed with greater specificity in the *Standards for Notice of Nonreappointment*, endorsed by the Fiftieth Annual Meeting of the American Association of University Professors (1964). These standards are:

Notice nonreappointment, or of intention not to recommend reappointment to the governing board, should be given in writing in accordance with the following standards:

- (1) *Not later than March 1 of the first academic year of service*, if the appointment expires at the end of that year; or, if a one-year appointment terminates during an academic year, at least three months in advance of its termination.
- (2) *Not later than December 15 of the second academic year of service*, if the appointment expires at the end of that year; or, if an initial two-year appointment terminates during an academic year, at least six months in advance of its termination.
- (3) At least twelve months before the expiration of an appointment after two or more years in the institution.

³ For a discussion of this question, see the “Report of the Special Committee on Academic Personnel Ineligible for Tenure,” *AAUP Bulletin* 52 (1996): 280-82.

⁴ For a more detailed statement on this question, see “On Crediting Prior Service Elsewhere as Part of the Probationary Period,” *AAUP Bulletin* 64 (1978): 274-75.

Other obligations, both of institutions and of individuals, are described in the *Statement on Recruitment and Resignation of Faculty Members*, as endorsed by the Association of American Colleges and the American Association of University Professors in 1961.

8. The freedom of probationary teachers is enhanced by the establishment of a regular procedure for the periodic evaluation and assessment of the teacher's academic performance during probationary status. Provision should be made for regularized procedures for the consideration of complaints by probationary teachers that their academic freedom has been violated. One suggested procedure to serve these purposes is contained in the *Recommended Institutional Regulations on Academic Freedom and Tenure*, prepared by the American Association of University Professors.

9. A further specification of the academic due process to which the teacher is entitled under this paragraph is contained in the *Statement on Procedural Standards in Faculty Dismissal Proceedings*, jointly approved by the American Association of University Professors and the Association of American Colleges in 1958. This interpretive document deals with the issue of suspension, about which the 1940 *Statement* is silent.

The 1958 *Statement* provides: "Suspension of the faculty member during the proceedings is justified only if immediate harm to the faculty member or others is threatened by the faculty member's continuance. Unless legal considerations forbid, any such suspension should be with pay." A suspension which is not followed by either reinstatement or the opportunity for a hearing is in effect a summary dismissal in violation of academic due process.

The concept of "moral turpitude" identifies the exceptional case in which the professor may be denied a year's teaching or pay in whole or in part. The statement applies to that kind of behavior which goes beyond simply warranting discharge and is so utterly blameworthy as to make it inappropriate to require the offering of a year's teaching or pay. The standard is not that the moral sensibilities of persons in the particular community have been affronted. The standard is behavior that would evoke condemnation by the academic community generally.

On Freedom of Expression And Campus Speech Codes

The statements which follows was approved by the Association's Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure in June 1992 and adopted by the Association's Council in November 1994

Freedom of thought and expression is essential to any institution of higher learning. Universities and colleges exist not only to transmit knowledge. Equally, they interpret, explore, and expand that knowledge by testing the old and proposing the new.

This mission guides learning outside the classroom quite as much as in class, and often inspires vigorous debate on those social, economic, and political issues that arouse the strongest passions. In the process, views will be expressed that may seem to many wrong, distasteful, or offensive. Such is the nature of freedom to sift and winnow ideas.

On a campus that is free and open, no idea can be banned or forbidden. No viewpoint or message may be deemed so hateful or disturbing that it may not be expressed.

Universities and colleges are also communities, often of a residential character. Most campuses have recently sought to become more diverse, and more reflective of the larger community, by attracting students, faculty, and staff from groups that were historically excluded or underrepresented. Such gains as they have made are recent, modest, and tenuous. The campus climate can profoundly affect an institution's continued diversity. Hostility or intolerance to persons who differ from the majority (especially if seemingly condoned by the institution) may undermine the confidence of new members of the community. Civility is always fragile and can easily be destroyed.

In response to verbal assaults and use of hateful language some campuses have felt it necessary to forbid the expression of racist, sexist, homophobic or ethnically demeaning speech, along with conduct or behavior that harasses. Several reasons are offered in support of banning such expressions. Individuals and groups that have been victims of such expression feel an understandable outrage. They claim that the academic progress of minority and majority alike may suffer if fears, tensions, and conflicts spawned by slurs and insults create an environment inimical to learning.

There arguments, grounded in the need to foster an atmosphere respectful of and welcome to all persons, strike a deeply responsive chord in the academy. But, while we can acknowledge both the weight of these concerns and the thoughtfulness of those persuaded of the need for regulation, rules that ban or punish speech based upon its content cannot be justified. An institution of higher learning fails to fulfill its mission if it asserts the power to proscribe ideas-and racial or ethnic slurs, sexist epithets, or homophobic insults almost always express ideas, however repugnant.

Indeed, by proscribing any ideas, a university sets an example that profoundly disserves its academic mission.

Some may seek to defend a distinction between the regulation of the content of speech and the regulation of the manner (or style) of speech. We find this distinction untenable in practice because offensive style or opprobrious phrases may in fact have been chosen precisely for their expressive power. As the United States Supreme Court has said in the course of rejecting criminal sanctions for offensive words:

[W]ords are often chosen as much for the emotive as their cognitive force. We cannot sanction the view that the Constitution, while solicitous of the cognitive content of the individual speech, has little or no regard for that emotive function which, practically speaking, may often be the more important element of the overall message sought to be communicated.

The line between substance and style is thus too uncertain to sustain the pressure that will inevitably be brought to bear upon disciplinary rules that attempt to regulate speech.

Proponents of speech codes sometimes reply that the value of emotive language of this type is of such a low order that, on balance, suppression is justified by the harm suffered by those who are directly affected, and by the general damage done to the learning environment. Yet a college or university sets a perilous course if it seeks to differentiate between high-value and low-value speech, or to choose which groups are to be protected by curbing the speech of others. A speech code unavoidably implies an institutional competence to distinguish permissible expression of hateful thought from what is proscribed as thoughtless hate.

Institutions would also have to justify shielding some, but not other, targets of offensive language—proscribing uncomplimentary references to sexual but not to political preference, to religious but not to philosophical creed, or perhaps even to some but not to other religious affiliations. Starting down this path creates an even greater risk that groups not originally protected may later demand similar solicitude—demands the institution that began the process of banning some speech is ill equipped to resist.

Distinctions of this type are neither practicable nor principled; their very fragility underscores why institutions devoted to freedom of thought and expression ought not adopt an institutionalized coercion of silence.

Moreover, banning speech often avoids consideration of means more compatible with the mission of an academic institution by which to deal with incivility, intolerance, offensive speech, and harassing behavior:

- (1) Institutions should adopt and invoke a range of measures that penalize conduct and behavior, rather than speech—such as rules against defacing property, physical intimidation or harassment, or disruption of campus activities. All members of the campus community should be made aware of

such rules, and administrators should be ready to use them in preference to speech-directed sanctions.

- (2) Colleges and universities should stress the means they use best-to educate-including the development of courses and other curricular and co-curricular experiences designed to increase student understanding and to deter offensive or intolerant speech or conduct. These institutions should, of course, be free (indeed encouraged) to condemn manifestations of intolerance and discrimination, whether physical or verbal.
- (3) The governing board and the administration have a special duty not only to set an outstanding example of tolerance, but also to challenge boldly and condemn immediately serious breaches of civility.
- (4) Members of the faculty, too, have a major role; their voices may be critical in condemning intolerance, and their actions may set examples for understanding, making clear to their students that civility and tolerance are hallmarks of educated men and women.
- (5) Student personnel administrators have in some ways the most demanding role of all, for hate speech occurs most often in dormitories, locker-rooms, cafeterias, and student centers. Persons who guide this part of campus life should set high standards of their own for tolerance and should make unmistakably clear the harm that uncivil or intolerant speech inflicts.

To some persons who support speech codes, measures like these-relying as they do on suasion rather than sanctions-may seem inadequate. But freedom of expression requires toleration of "ideas we hate," as Justice Holmes put it. The underlying principle does not change because the demand is to silence a hateful speaker, or because it comes from within the academy. Free speech is not simply an aspect of the educational enterprise to be weighed against other desirable ends. It is the very precondition of the academic enterprise itself.

Statement on Professional Ethics

The statement which follows, a revision of a statement originally adopted in 1966, was approved by the Association's Committee B on Professional Ethics, adopted by the Association's Council in June 1987, and endorsed by the Seventy-third Annual Meeting.

Introduction

From its inception, the American Association of University Professors has recognized that membership in the academic profession carries with it special responsibilities. The Association has consistently affirmed these responsibilities in major policy statements, providing guidance to professors in such matters as their utterances as citizens, the exercise of their responsibilities to student and colleagues, and their conduct when resigning from an institution or when undertaking sponsored research. The *Statement on Professional Ethics* that follows sets forth those general standards that serve as a reminder of the variety of responsibilities assumed by all members of the profession.

In the enforcement of ethical standards, the academic profession differs from those of law and medicine, whose associations act to ensure the integrity of members engaged in private practice. In the academic profession the individual institution of higher learning provides this assurance and so should normally handle questions concerning property of conduct within its own framework by reference to a faculty group. The Association supports such local action and stands ready, through the general secretary and Committee B, to counsel with members of the academic community concerning questions of professional ethics and to inquire into complaints when local consideration is impossible or inappropriate. If the alleged offense is deemed sufficiently serious to raise the possibility of adverse action, the procedures should be in accordance with the 1940 *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure*, the 1958 *Statement on Procedural Standards in Faculty Dismissed Proceedings*, or the applicable provisions of the Association's *Recommended Institutional Regulations on Academic Freedom and Tenure*.

The Statement

I. Professors guided by a deep conviction of the worth and dignity of the advancement of knowledge, recognize the special responsibilities placed upon them. Their primary responsibility to their subject is to seek and to state the truth as they see it. To this end professors devote their energies to developing and improving their scholarly competence. They accept the obligation to exercise critical self-discipline

and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge. They practice intellectual honesty. Although professors may follow subsidiary interests, these interests must never seriously hamper or compromise their freedom of inquiry.

II. As teachers, professors encourage the free pursuit of learning in their students. They hold before them the best scholarly and ethical standards of their discipline. Professors demonstrate respect for students as individuals and adhere to their proper roles as intellectual guides and counselors. Professors make every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct and to ensure that their evaluations of students reflect each student's true merit. They respect the confidential nature of the relationship between professor and student. They avoid any exploitation, harassment, or discriminatory treatment of students. They acknowledge significant academic or scholarly assistance from them. They protect their academic freedom.

III. As colleagues, professors have obligations that derive from common membership in the community of scholars. Professors do not discriminate against or harass colleagues. They respect and defend the free inquiry of associates or harass colleagues. They respect and defend the free inquiry of associates. In the exchange of criticism and ideas professors show due respect for the opinions of others. Professors accept their share of faculty responsibilities for the governance of their institution.

IV. As members of an academic institution, professors seek above all to be effective teachers and scholars. Although professors observe the stated regulations of the institution, provided the regulations do not contravene academic freedom, they maintain their right to criticize and seek revision. Professors give due regard to their paramount responsibilities within their institution in determining the amount and character of work done outside it. When considering the interruption or termination of their service, professors recognize the effect of their decision upon the program of the institution and give due notice of their intentions.

V. As members of their community, professors have the rights and obligations of other citizens. Professors measure the urgency of these obligations in the light of their responsibilities to their subject, to their students, to their profession, and to their institution. When they speak or act as private persons they avoid creating the impression of speaking or acting for their college or university. As citizens engaged in a profession that depends upon freedom for its health and integrity, professors have a particular obligation to promote conditions of free inquiry and to further public understanding of academic freedom.

A Statement of the Association's Council: Freedom and Responsibility

The statement which follows was adopted by the Council of the American Association of University Professors in October 1970. In April 1990, the Council adopted several changes in language that had been approved by the Association's Committee B on Professional Ethics in order to remove gender-specific references from the original text.

For more than half a century the American Association of University Professors has acted upon two principles: that colleges and universities serve the common good through learning, teaching, research, and scholarship; and that the fulfillment of this function necessarily rests upon the preservation of the intellectual freedoms of teaching, expression, research, and debate. All components of the academic community have a responsibility to exemplify and support these freedoms in the interests of reasoned inquiry.

The 1940 *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure* asserts the primacy of this responsibility. The *Statement on Professional Ethics* underscores its pertinency to individual faculty members and calls attention to their responsibility, by their own actions, to uphold their colleagues' and their students' freedom. The *Joint Statement on Rights and Freedom of Students* emphasizes the shared responsibility of all members of the academic community for the preservation of these freedoms.

Continuing attacks on the integrity of our universities and on the concept of academic freedom itself come from many quarters. These attacks, marked by tactics of intimidation and harassment and by political interference with the autonomy of colleges and universities, provoke harsh responses and counter-responses. Especially in a repressive atmosphere, the faculty's responsibility to defend its freedoms cannot be separated from its responsibility to uphold those freedoms by its own actions.

I

Membership in the academic community imposes on students, faculty members, administrators, and trustees an obligation to respect the dignity of others, to acknowledge their right to express differing opinions, and to foster and defend intellectual honesty; freedom of inquiry and instruction, and free expression on and off campus. The expression of dissent and the attempt to produce change, therefore, may not be carried out in ways which injure individuals or damage institutional facilities or disrupt the classes of one's teachers or colleagues. Speakers on campus must not only be protected from violence, but also be given an opportunity to be

heard. Those who seek to call attention to grievances must not do so in ways that significantly impede the functions of the institution.

Students are entitled to an atmosphere conducive to learning and to even-handed treatment in all aspects of the teacher-student relationship. Faculty members may not refuse to enroll or teach students on grounds of their beliefs or the possible uses to which they may the knowledge to be gained in a course. Students should not be forced by authority inherent in the instructional role to make particular personal choices as to political action or their own social behavior. Evaluation of students and the award of credit must be based on academic performance professionally judged and not on matters irrelevant to that performance, whether personality, race, religion, degree of political activism, or personal beliefs.

It is the mastery teachers have of their subjects and their own scholarship that entitles them to their classrooms and to freedom in the presentation of their subjects. Thus, it is improper for an instructor persistently to intrude material that has no relation to the subject, or to fail to present the subject matter of the course as announced to the students and as approved by the faculty in their collective responsibility for the curriculum.

Because academic freedom has traditionally included the instructor's full freedom as a citizen, most faculty members face no insoluble conflicts between the claims of politics, social action, and conscience, on the other hand, and the claims and expectations of their students, colleagues, and institutions, on the other hand. If such conflicts become acute, and attention to obligations as a citizen and moral agent precludes an instructor from fulfilling substantial academic obligations, the instructor cannot escape the responsibility of that choice, but should either request a leave of absence or resign his or her academic position.

II

The Association's concern for sound principles and procedures in the imposition of discipline is reflected in the 1940 *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure*, the 1958 *Statement on Procedural Standards in Faculty Dismissal Proceedings*, the *Recommended Institutional Regulations on Academic Freedom and Tenure*, and the many investigations conducted by the Association into disciplinary actions by colleges and universities.

The question arises whether these customary procedures are sufficient in the current context. We believe that by and large they serve their purposes well, but that considerations should be given to supplementing them in several respects.

First, plans for ensuring compliance with academic norms should be enlarged to emphasize preventive as well as disciplinary action. Toward this end the faculty should take the initiative, working with the administration and other components of the institution, to develop and maintain an atmosphere of freedom, commitment to academic inquiry, and respect for the academic rights of others. The faculty should also join with other members of the academic community in the development of procedures to be used in the event of serious disruption, or the threat of disruption,

and should ensure its consultation in major decisions, particularly those related to the calling of external security forces to the campus.

Second, systematic attention should be given to questions related to sanctions other than dismissal, such as warnings and reprimands, in order to provide a more versatile body of academic sanctions.

Third, there is need for the faculty to assume a more positive role as guardian of academic values against unjustified assaults from its own members. The traditional faculty function in disciplinary proceedings has been to ensure academic due process and meaningful faculty participation in the imposition of discipline by the administration. While this function should be maintained, faculties should recognize their stake in promoting adherence to norms essential to the academic enterprise.

Rules designed to meet these needs for faculty self-regulation and flexibility of sanctions should be adopted on each campus in response to local circumstances and to continued experimentation. In all sanctioning efforts, however, it is vital that proceedings be conducted with fairness to the individual, that faculty judgments play a crucial role, and that adverse judgments be founded on demonstrated violations of appropriate norms. The Association will encourage and assist local faculty groups seeking to articulate the substantive principles here outlined or to make improvements in their disciplinary machinery to meet the needs here described. The Association will also consult and work with any responsible group, within or outside the academic community, that seeks to promote understanding of and adherence to basic norms of professional responsibility so long as such efforts are consistent with principles of academic freedom.

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW GUIDE

Appendix B

**INTERVIEW GUIDE:
FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

(Date)

(Time)

PART ONE

- Introduce Self and the Research Project
- Thank Respondent for Participating
- Ask Permission to Tape

**PART TWO
RESPONDENT'S BACKGROUND**

1. What type of institution did you do your undergraduate and graduate work?
 - Was it a private or public institution?
 - Was it a research oriented university or a liberal arts college?
 - How big (i.e. approximate student enrollment)?
2. When did you decide on an academic career?
3. When did you choose an academic career?
4. What was your first academic position?
5. At what rank did you enter the profession?

6. Was there any orientation (formal or informal) for new faculty when you began in academe? Did senior faculty provide mentoring?

PART THREE ACADEMIC FREEDOM PERCEPTIONS

7. Were faculty freedoms to teach and conduct research an influence in your choice of an academic career?
8. Have these issues been significant issues in any way in your career?
9. How would you define academic freedom?
10. Can you give me any examples of what you would consider an academic freedom issue?
11. Do you think that faculty professional autonomy and academic freedom are the same thing?
12. Do you think that faculty at VCU expect too much freedom in their work environment?
13. Have you experienced academic freedom restrictions, threats or violations at VCU?
14. Have you known of academic freedom violations at VCU?
15. Do you think that academic freedom is a significant feature of an academic career?
16. Do you believe that your engineering/liberal arts colleagues value academic freedom?

17. Should faculty members be allowed to choose course content and textbooks for their courses?
18. How do you believe the VCU administration would react to a faculty member who took a controversial position?
19. Do you think VCU would be more or less supportive than other institutions?
20. Do you believe your department would protect or support a colleague who took a controversial opinion?
21. Do you believe it should?
22. Do you perceive any conflicts between your academic freedom values and those of your department?
23. Do you believe academic freedom is an issue for younger/older faculty?
24. Do you believe academic freedom is a more or less significant issue for faculty in other academic ranks?
25. Have you experienced any indirect or direct pressure on your choice of research areas at VCU?
26. Some academics are concerned about the growing link between academia and industry. Do you have an opinion concerning this relationship?
27. Do you feel free to teach or pursue any research interest you wish?
28. As a faculty member, what function(s) does tenure serve?
29. Should tenure be eliminated? Replaced with something else?
30. Do you see any threats to academic freedom existing in contemporary American society? How about here at VCU?

31. Does your department have a formal policy on academic freedom?
32. Does VCU?
33. Do you feel that sufficient protections exist for academic freedom?
34. How do you see academic freedom fitting into the future of American higher education?

PART FOUR
CLOSING

35. Now that you have talked about academic freedom for awhile, would your definition still be the same?
36. What is your definition, again?

- Express Gratitude for the Time and Information
- Thank the Respondent for an Interesting Discussion

(Interviewer)

(Date)

APPENDIX C
RECRUITMENT LETTER

Appendix C

Recruitment Letter

Dear Dr. _____,

I am a graduate student in the Center for Public Policy at VCU and I am currently working on my dissertation. I am interested in examining how faculty members define academic freedom here at VCU. In my review of the literature I have found that faculty definitions vary by institution, discipline, faculty rank, and longevity of appointment. However, where the research in this area has primarily compared faculty definitions *between* these categorical distinctions, I intend to compare faculty definitions *within* a cross-section of each of these categories. I am particularly interested in whether faculty who belong to a single institution, discipline, rank, and cohort will share a common understanding of the principle of academic freedom and if so, to what formal or informal experience might we attribute to this shared conception.

Another significant finding that I have gleaned from the literature is that tenured faculty members who have worked at public universities for more than ten years and who belong to the social sciences should have the most experience with issues pertaining to academic freedom. Therefore, my sampling frame consists of faculty members who belong to this cross-section of faculty. Upon consulting with the Dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences, I was reassured that there were no ethical problems associated with acquiring a list of faculty members who meet these criteria given that faculty rank, appointment, and length of appointment is all public knowledge.

Therefore, I would like for you to consider participating in this research. Although I anticipate the average interview to last approximately 45 minutes, your interest and/or willingness to elaborate on specific issues could extend that time period. The questions pertain to how you define academic freedom. What purpose(s) do you think it serves? How did you learn about academic freedom? What kinds of experiences have shaped your definition? What do you consider to be the primary threats to academic freedom? What do you think promotes or protects academic freedom?

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your participation will be completely confidential. Because I am examining a homogenous population, there will be no need to make distinctions between respondents in the data analysis that could be used for identification. With your permission, the interview will be recorded in order to ensure that I have an accurate reflection of your responses. Once the data is transcribed and entered into a software program, all identifiers will be eliminated and the original transcripts destroyed. The information you provide will help improve the academic culture of public universities and could be used to establish more effective orientation programs for new faculty.

I have time available on everyday from Dec. 1st through the 19th. I will follow-up with a phone call in a couple of days to see if you are available for an interview during this time frame.

Sincerely,

APPENDIX D

RESEARCH SUBJECT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

Appendix D

RESEARCH SUBJECT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM**TITLE: How do Faculty at a Metropolitan University Define Academic Freedom?****VCU IRB NO.: 3411****Purpose of the Study:**

The purpose of this research study is to examine how core faculty in the College of Humanities and Sciences at Virginia Commonwealth University define academic freedom.

You are being asked to participate in this study because you have had a faculty appointment in the college for at least ten years.

Description of the Study and Your Involvement:

If you decide to be in this research study, you will be asked to sign this consent form after you have had all your questions answered and understand what will happen to you.

In this study you will be asked to participate in an interview that should last no more than 90 minutes. The majority of the questions center around your knowledge of academic freedom and tenure. I am interested in how you define each; what purpose does each serve; what kinds of experiences have you had with each; and under what circumstances did you become aware of each. With your permission, the interview will be tape-recorded. Once the tape is transcribed, all identifiers will be removed to prevent anyone from linking you with your responses. All tape recordings will then be destroyed. I will also be recording my impressions of the tenor of the interview. These impressions will be based on observations made both during and immediately after the interview.

Risks and Discomforts:

Some of the questions may cause you to recall occasions when your academic freedom was violated. Other questions may cause you to recall uncomfortable situations that you experienced during your promotion and tenure process. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to answer any question with which you are uncomfortable.

Benefits:

You may not get any direct benefits from this study, however, the information you provide may help the university design better programs for faculty development including promotion and tenure. Furthermore, as a result of the interview process, you may find that you become more informed about the nature and role of academic freedom and tenure at a Metropolitan University in the 21st century.

Costs:

There are no costs for participating in this study other than the time you will spend in the interview.

Alternatives:

You have the option of not participating in this study. You may also withdraw from the study at any point in time.

Confidentiality:

We will not tell anyone the answers you give us; however, information from the study and the consent form signed by you may be looked at or copied for research or legal purposes by Virginia Commonwealth University. All of the data will be separated from the consent form and will be stored in a locked filing cabinet.

What we find from this study may be presented at meetings or published in papers, but your name will not ever be used in these presentations or papers.

If you agree to have the interview audio taped, no names will be recorded. Furthermore, I will not use any of the data in any manner that would result in the identification of the respondent. After the tapes are transcribed, the tapes will be destroyed.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal

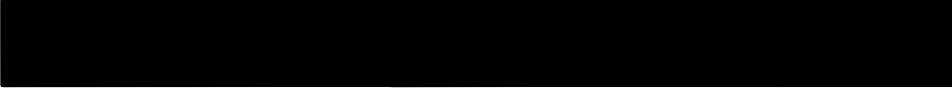
You do not have to participate in this study. If you choose to participate you may stop at any time without any penalty. You may also choose not to answer particular questions that are asked in the study.

Questions

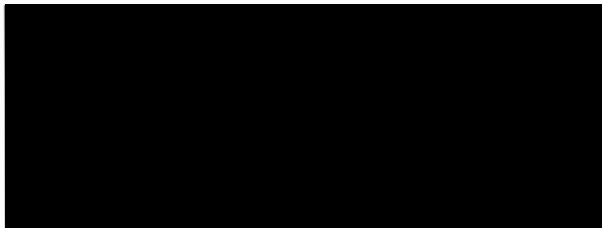
In the future, you may have questions about your participation in this study. If you have any questions, contact:



Or,



If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact:



Consent:

I have been given the chance to read this consent form. I understand the information about this study. Questions I wanted to ask about the study have been answered. My signature says that I am willing to participate in this study.

Participant name printed

Participant signature

Date

Witness Signature (Required)

Date

Signature of person conducting informed consent

Date

Investigator signature (if different from above)

Date