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## Academic Freedom

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5 December 2018

WHEREAS academic freedom is essential to the University of Mississippi's mission to "create, evaluate, share, and apply knowledge in a free, open, and inclusive environment of intellectual inquiry;" and

WHEREAS the University of Mississippi endorses the American Association of University Professors' 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, which states "the common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition" and that academic freedom is "fundamental to the advancement of truth;" and

WHEREAS the Chancellor, who, as leader of the University, is presumed to speak for the University as a whole and commands the attention of a wide audience that is further expanded by the extensive reach of the internet and social media; and

WHEREAS the Chancellor published an editorial on October 11, 2018, questioning the methods employed by members of the University faculty whose credentials and expertise have been recognized by the University and whose research was approved by the Institutional Research Board; and

WHEREAS public statements of this sort have a chilling effect on intellectual inquiry and academic freedom on campus; and

WHEREAS the internet and social media create an instant platform for the widespread dispersal of public statements such as the Chancellor's and at the same time magnify the demands of self-appointed watchdogs external to the University; and

WHEREAS senior leadership at the University plays an essential role in defending academic freedom;

BE IT RESOLVED that, on behalf of the faculty of the University of Mississippi, the Faculty Senate reaffirms the necessity of academic freedom to the University's mission, upholds the 1940 "Statement of Principles," and encourages senior leadership to use their positions of authority judiciously, to generally refrain from questioning the credibility of faculty scholarship, and to recognize and mitigate against any and all threats to academic freedom.

THE SENATE OF THE FACULTY

Dr. Brice Noonan  
Chair of the Faculty Senate

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