

# Hillsdale College Faculty Statement on Academic Freedom

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There is a species of freedom peculiar to the academy: it is commonly called academic freedom, and has historically been linked with tenure and various forms of due process designed to ameliorate conditions of implacable dispute. Ideally, academic freedom is that freedom to examine, dissect, describe, and explore the validity, utility, and consequences of ideas, beliefs, and institutions. Hillsdale subscribes to the ideal, but recognizes that it takes meaning only in the complex of principles which govern the entire College community and its several constituencies. The College suggests, then, the following summary statement, which may very well serve as a summary for all its principles:

Every right is joined to a corresponding duty. So it is with the principles of academic freedom to which Hillsdale College subscribes.

Hillsdale College, an independent educational institution governed by its Board of Trustees, affirms its freedom from direction by public political authority. Correspondingly, Hillsdale College recognizes its duties toward American society and toward the civilization of which we are a part.

Hillsdale College, as an independent institution, affirms its freedom from interference by interests or associations not related to the College by law or custom. Correspondingly, Hillsdale College recognizes its duties toward persons rightfully associated with the College—alumni, members of faculty and staff, and students.

Hillsdale College, as dedicated to ordered liberty in private and public concerns, affirms its concern for the intellectual freedom of members of its faculty and staff. Correspondingly, Hillsdale recognizes its duties of ensuring thorough competence and good character in its faculty and staff, as such competence and character relate to the canons of their profession.

Hillsdale College, in keeping with its commitment to principles of ordered liberty, affirms its desire to develop responsible freedom of thought and choice among its students. Correspondingly, Hillsdale College recognizes its duties of imparting to students habits of mind and conduct which develop an understanding of private and public order.

Hillsdale College affirms that academic freedom is bound up with a valuable legacy of other freedoms and duties. Among these are the following aspects of ordered liberty to be considered with their related moral and social obligations: freedom of worship; freedom in work; freedom in politics; freedom in the economy.

Hillsdale College affirms that all these freedoms are dependent upon the maintenance of a moral order; and that academic freedom in particular requires attachment to a body of truth, made known through the order and integration of knowledge. Of such truths the College is the conservator and renewer, and the primary function of the College is to transmit, through these truths, some measure of wisdom and virtue.