



Statement on Academic Freedom for Librarians

This document is based upon three documents, (1) the American Association of University Professors 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure¹; (2) the Association of College and Research Libraries and the AAUP Joint Statement on Faculty Status of College and University Librarians, last updated in 2012²; and (3) the ACRL Guidelines for Academic Librarians without Faculty Status³. The following does not reflect the views of those organizations, but it extrapolates from their principles.

The Statement of Principles states that “Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject.” The crucial roles librarians perform in service to the academy often require them to deal with topics beyond the subject of library science. So that they may perform necessary duties with due protection and consideration, the following principles should apply to librarians regardless of faculty status:

- 1) The subject of a library instruction session shall be considered both library science and the subject assigned to the class.
- 2) The subject of a reference interaction shall be considered both library science and the subject of the query brought by the patron.
- 3) At some institutions, librarians pursue research in the field of library science as part of the tenure and promotion requirements. In others, they may also pursue research in other fields to fulfill the same requirements. As with teaching faculty, the appropriateness of the topic of any research program shall be determined by the faculty in the library, department, or unit, and by the broader community of scholars.

¹ <https://www.aaup.org/report/1940-statement-principles-academic-freedom-and-tenure>

² <https://www.aaup.org/report/joint-statement-faculty-status-college-and-university-librarians>

³ <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/guidelinesacademic>