



# PONTIFICAL JOHN PAUL II INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES ON MARRIAGE & FAMILY AT THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

## **Academic Freedom for Faculty and Students**

### *1. Definition and Role of Academic Freedom*

The Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family at The Catholic University of America is a Catholic institution of higher education originally created under the authority of the Apostolic Constitution *Magnum matrimonii sacramentum* (1982). Organized and governed pursuant to the Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis gaudium* (2017), it is a “Pontifical Institute” authorized to develop educational programs in specific disciplines and confer degrees of civil and canonical value. As a Catholic institution of higher education, it is dedicated to scholarly and educational work directed to the pursuit of truth (*Ex corde Ecclesiae*, 4, 46).

The Institute is dedicated to academic freedom in the work of both faculty and students as an essential condition for the achievement of its mission. The Institute recognizes its role as a center for dialogue among academicians and students, encourages inquiry through research, and promotes the verification, publication, and distribution of the research results according to principles and methods recognized as appropriate in the academic field. Academic freedom also encompasses the just autonomy of disciplines, each with its own principles, methods, and unique contribution to the pursuit of truth (*Gravissimum educationis*, 10; *Ex corde Ecclesiae*, art. 2, sec. 5).

As a private institution with a limited, single-purpose mission, the Institute does not understand “academic freedom” to mean a license to violate other fundamental goods of Catholic learning and community life. Academic freedom does not include use of the Institute as a forum for advocacy or other expressions of opinions contrary to the doctrines and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church or a Catholic sense of human good. Academic freedom presupposes a good-faith pursuit of truth, knowing that faith and reason are together ordered to discovering and transmitting the truth about the human person, community, and relation to God (*Fides et ratio*).

### *2. Academic Freedom of Faculty*

In service to its mission, the Institute endeavors to employ suitable and appropriately qualified faculty to implement its degree programs, take responsibility for the Institute’s and wider community’s common good, strive to achieve the Institute’s mission, engage in scientific research, educate students to a high level of competence, and collaborate with colleagues of the Institute and other institutions. In the performance of the teaching, scholarship, and service

functions, the faculty must act with integrity and in fidelity to Catholic doctrine and morals, demonstrate competence in the performance of professional responsibilities and duties, be committed to the mission of the Institute, demonstrate an intellectual openness to the opinions and responsibilities of others, and demonstrate reasonable probity in public statements and conduct. In the execution of these responsibilities, the faculty enjoy academic freedom, in accordance with the definition as stated above, and exercise those responsibilities with prudence, trust, and judgment within the context of fidelity to the Church's Magisterium and with a commitment to the heritage of the Roman Catholic Church.

### *3. Academic Freedom of Students*

In accordance with its mission, the Institute seeks to educate students in Catholic theology and other disciplines related to Catholic theological and philosophical anthropology and confer civil and ecclesial degrees. The Institute recognizes that respect for students' academic freedom, understood in accordance with the above definition, is fundamental to achieving this mission. Students' academic freedom encompasses their research, information access, studies, comments or questions in class, and informal academic discourse at Institute-sponsored conferences, lectures, and other events.