ACADEMIC FREEDOM

by:

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Article 2. Section 8.

Every teacher shall enjoy academic freedom and shall have the privilege of sharing the product of his researches and investigations, provided that, if the results are inimical to the declared policies of the State, they shall be drawn to the proper authorities for appropriate remedial action.

One of the neglected aspect of teaching is the academic freedom.

Teachers are allowed to reflect. Certain discussions need to be elaborated. Outside the curriculum, there are more to see. Academic freedom is a means of teaching outside the box. According to the article, every teachers shall enjoy academic freedom. But applying academic freedom means a refraction from the curriculum. Will it be helpful or not?

In the elementary department, academic freedom is something a teacher must be very careful and conscious of. One’s opinion should not be counted when teaching foundational knowledge among students. Most literature said that academic freedom is best applied in the higher level of studies – perhaps, tertiary.

The discussion of knowledge should be taken with caution especially when teaching information that is beyond books. Thus, if there ever be a discussion, is rare. That is why academic freedom is, more or less, not very much practiced in the elementary education. Given such, there is no guarantee that the students are ready to learn advance
things, or rather ‘heavy’ information, and other details which are not really of use and meaningful to the learners.

Anyhow, why is academic freedom important in the teaching-learning process? What is the price of academic freedom? According to studies, there are four:

1. Time – to think, to create, to study. Teachers are able to reflect back on their lessons. To think better of solutions, to ask questions, to rectify methods are just part of the matrix. Time is important in understanding – giving way, making way, creating way. A lesson may be too hard to understand technically; it is the academic freedom of the teacher to make it easier. That will be lesser time consuming, and more time can be allotted in more practical approaches of the teaching-learning process.

2. Energy – continuous improvement. In a classroom, discussions and debates are often present. Ideas which are either right or wrong are tolerated for the benefit of the doubt. Students are able to defend their understanding against the other. Others will defend back with a better understanding of the former statement. The enthusiasm and the ecstatic nature of discussion and debate covers a high energy potential of intellectuality for all those that participated. The teacher keeps on asking – the Socratic Method. The students are required to answer outside the box. This is academic freedom in action.

3. Passion – to exchange ideas. Teachers may ask questions by and by. One student may raise a hand, and then followed by another. The exchange of ideas between two conflicting thesis pave way in understanding the various facets and dimensions of the topic. Lastly,

4. Creativity – to innovate. Academic freedom tries to innovate the curriculum for a better one. The level of discussion may not be applicable to the ideas rendered by the curriculum guide. For instance, a higher perspective arise from a problem and corollary
ideas may be connected thereupon. The only way a teacher can resolve the situation is to get out of the curriculum guide and set a higher level of discussion that is truly their own.

References:


