

---

# Internal Threats to Academic Freedom: Problems of Professional Control

---

JOSEPH C. HERMANOWICZ

Department of Sociology, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602, USA.  
Email: [jchl@uga.edu](mailto:jchl@uga.edu)

Attention has customarily centred on the academic profession's ability to carry out its work in light of external threats to academic freedom. This article draws attention to internal threats – what the academic profession does to impair itself. Self-regulation is a central attribute of professions. In the absence of professional control, quality of practice is thrown into question. Like academic freedom, self-regulation is a principle and not always a practice. Focused on the academic profession's teaching role, this article examines two types of problems in professional control that impair academic freedom: *slippage* and *overreach*. Both are instances of organizational deviance and abrogation of professional ethics. It is argued that the patterns threaten the structural integrity and public confidence of faculty, fields and higher-education institutions and thereby compromise the profession's capacity to persuasively defend itself.

## Introduction

Quality in higher-education teaching transcends national systems of education. The quality of higher-education teaching is paramount wherever such teaching occurs. Quality consists of those utterances and activities that are grounded in one's area of expertise (Hermanowicz 2024). As Scott (2017: 1) has observed, academic freedom consists of 'protection of faculty rights based on disciplinary competence'. Quality of utterance and activity differentiates protections enshrined in academic freedom, on the one hand, and from those codified in broader protections of speech, on the other. Freedom of speech writ large involves a right 'to express one's ideas, however true or false they may be' (Scott 2017: 1). Blanket free speech entails a right to say anything,

in any way, at any time (Scott 2017), whereas academic freedom operates on behalf of the pursuit of knowledge.

Fish (2017, p. B10, emphasis added) has pressed the point further:

Freedom of speech is not an academic value. *Accuracy* of speech is an academic value; *completeness* of speech is an academic value; *relevance* of speech is an academic value. Each of these values is directly related to the goal of academic inquiry: getting a matter of fact right.

Accuracy, completeness and a demonstrated relevance are thus understood to undergird quality academic work.

Structurally, professional peers are given the responsibility to evaluate the quality of utterances and activities of one another. More often than not, this would involve proximate professional peers (i.e., faculty in one's own department), but could also include colleagues in the field outside of one's immediate institution. Understood in this light, academic freedom places non-trivial constraints on what academics can legitimately say and do. They may not say or do just anything under a guise of academic freedom.

This article examines problems of professional control in the academic profession's oversight of higher-education teaching. I concentrate on quality in academics' teaching roles because this role, while centrally configured in academic positions, is generally not subject to routine practices of peer review (Braxton and Bayer 1999, 2004). In general, faculty in higher-education institutions are highly autonomous. By definition, autonomy confers considerable licence to teaching staff in what they say and do. The degree of freedom relegates the quality of utterance and activity in teaching to a wide range. Moreover, teaching lacks standardization. The same course subject might be taught differently, in content and speech, by different individuals. Further, teaching involves extemporaneous speech and interpretative utterances.

By contrast, the research role, which involves grant application and publication, exists in a highly institutionalized framework, in which there transpires as a matter of routine formal peer review that regulates behaviour (Zuckerman and Merton 1971). Production of speech and style in publication (as well as grant and fellowship applications) is comparatively standardized and heavily regulated by processes of peer and editorial review. Violations of standards of speech, to the extent they occur, are characteristically caught and edited prior to publication. In teaching, freedom is exercised more idiosyncratically.

Threats to teachers and their teaching can originate externally (such as from politicians or parents) or internally (by virtue of what teachers do and fail to do in their teaching roles). In this article I focus on the latter source of threat: the present exercise is one of collective self-examination, that is, a profession looking critically at its practices. Internal sources of potential problems in academics' teaching practices have received little attention. Rather, study has emphasized external threats to academic freedom, in teaching, research and civic roles, posed by actors such as governments, legislatures, benefactors and governing boards (e.g., Hamilton 1995;

Hofstadter and Metzger 1955; Michaels 2017; Schrecker 1986; Streb and Rabban 2006; Woodhouse 2009).

Like all behaviour, there are boundaries across which utterances and activities are inconsistent with the teaching role (Ben-Yehuda 1985; Braxton *et al.* 1996). Quality presupposes control. Quality can only be ascertained by others in reference to some set of criteria; such action exemplifies a process of control by peers. I examine regulative patterns that affect quality. I consider internal problems posed to teaching that I term ‘professional slippage’ and ‘professional overreach’. Slippage involves a deficit of professional control over teaching, while overreach involves an excess of control. We may theorize that both deficits and excesses of control by professional peers result in pathology (Durkheim 1951 [1897]). They hamper the integrity of the group.

Both slippage and overreach are instances of organizational deviance and contravention of professional ethics. I conclude by suggesting that deficits of professional control, on the one hand, and excesses of it, on the other, jeopardize academic freedom as a defensible principle that governs academic work. In doing so, the patterns discussed threaten the strength, integrity, and public confidence of faculty, fields and higher-education institutions.

### **Professional Control**

*Self-regulation* is a central attribute of professions (e.g., Goode 1957; Greenwood 1957; Johnson 1972; Parsons 1939). The attribute exists because practices, predicated on abstract, esoteric knowledge, are thought to be best assessed by members internal to the group. Members are in a structural position to most fully understand the group’s desired practices.

In the absence of professional control, quality of practice is thrown into question. Like academic freedom, self-regulation is a principle and not always a practice. *Slippage* refers to absence or neglect of control by professional peers. *Overreach* involves excess control by professional peers. I discuss in turn each pattern and its implications.

### ***Slippage***

Listed below are examples of teaching practices that likely warrant greater consideration by professional peers. The list is not exhaustive. The examples are actual, not hypothetical, based on the author’s observations over a period of approximately 25 years of university teaching. Because they are indicative of slippage, there is generally scant research literature about the examples, except where noted. Many of the examples illustrate behaviour that many academics would find problematic (Braxton *et al.* 2011). The examples are not limited to one department, field, institution, or occurrence.

I do not assert that the sampling of behaviour merits sanction at face value. Nor do I assert that the behaviours are idiosyncratic. Instead, they are offered as illustrations of practices by higher-education instructors that occur with sufficient regularity to justify further review.

Slippage in the exercise of professional control in teaching includes:

- Regular classroom use of profanity. This is differentiated from the idiosyncratic use of such language as hyperbole, emphasis, or quotation.
- Denigrating groups or social categories of people, including whites, on behalf of social justice ideologies, for example, that privilege activism over education.
- Denigrating departmental colleagues during class or advising likewise serves political aims at a cost to education.
- Social activist or advocacy rhetoric in the classroom, where activism is understood as ‘intentional action by an [instructor] to bring about social or political change. This action is in support of, or opposition to, one side of a controversial argument’ (Brenman and Sanchez 2014: 6012).
- Indoctrination, wherein an instructor ‘promulgate[s] as truth ideas or opinions which have not been tested’ (Dewey 1902: 4), i.e., ‘which have not been accepted as true within a discipline’ (American Association of University Professors 2015a: 20; also American Association of University Professors 2015b, especially p. 382).
- Heavy usage of films/movies/clips that are tenuously tied to a course or weakly integrated into content.
- Playing music (to which students are attuned) before class and/or during break-out group activities during class. The practice purportedly attempts to create a ‘solidarity’ between instructor and students without due consideration of its educational value or its chance at aggravating, rather than quelling, anxiety for which its use might be aimed.
- Misuse of classroom time. For example, playing an instrument in a non-music, non-arts course for students every Friday. Or, using the first 20 minutes of a 75-minute period for ‘frankly speaking’, a time set aside for students to talk about ‘what’s on their minds’ apart from anything related to the course. Or, using a Spanish language class to teach students about Spanish siestas, in which students are asked to put their heads down on their desks with the classroom lights turned off for the class period.
- No attendance policy, but conferral of course credit and passing grades. This is problematic particularly in those national contexts in which institutional accreditation is based partly on conferral of ‘credit hours’ through student course attendance.
- Regular dismissal of class such that a class is held only for roughly half the period (e.g., a 75-minute class held regularly for 30 or 40 minutes).
- Regular cancelling of class.
- Regular unpreparedness for class.

- Assigning a teaching assistant a majority or near-majority of teaching responsibility.
- Grade inflation (Johnson 2003; Rojstaczer and Healy 2010, 2012).
- Departmental tolerance/acceptance of 'non-rigorous' courses, that is, courses generally understood to be 'easy', undemanding, or not substantive (Arum and Roksa 2011).
- Routine failure to report student plagiarism (because, for example, it is perceived as too much trouble or results in what is thought to be minimal sanction).
- 'Light', non-rigorous annual reviews of graduate students; allowing students who exhibit perennial deficiencies to continue in a program without being redressed for their performance.
- Hugging certain students of a course, such as on the last day of the term.

Scott (2017) has noted that fields evince tensions about what constitutes acceptable work. For Scott, a path through such tension is the exercise of academic freedom itself: discuss, debate, disagree, provisionally resolve. But in many instances, there is little or no engagement among faculty about matters such as those listed above.

Slippage may occur out of deference to academic freedom. Faculty give a wide berth to their colleagues in what they say and do in the classroom. But a berth can be only so wide before it crosses a boundary of quality. Abuse of academic freedom includes utterances and activities in which no expertise is shared. A thread running through several of the illustrations is the absence of sharing expertise. One cannot share expertise, for example, if one is not present.

A profession that regulates itself poorly sacrifices its status, its jurisdictional mandate, and consequently, its public trust. Abridged of public trust, a profession loses its licence and mandate (Hughes 1958). These conditions weaken the academic profession's defence of legitimate claims to academic freedom. Slippage erodes faculty power in assertions of autonomy.

I offer three theories to explain slippage in the oversight of higher education teaching. First, a *theory of innocence* posits that behaviours such as those above, and indeed nearly all behaviours of higher-education instructors, are protected by academic freedom. By this theory, academics believe they can say and do almost anything in the classroom, because what they do is consonant with academic freedom. By this theory, academic freedom and freedom of speech are identical principles. The theory has credence through the likelihood that many academics lack an understanding of academic freedom. Academic freedom is never taught to faculty members and is rarely even discussed among them.

Second, a *theory of normalized deviance* posits that a system of professional work is corrupt. Not only are low standards common, but behaviour antithetical to good practice is accepted (Sykes 1988). By this theory, *reporting* infractions is the problem, not the infraction. Reporting constitutes non-conformity with deviance that is normalized. Non-reporting is widespread, and faculty do not report problems out of fear that their practices, too, would be scrutinized.

Accordingly, a disengagement compact exists among faculty. Faculty leave each other alone while knowing that practices among them exist outside the boundaries of quality. Regulating one another might result in higher-quality teaching practices, but might also create ill will. Although compatible with how professional work is set up, regulation is a constraint on freedom, including the freedom to engage in practices of little or no quality. It is easier not to regulate one another, unless a practice is so egregious that it leaves the domain of academic freedom (e.g., sexual harassment, assault). The academic profession evinces an unwillingness to make honest assessments about the quality of academic work (Hermanowicz 2021). This pattern is related to a third theory.

A *theory of self-interest* holds that academics operate to maximize their time on behalf of their preferred professional and personal activities. Academic work is highly competitive and requires significant amounts of time to perform at high levels. By this theory, policing one's colleagues is understood and communicated collectively as a low priority and subordinate to the interests of advancement in one's work and accrual of recognition (Bourdieu 1984a, 1984b; Merton 1973 [1957]). Indirect evidence in support of this theory is the value academics assign to service work for departments and universities. Faculty typically perform this work resignedly, understanding that it is defined as less rewarding than teaching and research. Compliance with the work is recognized as a betrayal of self-interest on behalf of the interests of the whole. Generally, faculty seek to minimize this type of work.

### ***Overreach***

At the same time, overreach also occurs in control by professional peers. In the present historical period, this pattern occurs in conjunction with 'identity politics', which involve 'groups of people having a particular racial, religious, ethnic, social, or cultural identity [who] promote their own specific interests or concerns without regard to the interests or concerns of any larger [...] group' (Patterson 2006). Identity politics are linked to 'social justice', which involves a correction of past wrongs against specific groups in society. Social justice and identity politics have enveloped present-day higher education (Patai and Koertge 2003).

Listed below are examples of overreach that likely warrant greater consideration by professional peers. Many, but not all, of the illustrations are connected to identity politics and social justice. Because the behaviours exemplify 'active' as opposed to 'passive' conduct, instances are more documentable with a literature compared to slippage. As with slippage, the list is non-exhaustive, and the same caveats hold: the examples are actual, not limited to one department or occurrence, and I do not assert that the sampling merits sanction at face value. Rather, the examples illustrate practices that occur with a regularity to warrant further review.

Practices of overreach in the control of teaching include:

- Seeking to terminate or terminating a faculty member for classroom utterances/activities perceived as controversial (Adler and Adler 2021).

- Mandating or strongly advising content in a course (cf. American Association of University Professors 2015c).
- Specifying language/terms to use in classroom discussions, such as of race or gender (American Psychological Association 2021).
- Self-censoring classroom speech out of fear, for example, of student accusation or institutional punishment (Lukianoff and Haidt 2018).
- Dis-inviting campus speakers whose views on past subjects offend students and/or faculty members. While invited speakers often speak in auditoriums rather than classrooms per se, they engage in a form of teaching (Gup 2017; Gillman and Chemerinsky 2017).
- Creating lists of texts to ban from classroom use (Flaherty 2014; Flood 2014).
- Procedures for hiring faculty members wherein institutions require candidates to submit statements that explain teaching (and other activities) they undertake on behalf of ‘diversity, equity and inclusion’ (Price 2020; Thompson 2019). The practice is tantamount to an ideological and politically motivated loyalty oath.
- Overvaluing course evaluations (and thereby not permitting a faculty member to conduct a course in accord with educational principles) in determining annual salary adjustments, among other rewards (e.g., Cashin 1999; Pounder 2007; Spooen *et al.* 2013).

Overreach is not to be confused with ‘collective academic freedom’, the exercise of decisions by academic bodies. For example, faculty have a collective responsibility for curriculum through channels of institutional governance. And, for instance, in some institutions, faculty committees are charged with furnishing to a unit head annual salary recommendations for colleagues, and so on.

Collective academic freedom makes significant assumptions about unity of group goals and group knowledge about governance. For example, faculty members may be ill-informed about problems inherent in student evaluations of courses and their misuse in faculty evaluation procedures. Members of curriculum committees ratify courses on the basis of proposals which often consist of general topical outlines, statements of learning objectives and requirements. In practice, these proposals are only a sketch of the courses that faculty members subsequently teach. In principle, collective academic freedom operates to protect the interests of faculty members as a group. In instances, group goals override individual preferences. By contrast, overreach involves the violation of *both* individual *and* collective academic freedom, as the list above illustrates.

I offer two theories to explain overreach in professional control of higher-education teaching. First, a *theory of moralism*, situated in a climate of social justice and identity politics, venerates emotion in the evaluation of utterances and activities. Moralism exists in a state of heightened sensitivity to subjectivities. Evaluation of utterances and activities is predicated not on due process but on whether a person conforms to prevailing ideological currents that render someone a good or bad person (e.g., Bérubé and Ruth 2022). Control of language by professional peers and

others is the chief means by which moralism is put into operative play (Hermanowicz and Hermanowicz 2023).

Second, a *theory of bureaucracy* holds that behaviour is guided by perception of organizational rules. Members of groups 'go along' with the rules without challenging them, and without recognizing that rules are created, at any given time, by people responsive to historically contingent sets of circumstances. Rules and precedents in organizations are not static empirically, but the theory indicates that people's perceptions are caught in stasis. There is little sensitivity to organizational change or rule modification. Thus, a rhetoric is heard: 'It's the way things are done', or 'It's how we have always done things'.

As with slippage, overreach compromises academic freedom. However, the two patterns operate differently in their effects. Slippage minimizes a profession's defences by lack of oversight. In contrast, overreach compromises academic freedom as a direct assault on it. In Aristotelian terms, slippage and overreach are extremes, the first a deficiency, the second an excess. The mean benefits the group and larger societal order on which a profession's viability is contingent. We may call the mean *control*: professionally grounded and guided self-regulation.

### **Conclusion**

The assessment of quality in higher-education teaching is a social process: structurally, it is carried out by professional peers who exercise control over the practices of a field. Professional control over work demarcates utterances and activities within and outside the boundaries of quality. This article has identified two problematic patterns of professional control in academic work. Slippage involves a deficit, and overreach involves an excess of control. Practices that illustrate slippage and overreach are of questionable quality. Both behavioural patterns are instantiations of organizational deviance and abrogation of professional ethics, and they both weaken academic freedom.

The harm inflicted on academic freedom by slippage is indirect: neglect weakens a group's ability to defend itself when it abuses the principle of self-regulation. Overreach is a direct incursion on academic freedom. Professional control is a prime means by which a group preserves its status, protects its mandate and maintains societal trust. Pathos in professional control is a prime means by which these attributes are eroded.

Attention has more customarily centred on the profession's ability to carry out its work in light of external threats to academic freedom. External threats are significant and merit sustained attention, but so do internal threats to academic freedom. This discussion has drawn attention to the latter: on what the academic profession does to impair itself. The task exemplifies professional control in the interests of serving education.



## Acknowledgements

The author acknowledges detailed comments and suggestions provided by John M. Braxton, Erika T. Hermanowicz and Hans-Joerg Tiede. Responsibility for content is solely the author's. The larger work prepared for the Symposium, on which this article draws, was published as 'Interrogating the meaning of "quality" in utterances and activities protected by academic freedom', in the *Journal of Academic Ethics*. Parts of the present work are re-printed with permission by SpringerNature (licence no. 5803240408178).

## Declaration of Interest

No funding was received for this study. The author has no financial or non-financial interests that are directly or indirectly related to this work.

## References

- Adler PA and Adler P** (2021) Administrative interference and overreach: the 'Adler controversy' and the 21st century university. In Hermanowicz JC (ed.), *Challenges to Academic Freedom*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 24–25.
- American Association of University Professors** (2015a) Freedom in the classroom. In *Policy Documents and Reports*, 11th Edn. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 20–27.
- American Association of University Professors** (2015b) Joint statement on rights and freedoms of students. In *Policy Documents and Reports*, 11th Edn. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 381–386.
- American Association of University Professors** (2015c) The freedom to teach. In *Policy Documents and Reports*, 11th Edn. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, p. 28.
- American Psychological Association** (2021) *Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: Inclusive Language Guidelines*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Arum R and Roksa J** (2011) *Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ben-Yehuda N** (1985) *Deviance and Moral Boundaries*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Bérubé M and Ruth J** (2022) *It's Not Free Speech: Race, Democracy, and the Future of Academic Freedom*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Bourdieu P** (1984a) *Homo Academicus*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Bourdieu P** (1984b) *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Braxton JM and Bayer AE** (1999) *Faculty Misconduct in Collegiate Teaching*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Braxton JM and Bayer AE** (2004) Toward a code of conduct for undergraduate teaching. In *Addressing Faculty and Student Classroom Improprieties: New Directions for Teaching and Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, pp. 47–55.

- Braxton JM, Eimers MT and Bayer AE** (1996) The implications of teaching norms for the improvement of undergraduate education. *Journal of Higher Education* 67(6), 603–625.
- Braxton JM, Proper E and Bayer AE** (2011) *Professors Behaving Badly: Faculty Misconduct in Graduate Education*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Brennan M and Sanchez TW** (2014) Social activism. In Michalos AC (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research*. Dordrecht: Springer, pp. 6012–6017.
- Cashin WE** (1999) Student ratings of teaching: uses and misuses. In Seldin P (ed.), *Changing Practices in Evaluating Teaching: A Practical Guide to Improved Faculty Performance and Promotion/Tenure Decisions*. Bolton, MA: Anker, pp. 25–44.
- Dewey J** (1902) Academic freedom. *Educational Review* 23(4), 1–14.
- Durkheim É** (1951 [1897]) *Suicide*. Translated by Spalding JA and Simpson G. New York: Free Press.
- Fish S** (2017) Free speech is not an academic value. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 31 March 2017, Section B, pp. B10–B11.
- Flaherty C** (2014) Trigger unhappy. *Inside Higher Ed* 14 April 2014. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2014/04/14/oberlin-backs-down-trigger-warnings-professors-who-teach-sensitive-material> (accessed 25 August 2021).
- Flood A** (2014) U.S. students request ‘Trigger warnings’ on literature. *The Guardian*, 19 May 2014. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/may/19/us-students-request-trigger-warnings-in-literature> (accessed 25 August 2021).
- Gillman H and Chemerinsky E** (2017) Does disruption violate free speech? *Chronicle of Higher Education* 3 November 2017, p. A31.
- Goode WJ** (1957) Community within a community: the professions. *American Sociological Review* 22(2), 194–200.
- Greenwood E** (1957) Attributes of a profession. *Social Work* 2(3), 44–55.
- Gup T** (2017) Free speech, but not for all? *Chronicle of Higher Education* 12 May 2017, pp. B3–B4.
- Hamilton N** (1995) *Zealotry and Academic Freedom*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.
- Hermanowicz ET and Hermanowicz JC** (2023) The perversion of virtue: causes and consequences of threats to academic freedom in the contemporary university. *Journal of Controversial Ideas* 3(1), 1–20.
- Hermanowicz JC** (2021) Honest evaluation in the academy. *Minerva* 59(3), 311–329.
- Hermanowicz JC** (2024) Interrogating the meaning of ‘quality’ in utterances and activities protected by academic freedom. *Journal of Academic Ethics* <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10805-024-09512-z>
- Hofstadter R and Metzger WP** (1955) *The Development of Academic Freedom in the United States*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Hughes EC** (1958) License and mandate. In *Men and Their Work*. New York: Free Press, pp. 78–87.
- Johnson T** (1972) *Professions and Power*. London: Macmillan.
- Johnson VE** (2003) *Grade Inflation: A Crisis in College Education*. New York: Springer.
- Lukianoff G and Haidt J** (2018) *The Coddling of the American Mind: How Good Intentions and Bad Ideas are Setting Up a Generation for Failure*. New York: Penguin.
- Merton RK** (1973 [1957]) Priorities in scientific discovery. In *The Sociology of Science: Theoretical and Empirical Investigations*, edited and with an Introduction by Storer NW. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 286–324.

- Michaels J** (2017) *McCarthyism: The Realities, Delusions, and Politics behind the 1950s Red Scare*. New York: Routledge.
- Parsons T** (1939) The professions and social structure. In *Essays in Sociological Theory*. New York: Free Press, pp. 34–39.
- Patai D and Koertge N** (2003) *Professing Feminism*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Patterson O** (2006) Being and blackness: a review of *We Who Are Dark* by Tommie Shelby and *Creating Black Americans* by Nell Irvin Painter. *New York Review of Books*. 8 January 2006. <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/01/08/books/review/being-and-blackness.html> (accessed 10 September 2024).
- Pounder JS** (2007) Is student evaluation of teaching worthwhile? An analytical framework for answering the question. *Quality Assurance in Education* **15**(2), 178–191.
- Price M** (2020) ‘Diversity statements’ divide mathematicians. *Science* **367**(6475), 239.
- Rojstaczer S and Healy C** (2010) Grading in American colleges and universities. *Teachers College Record* 4 March 2010. <http://www.tcrecord.org/PrintContent.asp?ContentID=15928> (accessed 10 September 2024).
- Rojstaczer S and Healy C** (2012) Where A is ordinary: the evolution of American college and university grading, 1940–2009. *Teachers College Record* **114**(7), 1–23. <https://www.gradeinflation.com/tcr2010grading.pdf> (accessed 10 September 2024).
- Schrecker EW** (1986) *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Scott JW** (2017) On free speech and academic freedom. *Journal of Academic Freedom* **8**, 1–10.
- Spooren P, Brockx B and Mortelmans D** (2013) On the validity of student evaluation of teaching: the state of the art. *Review of Educational Research* **83**(4), 598–642.
- Streb MJ and Rabban DM** (eds) (2006) *Academic Freedom at the Dawn of a New Century: How Terrorism, Governments, and Culture Wars Impact Free Speech*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Sykes CJ** (1988) *ProfScam: Professors and the Demise of Higher Education*. New York: St. Martin’s Press.
- Thompson A** (2019) The university’s new loyalty oath. *Wall Street Journal* 19 December 2019. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-universitys-new-loyalty-oath-11576799749> (accessed 10 September 2024).
- Woodhouse H** (2009) *Selling-Out: Academic Freedom and the Corporate Market*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press.
- Zuckerman H and Merton RK** (1971) Patterns of evaluation in science: institutionalization, structure and the functions of the referee system. *Minerva* **9**(January), 66–100.

### About the Author

**Joseph C. Hermanowicz** is Professor of Sociology at the University of Georgia. He is the author or editor of five books as well as articles and chapters that focus on scientific careers, the academic profession and universities as sites to study organizational culture and institutional behaviour. In addition, Hermanowicz’s

work examines social organizational problems of universities and the academic profession, including academic freedom, the structure of recurring threats to it and comparative differences of the professoriate and its autonomy across national systems of higher education. Hermanowicz is an elected member of the Sociological Research Association and an elected fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.