Summit on Academic Freedom and Academic Autonomy

Tuesday 4 and Wednesday 5 December 2018

Program

Tuesday 4 December
The Auditorium, China in the World, Building #188, Fellows Lane

5pm  Keynote Address and Reception
Introduction and welcome  Professor Mike Calford, ANU Provost
Keynote  Professor Glyn Davis AC, Distinguished Professor
Panel discussion  Professor Jacqueline Lo, ANU Academic Board Chair

Wednesday 5 December
The Hall, University House, 1 Balmain Crescent

8.30am  Introduction and welcome  Professor Brian P. Schmidt AC, ANU Vice-Chancellor
8.35am  Welcome address  Professor the Hon Gareth Evans AC QC, ANU Chancellor
8.50am  Scene setting  Professor Mike Calford, ANU Provost

9am  The relationship between Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech
Freedom of speech and academic freedom are different, though related, concepts. However, in debate inside and outside universities, they are often conflated. What is the relationship between the two, and what does that mean for universities?

Chair:  Professor Jacqueline Lo, ANU Academic Board Chair
Panellists:  Mr Gary Humphries, Former ACT Senator and Chief Minister
Professor Dianne Nicol, University of Tasmania
Professor Adrienne Stone, University of Melbourne
Eleanor Kay, ANU student
10.15am  Morning tea

10.30am  How should universities protect academic autonomy?
Universities are designed to be places of robust critical inquiry, where we advance humankind through the exploration of new ideas, revisiting old ideas and challenging norms. However, universities do not operate separate from our wider society, and are heavily reliant on funding from government, students, industry, philanthropic interests and foundations. They are also amongst our most heavily regulated institutions. How do universities maintain their autonomy and the autonomy of their academic community in an increasingly tight financial and regulatory environment?

Chair:  Professor Jacqueline Lo, ANU Academic Board Chair
Panellists:  Professor the Hon Gareth Evans AC QC, ANU Chancellor
Emeritus Professor Stephen Crump, University of Tasmania
Mr Matthew Lesh, Institute of Public Affairs
Professor Carmen Lawrence, University of Western Australia

11.45am  Who decides what research is conducted?
Research takes place in a complex environment of ideas, ethics, funding, institutional history, accepted truth and societal expectations. Decisions about what research is conducted are made at intersection of this complexity. How do we decide what is researched, and do those decisions dampen academic freedom?

Chair:  Professor Keith Nugent, incoming ANU Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation)
Panellists:  Dr Jacqui Hoepner, ANU Centre for Public Awareness of Science
Dr Martin Williams, Monash University
To be confirmed

1.15pm  Lunch time address
To be confirmed

2.30pm  What threatens academic freedom?
A decline in trust of expertise, contested ideas of truth, students demanding speakers not be heard, provocateurs demanding an unchallenged platform for their ideas, public and peer judgements on the legitimacy of research and its interpretation, academic freedom constrained by universities in search of marketing slogan, allegations or foreign influence, and public judgments on what and how universities teach. Is academic freedom really under attack and what does the threat really look like?

Chair:  Ms Jane O’Dwyer, ANU Vice-President (Engagement & Corporate Affairs)
Panellists:  Ms Helen Trinca, Managing Editor, The Australian
Dr Miriam Bankovsky, La Trobe University
Professor Amin Saikal, Director, ANU Centre for Arab & Islamic Studies
Professor John Fitzgerald, Swinburne University of Technology

4pm  Final talk and summit wrap up: The future of research and a commitment to academic freedom

Summary  Professor Mike Calford, ANU Provost
Closing  Professor Brian P. Schmidt AC, Vice-Chancellor