

Call for Papers No. 2

Academy and the Culture Wars: Ethical, Legal, and Empirical Perspectives on Freedom of Expression of Academic Teachers Today

April 30, 2026 – article proposal

July 31, 2026 – full paper submission

We invite all interested researchers to submit article proposals for the upcoming thematic issue of “Krytyka Prawa. Niezależne Studia nad Prawem” (The Critique of Law. Independent Legal Studies), which will appear as the journal’s fourth issue in 2026. The working title is: “Academy and the Culture Wars: Ethical, Legal, and Empirical Perspectives on Freedom of Expression of Academic Teachers Today”. The publication will be edited by Prof. Przemysław Kaczmarek (UWr), Dr Michał Paździora (UWr) and Dr Mateusz Wojtanowski (UWr). We encourage contributions written in English. While the call is primarily addressed to legal scholars, texts from researchers in other social sciences are also warmly encouraged.

In this issue, we aim to explore the role of academia in the “culture wars” shaping contemporary societies. The term refers to complex social tensions rooted primarily in moral and cultural divisions, rather than purely economic factors. These disputes revolve around deeply held values, norms, religious convictions, traditions, and political worldviews, influencing many aspects of public life. Conflicts arise over issues such as migration, racial and class inequalities, as well as censorship. Other contested topics include abortion and LGBT rights, religious symbols in public spaces, historical memory, and ongoing disputes over the rule of law. We are interested in contributions addressing both regular academic teachers and those in institutional positions, who are often authorized to speak on behalf of their universities.

The reference in the title to “freedom of expression of academic teachers”, rather than to “academic freedom”, signals that our interest also lies in forms of expression that reach beyond strictly professional or institutional contexts. In a related vein, we further encourage exploration of whether involvement of academics in public, worldview-based disputes should be protected under the umbrella of academic

freedom, or instead be seen as governed by more general principles of freedom of expression.

As suggested by the issue's working title, we invite contributions that address the central problem from one or more of the following complementary perspectives:

1. Ethical – this dimension invites reflection on the relationship between academic ethics and the culture wars. Does academic ethics call for neutrality in such conflicts, or does it instead support active scholarly involvement in them?
2. Legal – this angle encompasses relevant legislation and case law, including decisions made by academic disciplinary bodies concerning the freedom of expression of scholars.
3. Empirical – we also welcome both quantitative and qualitative studies examining public perceptions of academics engaging with controversial social issues. This may include research on expression within the institutional context of universities (e.g., teaching practices), as well as on forms of public engagement outside professional roles.

Article proposals (abstracts up to one page long) should be submitted to mateusz.wojtanowski@uwr.edu.pl by 30 April 2026. If the proposal is accepted by the issue editors, the author will be invited to submit the full manuscript to “Krytyka Prawa. Niezależne Studia nad Prawem” via the ScholarOne Manuscripts system by July 31, 2026. The submitted text will then undergo anonymous peer reviews. Manuscripts must be prepared in accordance with the journal's editorial guidelines, available at: <https://krytykaprawa.pl> (“Information for Authors” section).