

The primary purpose of college is to promote the exploration of ideas and the discovery and dissemination of knowledge and understanding. A major purpose of community college education is to share with students the scholarly, imaginative, and scientific efforts that have been made toward understanding our human condition and our world. Informed and critical students will be more able to act responsibly as citizens to make choices in their own lives, and to attempt solutions for problems of the future than uninformed, uncritical followers. A purpose of academic freedom is to ensure this intellectual development of students. The college is to be an open forum for ideas and issues to be raised, challenged, and tested.

In order to realize the educational advantages offered by an open forum climate, the District and the Federation will seek to maintain a teaching and learning environment that is collegial and respectful, and free of unlawful harassment and discrimination. Faculty members shall be protected from extraneous considerations such as a faculty member's ethnicity, race, religion, political beliefs or affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, or disability being used in evaluations of professional performance.

The District and the Federation agree that academic freedom is essential for the fulfillment of the educational mission of the District and for the ability of faculty members to perform their professional duties. It is the cornerstone of a college. Freedom in teaching is fundamental for the protection of both faculty and students in teaching and learning. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of knowledge. The fundamental need for academic freedom is acknowledged to protect faculty from any censorship or restraint which might interfere with their obligation to pursue truth in the performance of their teaching functions.

All faculty members, regardless of their employment status, shall enjoy the privileges and exercise the responsibilities inherent in academic freedom as outlined in the AAUP's 1940 Statement as interpreted in 1970. In particular, controversy is at the heart of free academic inquiry which the entire statement is designed to protect. Teachers should avoid persistently discussing material in their classes that has no relation to the subject or goals of the courses they are teaching.

Each faculty member is a citizen as well as being a faculty member. The rights and responsibilities of each role are not mutually exclusive and one does not stop being a citizen engaged in a democratic republic with guarantees of life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness and the ability to engage in civil discourse with one's elected officials when one becomes a faculty member.

When faculty members speak or write as citizens, they shall be free from institutional censorship, discipline, or obligations.

Faculty members shall maintain the exclusive right and responsibility to determine the grades they assign on the basis of their professional judgment. The grades given to each student for any course of instruction taught shall be determined by the instructor of the course, and the determination of the student's grade by the instructor - in the absence of mistake, fraud, bad faith, or incompetence - shall be final.