

## ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Academic freedom encompasses the freedom to study, teach and express ideas and viewpoints, including unpopular and controversial ones, without censorship, political restraint or retribution. Academic freedom allows for the free exchange of ideas in the conscientious pursuit of truth. This freedom exists in all service areas, including but not limited to teaching, librarianship, counseling, coordinating and all faculty-student interactions. Academic Freedom is the bedrock principle of all institutions of learning and must be extended to all faculty regardless of their status as full-time, part-time, or probationary.

Faculty members have the principal right and responsibility to determine the content, pedagogy, methods of instruction, the selection, planning and presentation of course materials, and the fair and equitable methods of assessment in their assignment in accordance with the approved curriculum and course outline and the educational mission of the District, and in accordance with state laws and regulations. These rights and responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the faculty member's choice of textbooks and other course materials, assignments and assessment methods, teaching practices, grading and evaluation of student work, and teaching methods and practices.

Special vigilance must be paid to the protection of the Academic Freedom Rights of probationary faculty undergoing the tenure process. While the tenure process is, at its core, an evaluative process, the evaluation of probationary faculty must never be used as a pretense for abridging or restricting the Academic Freedom rights of a tenure candidate. All members of a probationary faculty member's tenure review committee should bear in mind that differences between their own teaching methods and practices and beliefs and those of the tenure candidate should never be the basis for their evaluation of a probationary faculty member. These differences are protected by the tenure candidate's Academic Freedom. The evaluation of a probationary faculty member should be based solely on those criteria described in the negotiated faculty evaluation instruments and those listed in the advertised job description under which the tenure candidate was hired.