

Academic Freedom

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The Foothill-De Anza Community College District Board of Trustees believes that faculty and students have the right to pursue teaching and learning with full freedom of inquiry. In order to assure that this viewpoint is understood by all, the Board adopts the following policy.

Academic freedom and academic responsibility are inseparable. Academic freedom is the right of faculty members to interpret findings and communicate conclusions without being subjected to any interference, molestation, or penalization because these conclusions are at variance with those of constituted authorities or organized groups beyond the Colleges.

Likewise, the academic freedom of students is the freedom to express and to defend views or beliefs, the freedom to question and to differ, without authoritative repression and without scholastic penalization by the faculty or the Colleges.

Academic freedom carries with it corresponding responsibility. Academic responsibility emphasizes the obligation to study, to investigate, to present and interpret, and to discuss facts and ideas concerning human society and the physical and biological world in all branches and fields of knowledge. Since human knowledge is limited and changeable, the faculty member will acknowledge the facts on which controversial views are based and show respect for opinions held by others. While striving to avoid bias, *the faculty employee* will nevertheless present the conclusions to which he *or she* believes the evidence points.

College faculty members are citizens, members of a learned profession and officers of educational institutions. When they speak or write as citizens they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As persons of learning and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Therefore, they should at all times be accurate, they should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not institutional spokespersons.

It is recognized that all staff members of the College will be guided by the recommendations of the curriculum committees, the administration, and the policies approved by the Board of Trustees on the general purposes of the courses offered.

To insure these principles of academic freedom for De Anza and Foothill Colleges, the administrators of the District and the Board, as the governing body of the District, will at all times demonstrate their support by actively and openly working toward a climate which will foster this freedom. Such participation will extend to the point of defending and supporting tenured or non-tenured faculty members who, while maintaining the high standards of their profession, find their freedom of expression attacked or curtailed.

*Foothill-De Anza Community College District
Board of Trustees
Board Policy Manual*

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