

ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good. The following statements rest upon the belief that the common good depends upon a free search for truth and its free expression without intent to do personal harm.

Each faculty member shall be entitled to freedom in discussing the subject that he or she teaches. Limitations to this basic statement exist only within bounds of common decency and good taste. Each faculty member is also entitled to speak or write as a citizen of his or her nation, state, and community without fear of institutional censorship or discipline.

ACADEMIC  
RESPONSIBILITY

The concept of academic freedom must be accompanied by an equally demanding concept of responsibility, shared by the Board of Regents, the administration, and faculty members.

The fundamental responsibilities of a faculty member as a teacher and scholar include the maintenance of competence in his or her field of specialization and the exhibition of such competency in lectures, discussions, and publications.

Exercise of professional integrity by a faculty member includes recognition that the public will judge one's profession and institution by his or her statements. Therefore, a faculty member shall strive to be accurate, to exercise appropriate restraint, to show respect for the opinion of others, and to avoid creating the impression that any speech or action is for the College District when he or she speaks or acts as a private person.

A faculty member shall be selective in the use of controversial material in the classroom and shall introduce such material only as it has a clear relationship to the applicable subject or field.

FACULTY  
RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of each faculty member arise from one's involvement with students, from one's professional roles, from one's role in educational affairs and participation in governance, and from one's relationship with the institution.

Student-related responsibilities are as follows:

1. Responsibility to deal seriously and conscientiously with the teaching assignment, including careful planning of courses, preparation of lectures, regularity in meeting scheduled classes, clearly informing students of course requirements, and fair and impartial grading according to standards established by the institution.
2. Recognize that students deserve respect as individuals and have certain rights that must be protected. This encompasses an active interest in individual academic and personal

problems of students, the giving of mature professional advice, courteous treatment of students in class, and keeping in confidence personal information about students that may come to the faculty member's attention in his or her role as advisor or counselor.

3. Recognize that the faculty member serves as a model and exercises a great influence in shaping the individual. This being true, he or she must try to set a high standard in academic and scholarly excellence, personal integrity, and professional ethics.
4. Recognize that in one's influential classroom role a person is morally bound not to take advantage of his or her position by repeatedly introducing class discussions of subject matter outside the scope of the course and not within his or her field of professional competence.

Professional responsibilities are as follows:

1. Special responsibility to keep current with developing knowledge in his or her academic discipline through familiarity with recent publications and journals and participation in local or national professional societies and meetings where appropriate.
2. Responsibility to seek ways of improving his or her effectiveness as a teacher, exploring new ways of presenting academic subject matter, motivating students, and improving methods of evaluating student performance.
3. Responsibility to assist faculty colleagues in academic and College District activities including:
  - a. Contributing to curriculum studies.
  - b. Participating in divisional and general faculty meetings for the better operation and strengthening of the educational programs of the institution.
  - c. Carrying a fair share of the burden of special faculty committee assignments, including participation in such bodies as curriculum committees and club sponsorships as well as sharing in joint faculty responsibilities such as registration, advising or counseling, and examination proctoring.
4. Responsibility to exercise an active role in protecting and enhancing the academic and professional standing of the faculty by:

ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITIES

DGC  
(LOCAL)

- a. Assisting with recruitment of competent new faculty members.
  - b. Giving appropriate recommendations regarding promotion for able faculty colleagues.
  - c. Recommending the removal of colleagues who, after a fair hearing, have been found to be incompetent, guilty of moral turpitude or gross misconduct, or lacking in personal or professional integrity.
5. Responsibility to demonstrate respect for the right of others in the College District community to hold divergent opinions, including other faculty members, students, administrators, and staff.

Responsibilities in educational affairs and governance are as follows:

1. The faculty of the College District shall maintain ultimate responsibility for the assurance of quality for current instructional programs. In addition, the faculty, through leadership and participation in the College District's standing committees, shall maintain ultimate responsibility for the development of new instructional initiatives and/or the enhancement of current efforts.
2. The faculty shall maintain this responsibility through professional obligation and institutional procedure. The faculty is also charged with providing input and guidance to a variety of educational affairs including, but not limited to, educational policies. The faculty shall accomplish these responsibilities through three distinct processes:
  - a. First, each faculty member is required to participate in the program area and divisional structure. All curricular changes and initiatives shall begin with faculty input through program area and divisional meetings, which are convened by the appropriate chairperson, program coordinator, administrative coordinator, and/or director. These recommendations are subsequently forwarded to the curriculum committee where changes in academic and student-support processes may be made.
  - b. Secondly, each member of the faculty is expected to participate in one or more of the College District's standing committees. Through leadership and participation in the College District's governance structure through the College District's standing committees, each faculty member has an opportunity to influence and/or develop institu-

ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITIES

DGC  
(LOCAL)

tional policy and shall be involved in almost every aspect of the operation and governance of the College District.

- c. The third method for participation by faculty in educational affairs and governance of the College District is through participation in the faculty council. The faculty council addresses issues specifically related to the faculty.

Responsibilities to the institution are as follow:

1. To conscientiously fulfill all the contractual obligations for the period of time agreed upon and that he or she will give the institution reasonable notice when resigning.
2. To make conscientious use of the funds of the institution entrusted to his or her care, such as those allocated to budgets of academic divisions or special projects.
3. To make every effort to avoid professional and personal actions that may cause economic loss or legal embarrassment to his or her institution.
4. To give reasonable support to institutional activities.
5. To commit himself or herself to a reasonable amount of service on College District committees.
6. When making a public statement of his or her views, to indicate clearly that he or she does not speak as a representative of the institution but as an independent scholar and citizen.