



San Diego Community College District

City College · Mesa College · Miramar College · College of Continuing Education

Board of Trustees Policy

Chapter 4 – Instructional Services

BP 4030 – ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The District is committed to an academic environment that embraces the principles of academic freedom and freedom of expression. This commitment is based upon the value that free expression is essential to excellence in teaching, learning, critical inquiry and service to the community.

1. ACADEMIC FREEDOM

- a. Academic freedom affords the faculty the right to speak and write freely, without unreasonable restrictions or prejudices.
- b. In accordance with the doctrine of academic freedom, faculty have the following fundamental rights:
 - 1) Faculty primacy as a collective body in designing and approving curriculum and instructional methods regardless of delivery modality;
 - 2) Individual faculty member determination of instructional materials, course content, and presentation, and student evaluation methods, in concert with colleagues, so as to assure consistency of instruction and academic standards;
 - 3) Individual faculty member freedom to discuss subject matter of the course, as appropriate to the standards of the discipline and academic community, even when that material is controversial;
 - 4) Individual faculty member authority to evaluate enrolled students on the basis of the academic merit of the students' performance;
 - 5) Individual faculty member freedom to choose of professional research topics and methods of investigation — subject to professional and peer-determined standards— as well as unconditional freedom to publish their work; and
 - 6) Individual faculty member right to participate in curriculum review, accreditation processes, and other forms of participatory governance.

2. FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Freedom of expression affords the faculty, staff, and students the right to speak and write freely in accordance with the constitutional protections of free speech- without fear of retaliation. In particular:

- a. The District shall protect the rights of faculty to express their views in the classroom that pertain to class content. While it is understood that controversy is often at the core of inquiry, such controversy should be addressed in a mutually respectful manner.
 - 1) The District shall protect the rights of faculty, staff, and students to speak freely on matters of public concern;

- 2) Faculty, staff, and students are free to explore a wide range of views and judge the merits of competing ideas;
- 3) As outlined in board policies and administrative procedures, faculty, staff, and students have responsibilities which are based upon principles of fairness, integrity, confidentiality, safety, professionalism, and respect for others;
- 4) Faculty, staff, and students have the right to join or form organizations in accordance with District policy and procedures; and
- 5) Faculty, staff, and students have the right to participate in governance in accordance to District policy and procedures.

Also see BP 3900 Posting and Distribution of Literature, Political Activities, Free Speech and Freedom of Expression on Campus and District Sites.

Reference: Title 5 Sections 51023;
ACCJC Accreditation Eligibility Requirements 13 and 20;
ACCJC Accreditation Standard 4.1

Adopted: 04/28/09

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Supersedes: BP 4030 – *Renumbered to BP 4030 11/10/16*