

<b>Title: Academic Freedom</b>	<b>Number: 4.04.0710.3</b>
<b>Approved by the Board of Governors</b> <b>Date: July 5, 2010</b>	<b>Implementation</b> <b>Date: July 5, 2010</b>
<b>History: Approved July 5, 2010</b>  <b>Revised and Approved by the Board of Governors: July 11, 2017</b>  <b>Scheduled Review Date: July 2020</b>	<b>Origin:</b>

## **RATONALE**

In the proper exercise of the right of Academic Freedom, the College administration undertakes to support individuals in the pursuit of effective teaching as defined by their contractual obligations. In recognition of the fact that freedoms are not absolute but imply commensurate responsibility, the College holds that academic freedom must be balanced with proper academic responsibility.

## **DEFINITION**

**Academic freedom** - the belief that the freedom of inquiry and expression in an academic environment is the right of responsible and self-disciplined faculty and scholars.

## **POLICY**

Faculty and staff are entitled to freedom to pursue classroom activities and study germane to their interests and academic appointments. Such freedom is guided by their contractual obligations, and subject to the performance requirements of their total responsibilities in the classroom, their department, and the College, as agreed between them and the College administration. The following policy statements outlines the nature of such freedom:

1. Faculty members have an obligation to fulfill their teaching responsibilities. The primary responsibility of faculty members to their subject is to seek and to state the truth as they see it. To this end, faculty members devote their energies to developing and improving their scholarly competence. As a member of this College, faculty members seek above all to be effective teachers, student advisors and scholars. Although faculty may follow subsidiary interests, these interests must not seriously hamper or compromise their teaching responsibilities and scholarly pursuits.
2. The College is not responsible for the actions or statements of faculty and staff when acting

in a private capacity. Faculty should exercise the restraint and self-discipline that the academy, if not the society, expects from persons in the profession, and in their private capacity, should make every reasonable effort to indicate that they speak as individuals and not for the College.

3. As members of a learned profession, faculty and staff members should recognise that the public would, to some degree, judge their profession by their utterances. Therefore, they should be accurate, respectful of the opinions of others, including their students; and should exercise appropriate restraint.
4. Faculty are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing the courses they have agreed to teach. In so doing, they undertake to demonstrate to their students and colleagues, a positive endorsement of the aims of the College, and concern for the value and intellectual needs of the students they are privileged to instruct.
5. Those who cannot support the vision, mission, philosophy, objectives, policies, and values of the College should refuse to accept or renew their appointments. Should those who are employed find themselves in significant disagreement with these foundations of the College choose to speak, write or otherwise publicly oppose the College, they may be subject to disciplinary action which may not exclude termination of employment.
6. To remove faculty and staff members who are hostile toward the basic principles of the College is not so much an infringement of their freedom as it is a protection of the integrity of the institution. Academic Freedom cannot protect faculty members if they break the Law. Academic Freedom does not protect faculty members from sanctions for professional misconduct. Those sanctions require clear proof established through due process. The Board of Governors will be responsible for the final determination regarding such infractions.

## **PROCEDURES**

Faculty who feel that their right to academic freedom has been hindered or violated, may seek to address their concerns by following the procedures outlined in the College's *Employee Grievance Policy*.

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