

ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

SECTION ONE: PURPOSE AND ALIGNMENT OF POLICY

1.01 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define and explicate academic freedom and responsibility as fundamental to the College District as a teaching and learning enterprise.

1.02 Alignment

Academic Freedom ensures faculty members and students can engage in the free search for truth and its free expression without undue or unreasonable interference. Such freedom is necessary to achieve academic excellence and fulfill the mission of helping students and the community reach their full potential. Correlated with academic freedom, faculty members have academic responsibilities to safeguard the quality, currency, and applicability of programs, curriculum, and pedagogy as well as the reputation of the faculty and College as a source of reliable knowledge and expertise in its service to the community.

SECTION TWO: ACADEMIC FREEDOM

2.01 Commitment

The Board of Trustees and administration shall respect and defend the academic freedom of College faculty members and students.

2.02 Academic Freedom Definition

Academic freedom is a scholar's freedom to (a) express ideas without unreasonable constraints or risk of professional disadvantage, (b) research and publish within the faculty member's field, and (c) explain or describe in the classroom and elsewhere discipline-related skills, concepts, or postulates grounded in the most relevant and suitable available evidence.

2.03 Faculty Concerns

The College District encourages any faculty member who believes his/her academic freedom is being unreasonably or illegally restricted to submit a complaint in accordance with the *DGBA (Local) - Employee Complaints* policy.

2.04 Student Concerns

The College District encourages any student who believes his/her academic freedom is being unreasonably or illegally restricted to submit a complaint in accordance with the *FLD (Local) - Student Complaints* policy.

SECTION THREE: ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITIES

3.01 General Principles

For faculty members, the notion of academic freedom is linked to the equally important concept of academic responsibility to safeguard the quality, currency, and applicability of

curriculum and pedagogy as well as the reputation of the faculty and College as a source of reliable knowledge and expertise in its service to the community.

3.02 Responsibilities

3.02.1 Each faculty member is responsible for maintaining professional competence in their field of specialization. Faculty members are responsible for exercising such competence in their teaching and other activities whereby scholarly and professional status are demonstrated and may be appraised.

3.02.2 Faculty members are responsible for fostering inclusive learning and working environments free from harassment, discrimination, or bias on the basis of culture, national origin, race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, age, religion, family structure or relationships, economic status, veteran status, or intellectual point of view.

3.02.3 Faculty members are responsible for encouraging scholarly values in students, including academic honesty and the exercise of academic freedom.

3.02.5 Faculty members are responsible for contributing to the governance of the College District, including but not limited to safeguarding the quality, currency, and applicability of academic programs, curriculum, and pedagogy.

SECTION FOUR: IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

4.01 Responsible Person

The College President is responsible for the implementation of this policy. The College President may delegate authority to create and administer procedures related to the implementation of this policy.

4.02 Communication to Constituents

The College District shall publish all policies and regulations in the *Angelina College Policy & Procedure Manual*, which the College makes available on its website with a hyperlink on the homepage.

The College President or designee will direct the College Marketing Office to provide a hyperlink to all new or revised policies and regulations in the *Angelina College Policy & Procedure Manual* in the “Weekly Update” email message sent to all employees.

The Human Resources Office shall share this policy with new full-time and adjunct instructors during their new employee orientation process.

4.03 Timeline for Completion of Procedures

The College President or designee will approve and publish procedures for this policy within 30 days of its adoption and/or amendment by the Board of Trustees.

4.04 Methodology for Monitoring Compliance and Reporting Results

Pursuant to *DGBA (Local) - Employee Complaints* policy, the Vice President of Academic Affairs or an academic administrator and the Human Resources Office will address and adjudicate all faculty complaints relating to academic freedom. Pursuant to *FLD (Local) - Student Complaints* policy, the Executive Director of Student Affairs and Human Resources Office will address and adjudicate all student complaints relating to academic freedom. The Human Resources Office will report the findings of any investigation of complaint filings relating to academic freedom to the Office of the President.

4.05 Schedule for Review

The College President will review any related complaints and corresponding investigative findings as they occur and review the currency and effectiveness of this policy biannually following each regular Texas Legislative Session.

SECTION FIVE: IMPLEMENTATION

5.01 Procedures

The College President or designee is responsible for adopting procedures as necessary to implement this local policy.

5.02 Compliance

Compliance with the adopted procedures is mandatory.

The Vice President of Academic Affairs is responsible for reviewing and updating this policy. Policy reviews are made in accordance with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness Policy Tracking document.