

**ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

<b>Policy Name:</b> Academic Freedom	<b>Responsible Owner:</b> VP, Academic and Provost	<b>Created:</b> 2009
<b>Policy Number:</b> A35	<b>Approval Body:</b> Senior Management Team (SMT)	<b>Last Reviewed/Revised:</b> 2018 Apr
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**A. PURPOSE**

Institutions of higher learning serve the common good of society and are dedicated to the pursuit and dissemination of truth, knowledge and understanding through fostering independent thinking and expression. These ends cannot be achieved without academic freedom.

**B. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all Academic Educators and Students at Douglas College.

**C. DEFINITIONS**

1. **Academic Freedom:** The freedom to engage in teaching, learning, research or other creative work in order to expand knowledge and to do so in an atmosphere of free inquiry and exposition. It includes the right to examine, question, teach and learn in an environment that supports the need to investigate, speculate and comment without penalty or sanction.
2. **Academic Educators:** This includes all College employees who are engaged in educational pursuits within the College. This may include external visitors, speakers or scholars operating under the auspices of the College.
3. **Students:** Those individuals enrolled in study at the College.

#### D. POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Douglas College will ensure a teaching and learning environment that supports academic freedom. Academic Educators and students have rights and privileges to engage in independent thinking and expression unhindered by external or non-academic constraint, to pursue avenues of inquiry and to engage in full and unrestricted consideration of any opinion. These rights carry with them the duty and responsibility to use that freedom in a way that is consistent with the scholarly pursuit of truth, knowledge and understanding. These rights and privileges must be exercised within the applicable laws and College policy reflecting these laws.
2. Academic Educators have academic freedom to pursue the following, without institutional censorship or reprisal:
  - Conduct teaching, including setting of educational activities and content in any media, and engage students in related discussion;
  - Freely express opinions on matters related to teaching and curricular responsibilities;
  - Carry out research and disseminate the results;
  - Produce and perform creative works;
  - Engage in service to the institution and community;
  - Acquire, preserve and provide access to the widest range of materials in all formats; and
  - Participate in professional and representative academic bodies.
3. Students have academic freedom to pursue the following, without institutional censorship or reprisal:
  - Raise for discussion in class aspects of a topic pertinent to the subject matter of that class;
  - Meet on campus to discuss topics or issues;
  - Carry out research under the guidance of an Educators member and disseminate the results;
  - Produce and perform creative works, under the guidance of an Educators member;
  - Engage in service to the institution and community; and
  - Express freely opinions about the institution and matters related to their course of study.
4. The rights of Academic Educators and students to exercise their academic freedom do not vary according to the medium in which they are exercised. These rights are as essential to academic activities undertaken electronically as to those undertaken in speech, writing and/or other media.
5. Academic Educators and students have the responsibility to foster and defend intellectual honesty, freedom of inquiry and instruction and the free expression of ideas; they are obliged to respect the opinions of students and others in the academic and College community and to maintain accuracy, integrity and academic honesty in the fulfillment of their roles.

6. Teaching and academic inquiry often involves controversial matters; Academic Educators are authorized to conduct frank discussions of controversial matters and to conduct research and other forms of inquiry into them.
7. As professionals and as employees of the College, Academic Educators may choose or be called upon to speak publicly in their area of expertise. In these cases, it is appropriate for them to identify themselves as College employees, but they should not present their views as the official position of the College.
8. Librarians have a duty to promote and maintain intellectual freedom in the institution in keeping with the principles expressed in the Canadian Library Association Position Statement on Intellectual Freedom and in the British Columbia Library Association Statement on Intellectual Freedom.

#### E. PROCEDURES

N/A

#### F. SUPPORTING FORMS, DOCUMENTS, WEBSITES, RELATED POLICIES

- [Canadian Library Association Position Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries](#)
- [British Columbia Library Association Statement on Intellectual Freedom](#)

#### [Administration Policies Page](#)

- Acceptable Use of Computer and Information Technology
- Advertising on College Property
- College Use of Copyrighted Works
- Integrity in Research and Scholarship Policy
- Standards of Conduct Involving College Employees Policy
- Standards of Student Conduct Policy
- Use of College Concourse Policy
- Violence Prevention Involving College Employees Policy
- Violence Prevention Involving Student/Users Policy

#### G. RELATED ACTS AND REGULATIONS

N/A

#### H. RELATED COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT CLAUSES

N/A