

Board Policy 4030

Academic Freedom

The El Camino College District recognizes that institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual faculty member or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition. Academic freedom is essential to these purposes and applies to both teaching and research. Academic freedom is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the faculty member in teaching and of the student in learning. It carries with it responsibilities correlative with rights. Accordingly, a faculty member shall have the freedom:

1. To examine or endorse unpopular or controversial ideas either in classroom teaching or in discussions with students as is appropriate to the course content, or in academic research or publication, while recognizing the responsibility to be accurate, objective and respectful of others. Faculty also have the responsibility to grade students solely on the basis of evidence of knowledge of the material pertinent to the class and attainment of appropriate skills, or other generally accepted grading criteria, avoiding any bias generated by a student's political outlook, religious belief or other personal attributes.
2. To select or recommend the selection of course instructional materials that may contain unpopular or controversial ideas, with the correlative responsibility that these materials are pertinent for the course.
3. To speak or write as a citizen, provided that the faculty member recognizes the special professional obligations of an educator to be accurate, objective and respectful of others, and that the faculty member take care to avoid leaving the impression that he or she is speaking for the college or the district.
4. To select or recommend library books, materials, media and online resources representing a multiplicity of philosophies and points of view, relying on professional expertise to maintain appropriate depth and breadth of the collections.

A faculty member shall not be subject to any adverse action affecting his or her employment with the El Camino College District for exercising any of the foregoing choices.

Board Policy 4030 supersedes Board Policy 4030.1 Teaching of Controversial Issues adopted by the Board on July 26, 1965.

Reference: Agreement, El Camino College Federation of Teachers, Article V.
El Camino College
Adopted: 8/21/06