



OKLAHOMA CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

NO. 4042 ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.0 A society, to remain free, requires citizens not only well-schooled in traditional knowledge, but fundamentally, citizens capable of critical evaluation of both new and old ideas. An institution of higher education can best foster growth in a democratic society when both student and teacher can freely participate in the process of shifting and weighing traditional approaches and creating and evaluating new ones. Through the community and the community college, society should provide an academic atmosphere in which questioning is encouraged, where alternatives can be explored, where one may follow where inquiry leads.
- 2.0 Oklahoma City Community College (“OCCC”) is committed to a systems approach to education as a means to fulfill its responsibilities to the community it serves. Fundamental to OCCC’s identity is the belief that professional educators must be academically free to seek and teach the truth.
- 3.0 DEFINITIONS:
 - 3.1 Professional academic freedom is defined as the freedom of professionally qualified persons to inquire or investigate, to discuss, publish or teach the truth as they see it in the discipline of their competence subject to no religious or political control of authority, except the control of standards of professional ethics or the authority of the rational methods by which truths and conclusions are established in the disciplines involved.¹
- 4.0 Academic freedom, along with its accompanying responsibilities, is seen by OCCC as a necessary right of OCCC persons who carry out instructional functions with students in situations designed to foster learning and of students who participate in those situations. Thus, educators and students are entitled to full academic freedom within a framework derived from OCCC philosophy and educational systems as described in OCCC’s educational master plan, bulletin and policies and procedures manual.
- 5.0 FREEDOMS:
 - 5.1 Educators enjoy full freedom in the discussion of their subjects and related topics both in and beyond the classroom, the ultimate purpose of such freedom being the pursuit of truth.
 - 5.2 For educators, the right of expression on matters of OCCC policy and procedure shall not be denied or abridged, nor should such expressions jeopardize their academic positions, as long as the expressions are in a professional and ethical manner.

¹ Hook, Sidney, “The Principles and Problems of Academic Freedom Accountability,” Vital Speeches of the Day, Vol. 7, 1984, pp. 701-704.

- 5.3 As citizens, educators are entitled to all the personal and civil liberties pertaining thereto, and legal exercise of these privileges should in no way prejudice their positions as members of OCCC community.
- 5.4 Program faculty shall have the responsibility for and authority to determine the design of their courses and instructional procedures in those courses in accordance with the principles of OCCC's philosophy and educational systems as described in the educational master plan, bulletin and policies and procedures manual.
- 6.0 RESPONSIBILITIES:
 - 6.1 In work, educators should adhere to the policy and procedure statements of OCCC; in activities as citizens, educators are governed by civil law.
 - 6.2 When speaking or writing as citizens, educators should be entirely free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community obliges them to remember that the public may judge the teaching profession as well as the institution by the validity of opinions and the manner in which they are expressed. When speaking or writing as citizens, educators should indicate that it is not done as spokespersons for the institution.
 - 6.3 Whether educators speak or write as citizens or as educators they should be scrupulously accurate and objective, should maintain appropriate emotional restraint and should show respect for the convictions of others.

Effective Date: 12-18-89

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