

## HARTNELL COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

### **BP 4030 Academic Freedom**

**Reference:** Title 5, Section 51023, ACCJC Accreditation Standard 4.1, ACCJC Accreditation Eligibility Requirements 13 and 20

#### **Introduction**

Hartnell Community College District is committed to the principle that the free expression of ideas is essential to the education of its students and to the effective governance of its colleges. The District recognizes that academic and intellectual freedom is best protected by a system of tenure, academic due process, and policies and procedures that provide faculty, students, and classified employees with the opportunity to freely express themselves in any campus venue, from the classroom to the board room. The District further subscribes to the principle that the free expression of ideas should be limited only by the responsibility to express ideas with fairness, and in a manner that respects the differing ideas of others and distinguishes between established fact and theories and one's own opinion.

#### **Rights of Academic Employees**

Academic freedom shall be guaranteed to all academic employees. No special limitations shall be placed upon study, investigation, presentation, and interpretation of facts and ideas concerning human society, the physical and biological world, and other branches of learning, subject to accepted standards of professional responsibility. The right to academic freedom herein established shall include the right to support or oppose political causes, issues, and parties outside of normal classroom activities.

Academic employees are citizens, members of learned professions, and members of the institution. When academic employees speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, provided they clearly indicate they are not representing the institution.

Academic freedom allows academic employees to seek and present the truth as they know it on problems and issues, subject to the accepted standards of professional responsibility, without fear of interference from administrators, the District Board of Trustees, governmental authorities, or pressure groups.

Although academic employees have the obligation to ensure that their classroom material meets the valid educational objectives of the course as stated in the approved Course Outline of Record, they are entitled to freedom in the classroom in presenting the subjects they teach and shall be free to select and use textbooks and materials that they deem appropriate to meet the stated learning outcomes for the course.

Academic employees are entitled to full freedom in their use of books, online sources, and internet sites and in the publication of the results of any research that may result from the use of these resources.

Academic employees may arrange for classroom lecturers or speakers to make presentations in regularly scheduled classes or groups of classes. The academic employees shall be responsible for the relevance of the lecturer or speaker's subject matter to the course.

### **Obligations of Academic Employees**

Academic freedom requires that all academic employees establish and preserve an open learning environment at the college. No special limitations shall be placed upon students in their study, investigation, presentation, and interpretation of facts and ideas concerning human society, the physical and biological world, and other branches of learning, subject to accepted standards of academic responsibility. Students shall have the opportunity to study controversial issues and divergent views and to arrive at their own conclusions. Academic employees have an obligation to protect the student's right to freedom of inquiry even when the student's conclusions differ from those of the academic employees.

While students may represent without penalty any opinion in or out of class, they may be required to demonstrate knowledge of views contrary to their own in order to fulfill course requirements.

### **Libraries and Learning Resource Centers**

Books and other library and learning resources materials selected and databases provided should be chosen for values of interest, information, and enlightenment of all the people of the community. In no case should library materials be excluded because of the race, nationality, social, political, or religious views of the authors. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting diverse points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

Formerly BP 4120 (Renumbered, revised) 10/4/11;