



Book	VCCCD Board Policy Manual
Section	Chapter 4 Academic Affairs
Title	BP 4030 Academic Freedom
Code	BP 4030
Status	Active
Legal	ACCJC Accreditation Standard II.C.7 Title 5, Section 51023 ACCJC Accreditation Eligibility Requirement 20
Adopted	April 18, 2006
Last Revised	September 12, 2017

The primary purpose of a college is to promote the exploration of ideas and the discovery and dissemination of knowledge and understanding. The college is to be an open forum for ideas and issues to be raised, challenged, and tested.

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of a college. Intellectual ferment is absolutely dependent upon academic and intellectual freedom. Freedom in teaching is fundamental for the protection of both faculty and students in teaching and learning. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of knowledge.

The 1940 American Association of University Professors (AAUP) Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure with 1970 Interpretative Comments* from the AAUP provides a nationally recognized definition of academic freedom, its protections and its responsibilities.

Academic Freedom

(a) Academic employees are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be conscientious regarding teaching subject matter which has no relation to their subject.

(b) Academic employees are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties, but research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution.

(c) Academic employees are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As scholars and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and institution by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times be accurate, should show respect for the opinions of others, and indicate that they are not speaking for the institution.

It is the policy of VCCCD that all academic employees, regardless of their employment status, should enjoy the privileges and exercise the responsibilities inherent in academic freedom as defined by the AAUP statement. In addition, all VCCCD employees enjoy the same protection and responsibilities within the context of their obligations. Furthermore, faculty tenure constitutes the strongest procedural safeguard of academic freedom and individual responsibility, and as such, is essential for the maintenance of intellectual liberty and high standards in teaching and scholarship.

* The footnote from the 1970 Interpretative Notes on the AAUP Statement reads: "The intent of this statement is not to discourage what is 'controversial.' Controversy is at the heart of free academic inquiry which the entire statement is designed to focus. The passage serves to underscore the need for teachers to avoid persistently intruding material which has no relation to the subject."

Reference: this policy has been adapted almost verbatim from the California State University System's statement on Academic Freedom, which is in turn substantially based on AAUP's 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure with 1970 Interpretative Comments.

See [Administrative Procedure AP 4030](#).