



**NORTHERN
PENNSYLVANIA
REGIONAL COLLEGE**

Policy: NPRC-3000 Academic Freedom
Origination: 04-20-2020
Approved: 05-08-2020
Effective: 05-08-2020
Reviewed:
Last Updated:

Subject: Academic Freedom

1. PURPOSE

This policy establishes the expectations and responsibilities regarding academic freedom essential to the foundation of education. NPRC is committed to the principle and the practice of academic freedom that is inherent in the search for scholarly truth. This policy informs other NPRC policies, particularly those that guide our academic efforts, publicly express ideas and opinions, use of College technology, and interactions with each other.

2. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This policy is applicable to all employees and students.

3. REFERENCES

3.1 American Association of University Professors, 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1 Academic freedom is an individual's right to engage in intellectual inquiry, debate, speech, and in writing, on and off campus, without fear of censorship, retaliation, or sanction. It allows the exploration of significant and controversial questions as an essential component of education and advancing knowledge. The intellectual search for transmission of knowledge provides the college community opportunities for critical thinking and understanding of conflicting viewpoints. Academic freedom allows individuals to investigate, to form conclusions, and to express judgments and opinions without interference from special interests or conflicting public opinion. Academic freedom includes the right to constructively criticize college policies in appropriate forums as part of the governance process without fear of retribution.

5. POLICY

5.1 NPRC is committed to the free inquiry and discussion of ideas as necessary and beneficial for the pursuit of higher education for a free society and for the common

good. The college upholds the protection that academic freedom affords to all members of the college community. Members of the college community have a corresponding duty to exercise the responsibilities that accompany academic freedom.

- 5.2 NPRC encourages a scholarly atmosphere by fostering respect for new, challenging, or controversial ideas and diverse viewpoints among NPRC community members.
- 5.3 In the exercise of academic freedom faculty members may, without limitation, discuss their own subject in the classroom. This freedom involves the right to introduce controversial topics if the presentation involves objective reasoning and rational discussion. Discussion of controversial matter which has no relation to their subject is not protected by academic freedom.
- 5.4 Faculty and students have a responsibility to engage in teaching and learning that honors and respects divergent viewpoints that are grounded in reason, logic, evidence, and responsible scholarship.
- 5.5 Students are evaluated only on academic criteria and standards, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to those criteria and standards.
- 5.6 When employees speak or write as citizens, care should be taken to avoid the representation of any personal view as that of NPRC.
- 5.7 Consistent with the above statements, NPRC endorses the following statement from the American Association of University Professors:

College and university teachers 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 their institution by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution.

6. RESPONSIBILITIES AND TIMELINES

The Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs or designee is responsible for oversight and administration of this policy.

7. SIGNATURES

Signature on file

Chair, Board of Trustees

Date

Signature on file

President

Date