



COLLEGE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE MANUAL

Procedure Title	Procedure Number	Page(s)	Date Adopted:
Academic Freedom Responsibility	DGC - I		08/26/2025

BASED ON BOARD POLICY

Section	Policy Title	Policy Number	Date Adopted:
D - Personnel	Employee Rights and Privileges: Employee Expression and Use of College Facilities	DGC	08/26/2025

I. ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good, which depends upon an uninhibited search for truth and its open expression. Essential to this goal is the freedom of each faculty member to pursue scholarly inquiry without undue restriction and to voice and publish individual conclusions concerning the significance of evidence the faculty member considers relevant. Each faculty member must be free from the corrosive fear that others, inside or outside the community of higher education, because their vision may differ, may threaten the faculty member's professional career or the material benefits accruing from it.

Each faculty member is entitled to full freedom in the classroom in discussing the subject taught, but is expected to be judicious in introducing into teaching controversial matters which have little relation to the classroom subject. Each faculty member is a citizen of the nation, state and community; when speaking, writing, or acting as such, the faculty member must be free from institutional censorship or discipline.

II. ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITY

The concept of academic freedom for faculty must be accompanied by an equally demanding concept of academic responsibility of faculty. A faculty member has a responsibility to the institution, profession, students, and society at large. The rights and privileges of faculty members extended by society and protected by governing boards through written policies and procedures on academic freedom and tenure, and further protected by the



courts, require reciprocally the assumption of certain responsibilities by faculty members.

1. The fundamental responsibilities of a faculty member as a teacher and scholar include maintenance of competence in the field of specialization and the exhibition of competence in the classroom, studio, or laboratory by such activities as discussions, lectures, consultations, publications, and participation in professional organizations.
2. The exercise of professional integrity by a faculty member includes recognition that the public will judge the profession and Institution by public statements. Therefore, the faculty member should strive for accuracy and appropriate restraint, respecting different opinions, and making it clear that he/she does not speak or act for the Institution by public statements or when speaking or acting as a private person.
3. The constitutionally protected right of the faculty member to freedom of expression must be balanced with the Institution's interest of promoting the efficiency of its educational services. A faculty member's comments are protected even though erroneous or highly critical in tone or content, but are not protected free speech if they substantially impede the faculty member's performance of daily duties, or materially interfere with the regular operation of the Institution.
4. The protection of free speech does not extend to a continuing pattern of expression such as to destroy the regular operation of a division or department. Statements made in knowing disregard of the truth are not entitled to protection, and public statements may be so without foundation as to interfere with the faculty member's competence to perform professional duties.
5. A faculty member should be judicious in the use of controversial material in the classroom and should introduce such material only as it has clear relationship to the subject area.
6. A faculty member should be professional in conduct in the classroom and in relationship with students, maintaining respect for the student and for the student's posture as a learner. The faculty member should be appropriately available to the student for consultation on course work.
7. A faculty member commits to maintain the highest ethical standards through adherence to the College Ethics Policy as adopted by the McLennan Community College Board of Trustees and to adhere to the Code of Professional Ethics as adopted by the Texas



Community Colleges Teachers Association.

8. A faculty member has the responsibility of providing timely and adequate notice of intention to interrupt or terminate employment.



CODE OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

(Revised February 20, 1997)

The McLennan Community College Board of Trustees endorses the Code of Professional Ethics adopted by the Texas Community College Teachers Association (Revised February 20, 1997) as described below:

The Professional Educator shall treat all persons with respect, dignity, and justice discriminating against no one on any arbitrary basis such as ethnicity, creed, gender, disability, or age.

The Professional Educator shall strive to help each student realize his or her full potential as a learner and as a human being.

The Professional Educator shall by example and action encourage and defend the unfettered pursuit of truth by both colleagues* and students, supporting free exchange of ideas, observing the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity, and seeking always an attitude of scholarly objectivity and tolerance of other viewpoints.

The Professional Educator shall work to enhance cooperation and collegiality among students, faculty, administrators, and other personnel.

The Professional Educator shall recognize and preserve the confidential nature of professional relationships, neither disclosing nor encouraging the disclosure of information or rumor which might damage or embarrass or violate the privacy of any other person.

- The Professional Educator shall maintain competence through continued professional development, shall demonstrate that competence through consistently adequate preparation and performance, and shall seek to enhance that competence by accepting and appropriating constructive criticism and evaluation.
- The Professional Educator shall make the most judicious and effective use of the college's time and resources.
- The Professional Educator shall fulfill the employment agreement both in spirit and in fact, shall give reasonable notice upon resignation, and shall neither accept tasks for which he or she is not qualified nor assign tasks to unqualified persons.
- The Professional Educator shall support the goals and ideals of the college and shall act in public and private affairs in such a manner as to bring credit to the college.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- The Professional Educator shall not engage in sexual harassment of students or colleagues and shall adhere to the college's policy on sexual conduct.
- The Professional Educator shall observe the policies and procedures of the college, reserving the right to seek revision in a judicious and appropriate manner.
- The Professional Educator shall participate in the governance of the college by accepting a fair share of committee and institutional responsibilities.
- The Professional Educator shall support the right of all colleagues to academic freedom and due process and defend and assist a professional colleague accused of wrongdoing, incompetence, or other serious offense so long as the colleague's innocence may reasonably be maintained.
- The Professional Educator shall not support a colleague whose persistently unethical conduct or professional incompetence has been demonstrated through due process.
- The Professional Educator shall accept all rights and responsibilities of citizenship, always avoiding use of the privileges of his or her public position for private or partisan advantage.

**In this Code the term "colleague" refers to all persons employed by colleges in the educational enterprise.*