

ACADEMIC FREEDOM POLICY

This document is the parent policy for any College procedures. Questions regarding this policy are to be directed to the identified Policy Owner.

Category:	Student/Academic
Policy Number:	D47
Approval Date:	April 15, 2021
Effective Date:	April 15, 2021
Policy Owner:	Vice President, Academic and Student Experience

Objective:	<p>This policy outlines who has Academic Freedom at Olds College and the College's role in protecting Academic Freedom. Academic freedom is essential to the role of higher education institutions in a democratic society. Olds College is committed to the pursuit of knowledge, truth, and understanding and its communication to others, including students and the broader community.</p> <p>Scope: This policy applies to all Olds College academic staff (faculty members and staff who have direct interaction with curriculum delivery and research), and current students.</p>
Policy:	<p>Olds College values and protects the principles of academic freedom, including freedom of inquiry, discourse, intellectual independence, teaching, scholarly activity, research, and publication. The privilege of academic freedom is extended in the context of academic integrity and responsibility in the delivery of curriculum, conduct of research, inquiry and other scholastic pursuits. Academic freedom offers faculty the opportunity and protection for reflective thought, open dialogue and responsible challenge to prevailing opinion in research and publication, which are crucial to the social vitality of the Institute, to the pursuit of truth and to the advancement of knowledge.</p> <p>In accordance with Campus Alberta Quality Council (CAQC), "an institution's academic staff and students must be free to examine and to test all knowledge appropriate to their disciplines as judged by the academic community in general" (CAQC, 2017).</p> <p>Guidelines and Principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic freedom fosters independent thought and expression through the use of evidence, impartial reasoning, and honesty. • Academic freedom does not imply rights greater than those granted to all Canadian citizens under the laws of the Government of Canada, including

the Human Rights Act and provincial laws.

- Academic freedom is constrained by the professional standards of the relevant discipline, and the responsibility of the institution to set and organize its academic mission, including the protection of proprietary and confidential information.
- Academic freedom protects academic and research activities from undue influence or compromise from funding sources.
- Academic freedom is a right of faculty, students, and staff involved in instructional delivery; it is a responsibility for the leadership of Olds College.
- Faculty and staff members are free to:
 - Conduct teaching and related discussions in their respective subject areas.
 - Express opinions freely on matters related to teaching and curricular responsibilities
 - Carry out research and disseminate the results
 - Access, accrue, and provide documentary material
 - Participate in professional and academic bodies
 - Act or speak in their capacity as a citizen
 - Select course materials, content, delivery methodology and sequence of subjects, within the frameworks of Olds College policies, course outlines, and requirements of Campus Alberta Quality Council as well as any other governing bodies to which the College is accountable.
- Students are free to:
 - Discuss and express opinions in class, related to any aspect of a topic pertinent to the subject matter of that class.
 - Under the guidance of faculty or other college employee, carry out research, create products and disseminate the results
 - Assemble on campus for the purpose of civilized discussion of any topic or issue.
- As no freedom is absolute and no right is unlimited, those who claim the right to academic freedom must also accept the associated personal and professional responsibilities.
- Faculty are responsible to submit their knowledge and claims to rigorous and public review by peers who are experts in the subject matter under consideration and to ground their arguments in the best available evidence.

Definitions:

Academic Freedom: The freedom to teach, learn, conduct research, pursue truth, produce creative works, and disseminate knowledge and results in an academic environment without reprisal or interference.

Faculty: An academic staff member employed by Olds College under the Olds College Faculty Association Collective Agreement.

Student: Any person enrolled in study at Olds College.

Staff: As it relates to this policy, staff are employees of Olds College with direct interaction with students in curriculum delivery and researchers.

Related Information:

Related Olds College Policies

- [A25 - Code of Conduct](#)
- [A38 - Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [D30 - Complaints and Appeals](#)
- [Freedom of Expression](#)
- [D44 - Research Involving Animals](#)
- [D45 - Research Involving Humans](#)
- [D38 - Responsible Conduct of Research](#)
- [C26 - Progressive Discipline](#)
- [D31 - Academic Integrity](#)
- [A42 - Social Media](#)
- [A30 - Fair Dealing](#)
- [A29 - Use of Copyrighted Material](#)

Related Procedures:

Review Period:

Annually for the first two years, then every three years.

Revision History:

April 2021: NEW