

## ACADEMIC FREEDOM

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

<b>Category:</b>	A. Academic
<b>Policy Number:</b>	A01
<b>Approval Date:</b>	May 24, 2023
<b>Effective Date:</b>	May 24, 2023
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Vice President, Academic

<b>Objective:</b>	<p>This policy outlines who has Academic Freedom at Olds College of Agriculture &amp; Technology (the “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. The 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 College academic staff (faculty members and staff who have direct interaction with curriculum delivery and research), and current students.</p>
<b>Policy:</b>	<p>The College values and protects the principles of Academic Freedom, including freedom of inquiry, discourse, intellectual independence, teaching, scholarly activity, research, and publication and other forms of dissemination. 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> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Academic Freedom fosters independent thought and expression through the use of evidence, impartial reasoning, and honesty.</li> <li>2. 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.</li> <li>3. Academic Freedom is constrained by the professional standards of the</li> </ol>

relevant discipline, and the responsibility of the institution to set and organize its academic mission, including the protection of proprietary and confidential information.

4. Academic Freedom protects academic and research activities from undue influence or compromise from funding sources.
5. Academic Freedom is a right of faculty, students, and staff involved in direct interaction with curriculum delivery and research); it is a responsibility for the leadership of the College.
6. Faculty and staff members are free to:
  - a. Conduct teaching and related discussions in their respective subject areas.
  - b. Express opinions freely on matters related to teaching and curricular responsibilities
  - c. Carry out research and disseminate the results
  - d. Access, accrue, and provide documentary material
  - e. Participate in professional and academic bodies
  - f. Act or speak in their capacity as a citizen
  - g. Select course materials, content, delivery methodology and sequence of subjects, within the frameworks of the College policies, course outlines, and requirements of Campus Alberta Quality Council as well as any other governing bodies to which the College is accountable.
7. Students are free to:
  - a. Discuss and express opinions in class, related to any aspect of a topic pertinent to the subject matter of that class.
  - b. Under the guidance of faculty or other college employee, carry out research, create products and disseminate the results
  - c. Assemble on campus for the purpose of civilized discussion of any topic or issue.
8. 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.
9. Faculty are responsible to submit their knowledge and claims to rigorous and transparent peer review 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 the College under the Olds College Faculty Association Collective Agreement.

**Student:** Any person enrolled in study at the College.

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

**Related Information:**

- G02 Code of Conduct Policy
- I07 Student Code of Conduct Policy
- D10 Freedom of Expression Policy
- H03 Research Involving Animals Policy
- H04 Research Involving Humans Policy
- H05 Responsible Conduct of Research Policy
- G18 Progressive Discipline Policy

	A02 Academic Integrity Policy D08 Social Media Policy B10 Use of Copyright Material Policy
<b>Related Procedures:</b>	
<b>Review Period:</b>	3 years
<b>Revision History:</b>	New: April 2021 Revised: May 2023