

WGTC 6.7

Academic Freedom and Professional Ethics

To ensure an academic program marked by excellence, West Georgia Technical College supports the principle of academic freedom. In its pursuit to guarantee such freedom, the College provides an environment in which faculty can teach and pursue knowledge and discuss ideas openly without restriction, interference, or fear of reprisal.

In the development of knowledge, research endeavors, and creative activities, faculty and students are free to cultivate a spirit of inquiry and scholarly criticism. Faculty members are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject. Although caution must be used not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject, faculty and students must be able to examine ideas in an atmosphere of freedom and confidence and to participate as responsible citizens in community affairs.

Instructors are private citizens as well as representatives of the College. When faculty members write, act, or speak as citizens about matters of general public interest, they will be free from College censorship or discipline. However, their position in the community carries with it certain obligations. As professional educators, they must recognize that the public may judge their profession and College by whatever comments they may make. Therefore, they should strive always to be accurate, to exercise restraint, to respect the opinions of others, and clearly indicate when they are speaking as private citizens and not as representatives of the College.

Faculty encourage the pursuit of learning by students, demonstrating respect for the students as individuals and adhering to the proper role as learning guide and counselor. Faculty members make every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct and to assure that evaluation of students reflects their true performance. Faculty members respect the confidential nature of the relationship between instructor and student and avoid any exploitation of students for private advantage.

As a colleague, the instructor has obligations that derive from membership in the College community. The instructor respects and defends the free inquiry of other faculty members. In the exchange of criticism and ideas, faculty should show due respect for the opinion of others.

Faculty members strive to be objective in their professional judgment of others. Individual instructors accept a share of faculty responsibilities for meeting the goals of the College.

As a member of the College, the instructor seeks above all to be an effective teacher. Although faculty must observe state regulations, members should maintain the right to question and seek revision. When considering the termination of their teaching obligation with the College, instructors must recognize the effect of that decision upon the program of study and give due notice of intentions.

Although West Georgia's faculty members have the rights and obligations of any citizen, the urgency of these obligations is measured in the light of their responsibilities to students. At no time shall the principles of academic freedom prevent the College from making proper efforts to assure the best possible instruction for all students in accordance with the objectives of the College.

West Georgia Technical College safeguards and protects the rights of academic freedom by providing faculty and students the due process to initiate grievance procedures (per WGTC Employee Complaint Resolution Procedure, WGTC 4.14) should they have complaints regarding the infringement of these rights or personal penalization as the result of the exercise of this freedom.

Reference: State Board Procedure 5.1.1p.
<https://tcsգ.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/policymanual/overview>

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