

Board of Trustees Agenda Item

Board Meeting Date: January 5, 2010

Title of Item: Approval of Revision to BP 4190 Academic Freedom

Background and Analysis:

In the continuing review of Board Policies, the Chancellor's Advisory Committee is recommending changes to BP 4190 per the attached. These changes were primarily constructed by the Academic Senates at Foothill and De Anza, and reviewed by legal counsel and the Chancellor's Advisory Committee. The existing policy is attached showing strikethroughs of existing language with the proposed new policy attached.

The first reading of this proposed policy was reviewed at the Board of Trustees meeting on December 7, 2009. No changes were recommended so the policy can now be approved as final at the January 5, 2010 meeting. Staff will be in attendance to answer any questions the Board may have regarding these proposed changes.

Recommendation: Approve BP 4190, Academic Freedom

Submitted by:	Mike Brandy
Additional contact names:	
Is backup provided?	No

Academic Freedom

4190

Academic freedom encompasses the freedom to study, teach and express ideas and viewpoints, including unpopular and controversial ones, without censorship, political restraint or retribution. Academic freedom allows for the free exchange of ideas in the conscientious pursuit of truth. This freedom exists in all service areas, including but not limited to teaching, librarianship, counseling, coordinating and all faculty-student interactions. Academic Freedom is the bedrock principle of all institutions of learning and must be extended to all faculty regardless of their status as full-time, part-time, or probationary.

Faculty members have the principal right and responsibility to determine the content, pedagogy, methods of instruction, the selection, planning and presentation of course materials, and the fair and equitable methods of assessment in their assignment in accordance with the approved curriculum and course outline and the educational mission of the District, and in accordance with state laws and regulations. These rights and responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the faculty member's choice of textbooks and other course materials, assignments and assessment methods, teaching practices, grading and evaluation of student work, and teaching methods and practices.

Approved 4/20/60
Amended 11/18/96
Approved FH Academic Senate 6/1/09
Approved DA Academic Senate 6/8/09
Proposed Approval 1/5/10

Academic Freedom

4190

The Foothill-De Anza Community College District Board of Trustees believes that faculty and students have the right to pursue teaching and learning with full freedom of inquiry. In order to assure that this viewpoint is understood by all, the Board adopts the following policy.

Academic freedom and academic responsibility are inseparable. Academic freedom is the right of faculty members to interpret findings and communicate conclusions without being subjected to any interference, molestation, or penalization because these conclusions are at variance with those of constituted authorities or organized groups beyond the Colleges.

Likewise, the academic freedom of students is the freedom to express and to defend views or beliefs, the freedom to question and to differ, without authoritative repression and without scholastic penalization by the faculty or the Colleges.

Academic freedom carries with it corresponding responsibility. Academic responsibility emphasizes the obligation to study, to investigate, to present and interpret, and to discuss facts and ideas concerning human society and the physical and biological world in all branches and fields of knowledge. Since human knowledge is limited and changeable, the faculty member will acknowledge the facts on which controversial views are based and show respect for opinions held by others. While striving to avoid bias, *the faculty employee* will nevertheless present the conclusions to which he *or she* believes the evidence points.

College faculty members are citizens, members of a learned profession and officers of educational institutions. 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 persons of learning and educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Therefore, they should at all times be accurate, they should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not institutional spokespersons.

It is recognized that all staff members of the College will be guided by the recommendations of the curriculum committees, the administration, and the policies approved by the Board of Trustees on the general purposes of the courses offered.

To insure these principles of academic freedom for De Anza and Foothill Colleges, the administrators of the District and the Board, as the governing body of the District, will at all times demonstrate their support by actively and openly working toward a climate which will foster this freedom. Such participation will extend to the point of defending and supporting tenured or non-tenured faculty members who, while maintaining the high standards of their profession, find their freedom of expression attacked or curtailed.