



# Santiago Canyon College

## Academic Freedom

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## Academic Freedom

As Academic Freedom allows Santiago Canyon College Faculty the latitude to engage students in a manner they deem best appropriate for student success, Academic Freedom is of paramount importance to the Academic Senate at Santiago Canyon College. Because of this, the Academic Senate is committed to not only regularly reviewing policies regarding Academic Freedom but to allowing space and time for the discussion of best practices as it relates to Academic Freedom.

A formal discussion regarding Academic Freedom emerged at the Spring 2017 Senate Retreat. Later that semester, the Senate approved Resolution S2017.3 that created a group to further examine the District's policy on academic freedom (Board Policy 4030). This emerged as a result of the political climate at the time and events at another Orange County community college that brought the issue to the surface. The Academic Freedom Task Force was formed in order to engage in additional discussion regarding BP 4030 and determine whether or not an additional, separate policy needed to be created specifically by and for faculty. Academic Senate representatives were also asked to obtain feedback from their faculty constituents regarding Academic Freedom concerns and recommendations.

The Academic Freedom Task Force, which consisted of faculty from Astronomy, Counseling, English, History, Math, and Psychology, was asked to critically discuss BP 4030 along with Academic Freedom policies from other districts and advising bodies (e.g., AAUP). This task force was asked to determine: 1) whether or not BP 4030 was sufficient in its protections of faculty and 2) if this policy adequately described the concept of Academic Freedom or whether an additional recommendation was needed.

In May 2017, the Academic Freedom Task Force determined that, in fact, BP 4030 appeared to sufficiently protect the faculty's Academic Freedom as well as delineate associated responsibilities and student rights in the classroom. Also, existing literature such as that published by the American Association of University Professors was seen as an available resource to further define best practices. The group felt that no other policy needed to be created. With students' classroom experience in mind, the Academic Senate also recommended that ASG collaborate with students to create a separate Student Bill of Rights in the near future.

### BP 4030 Academic Freedom

*Reference: Title 5, Section 51023; ACCJC Accreditation Eligibility Requirement 20 and AACJC Accreditation Standard I.C.7 (formerly II.A.7)*

The teacher should be free to think and to express ideas, free to select and employ materials and methods of instruction, free from undue pressures of authority, and free to act within his/her professional group. Such freedom should be used judiciously and prudently to the end that it promotes the free exercise of intelligence and student learning. Academic freedom is not an absolute. It must be exercised within the law and the basic ethical responsibilities of the teaching profession. Those responsibilities include:

1. An understanding of our democratic tradition and its methods.
2. A concern for the welfare, growth, maturity, and development of students.
3. The method of scholarship.
4. Application of good taste and judgment in selecting and employing materials and methods of instruction.

### Academic Freedom as identified by the American Association of University Professors

1. Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties; but research for pecuniary return should be

based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution.

2. Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to the subject. Limitations of academic freedom because of religious or other aims of the institution should be clearly stated in writing at the time of appointment.
3. College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an education institution. 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 scholars and education officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence they should at all time be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution.



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