



# Academic Affairs Policy & Procedure

<b>Section:</b>	<b>Academic Affairs</b>
<b>Policy Number/Name:</b>	<b>AA:FA:002 Academic Freedom</b>
<b>Origin:</b>	<b>VPAA</b>
<b>Status:</b>	<b>Approved 6/14</b>
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## **Purpose**

It is the policy of Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC) to support the principles of academic freedom. The importance of academic freedom is crucial in the development of critical thinking, the fostering of creative and alternative ideas, the encouragement of free expression, all within the bounds of institutional policy and decorum. The focus of academic freedom is on the creation and discourse of ideas in an environment where topics, not persons or traits, are subject to challenge and development.

This policy shall apply to the comments, actions, and expressions of faculty and students of NICC in the classroom and any other academic session.

## **Policy and Procedure**

### **The Rights of Academic Freedom for Faculty:**

Faculty members of NICC shall have the following rights under the protections of academic freedom:

- a. To determine the content of a course consistent with the course guide and other state or federal requirements that may apply to a course (e.g. accreditation requirements);
- b. To determine the pedagogy for a course or program;
- c. To create and implement the methods of instruction; and
- d. To create and require the methods of, timing, and character of assessments.

### **The Responsibilities of Academic Freedom for Faculty:**

Faculty members of NICC shall be charged with the following responsibilities when exercising the rights of academic freedom set out above:

1. The obligation to frame discussion and content in a manner related to the course content. Faculty have the right to introduce topics related to the

- course subject matter, but must take caution to not introduce or infuse matters or opinions that have no relation to the course or the field of study;
2. The obligation to protect the physical, emotional, and psychological safety of the students in the teaching and methods employed in the course;
  3. The obligation to protect the integrity and civility of the classroom environment, including, but not limited to, the privacy and dignity of students and classroom participants;
  4. The obligation to conduct and manage all activity related to the course within the framework of the discipline;
  5. The obligation to conduct themselves consistent with the requirements of the NICC Faculty and Employee Handbooks, as may be amended from time to time; and
  6. The obligation to make reasonable efforts to assist students to achieve the academic goals set out in a student's plan of study or the course objectives.

### **The Rights of Academic Freedom for Students:**

Students of NICC have the following rights and protections under the conditions of academic freedom:

- a. To have ideas, material, and content presented on in the academic setting that is related to the subject matter of the course;
- b. To learn in an atmosphere conducive to the physical, emotional, and psychological safety of the student;
- c. To be provided the legal and civil rights protections granted and required by law;
- d. To be allowed and encouraged to challenge ideas, concepts, and content without retribution and recourse;
- e. To be provided information on course expectations, grades, and other information directly related to performance or completion of a course;

### **The Responsibilities of Academic Freedom for Students:**

Students of NICC shall be charged with the following responsibilities when exercising the rights of academic freedom set out above:

1. The obligation to participate in discussion and the free expression of ideas in a manner related to the pedagogy as determined by the faculty member. Students have the right to freely express opinions and discuss topics related to the course subject matter, but must take caution to not introduce or infuse matters or opinions that have no relation to the course or the field of study or detract from the methods of instruction determined by the faculty;
2. The obligation to not compromise the physical, emotional, and psychological safety of the faculty or fellow students during the conducting of the course;
3. The obligation to protect the integrity and civility of the classroom environment, including, but not limited to, the privacy and dignity of faculty, students and classroom participants;

4. The obligation to conduct themselves consistent with the requirements of the NICC Code of Student Conduct; and
5. The obligation to make reasonable efforts to achieve the academic goals set out in the plan of study or the course objectives.

**Disclaimer:**

Nothing set out in this Academic Freedom Policy is intended to be nor should be interpreted to abridge or expand the rights and obligations granted to or placed on faculty and students under any and all federal or state law. This policy is intended to define and explain the rights and obligations of faculty and students consistent with the legal rights and obligations of NICC as an educational entity.

**Reviewers of Policy AA:FA:002**

Director of Human Resources  
VPAA  
Deans

**Forms**