

## **Policies and Regulations**

### **Policy STC 805.1**

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#### **Academic Freedom**

##### **Definition**

Academic freedom is an individual's right to engage in intellectual debate, research, speech, written or electronic correspondence, on and off campus, without fear of censorship, retaliation or sanction. Academic freedom encompasses both the individual's and Southeast Technical College's right to maintain academic standards and gives faculty members substantial latitude in deciding how to teach the courses to which they are assigned, encourage intellectual integrity, are appropriate to subject matter, sustain pedagogical approaches consistent with the discipline taught and evaluate student work. Academic freedom preserves the right of individuals to disagree with policies or procedures. Academic freedom includes the right for one individual to challenge the views of another individual.

Academic freedom does not involve expression that substantially impairs the rights of others or the imposition of political, religious, or philosophical beliefs on individuals of the Southeast Tech community. Academic Freedom does not provide protection of faculty who demonstrate professional ignorance, incompetence, or dishonesty with regard to their assigned discipline or fields of expertise, or who engage in arbitrary or capricious evaluation of students.

##### **Complaint Procedure**

Complaint resolution will be conducted according to the complaint resolution policy procedure in the Southeast Tech Employee Handbook or Southeast Tech Catalog as they apply.

##### **Faculty Responsibilities**

Faculty are expected to be accurate, objective, and purposeful. Material presented or discussed should be related to the course's subject matter. Faculty are expected to present and discuss assignments and material relevant to the student learning outcomes presented in the course outline. Faculty are responsible to set reasonable rules for appropriate classroom discourse, including limits to speech that is unrelated to class material or substantially impairs the rights of others.

##### **Community Responsibilities**

Throughout the educational process, members of the Southeast Tech community, which include faculty, staff, students, and guests are encouraged to participate in spirited and open debate as well as intellectual exchange. In the course of inquiry, individual members of our community may express viewpoints that other individuals may find disagreeable, unwelcome, or objectionable. All individual members of the Southeast Tech community also bear the responsibility to distinguish those behaviors that may violate Southeast Tech's student or employee Code of Conduct. Verbal harassment of, or threats directed toward, any member of the community, breach of peace on institute property or at any institute-sponsored function in a manner that disturbs the privacy of other individuals and/or the

instructional program, violation of institute regulations or policies, and breach of any federal, state, or local criminal law, either on campus or at any institute-sponsored activity, are examples of individual conduct violations that are not protected under the Academic Freedom Policy.

Regulation approved:	07.08.19	Board Action ST00400	(formerly IB-R/STC	07-01-25)
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