



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 3357:15-13-48 Freedom of expression and responsibilities.

Effective: [October 16, 2022](#)

The college believes that the right of expression is as necessary as the right of inquiry and that both must be preserved as essential to the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge and truth.

Students, including student groups, have a fundamental constitutional right to free speech. The college is committed to giving students broad latitude to speak, write, listen, challenge, learn, and discuss any issue. The college is further committed to maintaining campus as a marketplace of ideas for all students and faculty in which the exchange of ideas is not to be suppressed because the ideas put forth are thought by some members of the college community to be offensive, unwise, indecent, disagreeable, conservative, liberal, traditional, radical, or wrong-headed; it is not the college's role to shield individuals from such speech or to use concerns about civility and mutual respect as justification for closing off the discussion of such speech. The college believes that it is for individual students and faculty to make judgments about ideas for themselves, and to act on those judgments not by seeking to suppress free speech, but by openly and vigorously contesting the ideas they oppose. The primary responsibility of faculty is to engage in honest, courageous, and persistent effort to search out and communicate the truth that lies in the areas of their competence.

Although all students and all faculty are free to state their own views about and contest the views expressed on campus, and to state their own views about and contest speakers who are invited to express their views on campus, they may not substantially obstruct or otherwise substantially interfere with the freedom of others to express views they reject or even loathe. To this end, the college has a responsibility to promote a lively and fearless freedom of debate and deliberation and protect that freedom. The college is committed to providing an atmosphere that is most conducive to speculation, experimentation, and creation by all students and all faculty, who shall always remain free to inquire, to study and to evaluate, and to gain new understanding.

Academic freedom is the right to engage in intellectual expression, on and off campus, without fear of censorship, retaliation, or sanctions. This right is essential to the longstanding goal of higher education to seek the truth by encompassing varying viewpoints. Academic freedom includes both the individuals and institutions' responsibility to maintain academic standards and to encourage



intellectual inquiry and integrity. Academic freedom of expression extends to all members of the academic community, subject to constitutional limits on expression that is defamatory, incites violence, discriminates, or harasses.

College employees are entitled to academic freedom and to pursue scholarly interests without fear of censure, discipline, or reprisal; but they are subject to the standards of professional conduct set forth in the policies and procedures manual. When college employees speak or write as citizens, they are free from college censorship or discipline; but their special position in the community imposes special obligations, as the public may judge the institution by their comments. Hence, employees are encouraged to be accurate at all times, exercise appropriate restraint, show respect for the opinions of others, and should indicate that they do not speak for the college.

College faculty members may present course content in their own scholarly manner. The college design best practices established by the college, ethical standards of the discipline, and state college policies and procedures are subject to this policy and must be followed by faculty. Faculty members are free to discuss subject matter aligned with the approved course learning objectives. However, faculty members must refrain from persistently using a substantial portion of classroom instruction to introduce material that has no bearing on the subject matter of the course and/or which is outside the area(s) of their competence and training. Students will be graded only on the intellectual merits of their work. Academic freedom does not allow a faculty member to impel his or her opinions on students. Consequently, faculty members must assess student learning for mastery of course content, rather than a student's personal beliefs on a subject or a student's subjective decision to agree or disagree with a particular aspect of the material.

Nothing within this policy shall be interpreted as preventing the college from imposing measures under its policies and procedures that do not violate the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution or Article I, Sections 3 and 11 of the Ohio Constitution, such as: constitutional time, place and manner restrictions; reasonable and viewpoint-neutral restrictions in nonpublic forums; restricting the use of the college's property to protect the free speech rights of students and faculty members and preserve the use of the property for the advancement of the college's mission; prohibiting or limiting speech, expression, or assemblies that are not protected by the first amendment to the United States Constitution or Article 1, Sections 3 and 11 of the Ohio Constitution; and content restrictions on speech that are reasonably related to a legitimate pedagogical purpose, such as classroom rules



enacted by faculty. Additionally, nothing in this policy shall give students the right to disrupt previously scheduled or reserved activities occurring in a traditional public form.