# Academic Freedom and Academic Responsibility

## Academic Freedom
Richland College, like all other institutions of higher learning, serves the common good, which depends upon an uninhibited search for truth and its open expression. The points enumerated below constitute the college’s position on academic freedom:

1. Faculty members are appointed to impart to their students and to their communities the truth as they see it in their respective disciplines.

2. Subject to legal constraints, the following are among the responsibilities which reside primarily with the faculty: planning and revising curricula, selecting textbooks and readings, selecting classroom films and other instructional materials and activities, choosing instructional methodologies, evaluating learners, assigning grades and maintaining classroom discipline.

3. It is essential that faculty members be free to pursue scholarly inquiry and to voice and publish their conclusions without fear of institutional censorship or discipline.

4. Faculty members are citizens and, therefore, possess the rights of citizens. These rights include, among others, the right as private citizens to speak freely outside the classroom on matters of public concern and to participate in lawful political activities.

5. Prior restraint or sanctions will not be imposed upon faculty members in the exercise of their rights as citizens or duties as teachers. Nor will faculty members fear reprisal for exercising their civic rights and academic freedom.

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## Academic Responsibility
The academic freedom of faculty members is accompanied by equally compelling obligations and responsibilities to their profession, their students, their college, and the community. Faculty members must defend the rights of academic freedom while accepting willingly the responsibilities enumerated below:

1. Faculty members will be judicious in the introduction of material in the classroom without forfeiting the instructional benefits of controversy.

2. No faculty member will attempt to force on students a personal viewpoint intolerant of the rights of others to hold or express diverse opinions.

3. Faculty members must recognize their responsibility to maintain competence and adapt to change in their disciplines through continued professional development and to demonstrate their competence through consistently adequate preparation and performance.

4. Faculty members must recognize that the public will judge the college and their profession by their public conduct. Therefore, faculty members will make clear that the views they express are their own and should avoid creating the impression that they speak or act in behalf of the College, District or of the profession.

## Richland College Library Academic Freedom Policy
In addition to the Richland College academic freedom and academic responsibility statement of policy, the Richland College Library asserts an official academic freedom policy regarding challenged materials. This policy states that certain materials, although considered controversial by some, support the curriculum and represent different
perspectives. Richland College Library materials represent a collection that supports a wide range of academic and technical programs and diverse backgrounds of student and community users.

Richland College Dual Credit Programs Academic Freedom Policy
Richland College offers robust dual credit program options that include: a traditional dual credit program in partnership with local service area high schools; a home school program in partnership with various Dallas County home school associations; and Richland Collegiate High School, which is located on the Richland College campus. Richland Collegiate High School represents a complete high school program with dual credit student participation in on-campus college classes where within two years students can simultaneously complete junior and senior high school coursework, high school graduation, and complete coursework to earn an associate degree. Each of these dual credit program options requires that parents and students read and acknowledge Richland College’s Academic Freedom policy. These signed Acknowledgement of Academic Freedom authorizations ensure that dual credit students and their parents understand and accept the fact that academic freedom is practiced by and protected for Richland College faculty. In signing the acknowledgement, students and parents agree to comply with the fact that dual credit students may be exposed to adult, appropriate, essential discipline-specific terminology, concepts, and principles used as needed in college classroom instruction.

Academic Freedom Grievance/Appeal Process and Procedures
Richland College has a process and procedures in place should faculty, librarians, and instructional staff feel that their academic freedom is unprotected or has been violated. This process addresses unfounded accusations of faculty sharing ideas and teaching content within the purview of their discipline.

1. A grievance means a work-related problem or condition that an employee believes is discriminatory or a hindrance to effective performance of the employee's job. Initial presentation of a grievance related to academic freedom must be in writing on the Richland Employee Grievance Form and must specify reasons for the grievance. All supervisors shall give the employee a full opportunity to present a grievance without fear of coercion or reprisal.

2. An employee should make every effort to resolve the issue before initiating the grievance procedure.

3. All employees who file a grievance must discuss the grievance first with the employees’ location Human Resources representative.

4. During this discussion, the Human Resources representative and employee shall review all written policies and procedures that they believe are pertinent to this grievance.

5. If, after this discussion, an employee wishes to file a grievance, the employee will complete the grievance form and submit it to the employee’s first level supervisor. The most satisfactory solution may often be accomplished with the first-level supervisor.

6. If discussion with an employee’s supervisor does not resolve a grievance to the employee’s satisfaction, the employee may proceed to the next level of supervision, and eventually through the regular line of authority to the College President. The procedure is still quite informal, flexible, open, and designed to seek a satisfactory solution with a minimum of formality. Faculty, librarians, and instructional staff have the right to seek counsel and have a counsel be present during the appeal process.

7. A College President shall conduct a formal review if an employee submits a written request for the review. The College President is authorized to require each employee to provide a written statement along with any documentation concerning the events, circumstances, and facts which give rise to a grievance and to require appropriate personnel to appear and provide information; and question each employee who testifies. A review
by a College President is not an adversarial proceeding. A College President will conduct this review in a professional and cooperative manner and all participants are expected to do likewise.

8. A College President is the final level for review and decision unless the college president is an immediate supervisor of an employee who requests a formal review. In this event, then the executive vice chancellor of educational affairs or the executive vice chancellor of business affairs is the final level and are bound by the same procedures and guidelines as a college president.

9. A College President or the designated executive vice chancellor shall report a decision in writing to an employee within ten (10) working days after conclusion of a review.