

2520 – Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression

Barton Community College (Barton) strongly supports the following statement of academic freedom:

1. The faculty, in collaboration with the College administration, is responsible for curriculum matters.
2. The College acknowledges that faculty members shall have academic freedom consistent with the AAUP 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom, which follows:
 - “Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual teacher or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition.”
 - “Academic freedom is essential to these purposes and applies to both teaching and research. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Academic freedom in its teaching aspect is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the teacher in teaching and of the student to freedom in learning. It carries with it duties correlative to rights.”
 - “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.”
 - “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 their subject. Limitations of academic freedom because of religious or other aims of the institution should be clearly stated in writing at the time of the appointment.”
 - “College and university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational 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 educational officers, they should remember that the public may judge their profession and their institution by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times be accurate, exercise appropriate restraint, show respect for the opinions of others, and make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution.”
3. The College acknowledges both faculty and student rights to the maintenance of a classroom environment conducive to learning. The College acknowledges that the legitimate due process rights of students must be preserved along with the faculty right to have proper protection of the classroom environment from disruptive student conduct or activities that are deleterious to the learning process.

4. The College is committed to free and open inquiry in all matters and guarantees the latitude to speak, write, listen, challenge, and learn. Limited restrictions may be necessary to the functioning of the institution. Beyond the rare exception, Barton fully respects and supports the freedom of all members of the Barton community “to discuss any problem that presents itself.”

There will be occasions when the ideas of members will conflict. In these instances, it is not the role of the College to shield individuals from ideas and opinions they find unwelcome, disagreeable, or even deeply offensive. The institution does however expect a climate of shared responsibility that does not suppress differing viewpoints and results in civil and respectable discussion.

Barton may restrict expression that violates the law, that constitutes a genuine physical threat or harassment, that unjustifiably invades substantial privacy or confidentiality interests, or that is otherwise directly incompatible with the core functions of the College. In addition, the institution may reasonably regulate the time, place, and manner of expression to ensure it does not disrupt the core functions of the College.

As a corollary to Barton’s commitment to protect and promote free expression, members of the Barton community must also act in conformity with the principle of free expression. Although members of the Barton community are free to criticize and contest the views expressed and to criticize and contest speakers who are invited to express their views at a college event, they may not obstruct or otherwise interfere with the freedom of others to express their views. The College has a responsibility not only to promote freedom of debate and deliberation, but to protect that freedom when others attempt to restrict it.

This resolution is adapted and excerpted from the “Report of the Committee on Freedom of Expression” at the University of Chicago.

Based on policy 1520

Approved by: President

Date: 11/16/07

Revision(s): 10/17/22