

## STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Academic freedom is essential to pursuit of truth, education of students, the dissemination of knowledge and understanding. Academic freedom includes the right to freely communicate knowledge and the results of research and scholarship.

In teaching, academic freedom is fundamental to the protection of the rights of the teacher to teach and of the student to learn. In research and scholarship, it is critical to advancing knowledge.

Evidence and truth are the guiding principles for faculty and students. Thus, academic freedom is based on reasoned discourse, rigorous extensive research and scholarship, and peer review. Faculty are free to take intellectual risks and tackle controversial subjects in their teaching, research and scholarship. The views expressed by faculty must be based on solid research, data and evidence, and commitment to the principles of integrity.

Academic freedom is constrained by the professional standards of the relevant discipline and the responsibility of Coquitlam College to shape its academic mission. This constraint recognizes that the academic mission of Coquitlam College, like other work, will be organized in accordance with the responsibility to select and appoint faculty and staff, to admit and discipline students, to establish and control curriculum, to make organizational arrangements for the conduct of academic work, to certify completion of a program and to grant degrees.

It is a responsibility of the Board of Governors, Executive Council and Faculty of Coquitlam College to protect and promote academic freedom. This includes ensuring that funding and other partnerships do not interfere with autonomy in deciding what is studied and how.

Executive Council is responsible for communicating the values around academic freedom to internal and external stakeholders and will defend academic freedom against interpretations that are excessive or too loose, and the claims that may spring from such definitions. In all instances, the Executive Council will act in the best interests of the College.

Executive Council will ensure that the rights and freedoms of others are respected, and that academic freedom is exercised in a reasonable and responsible manner.

Faculty must be committed to the highest ethical standards in their teaching and research. They are free to examine data, question assumptions and be guided by evidence.

Faculty have an equal responsibility to submit their knowledge and claims to rigorous and public review by peers who are experts in the subject matter under consideration and to ground their arguments in the best available evidence.

All members of the College community have an obligation to ensure that students' human rights are respected and that they are encouraged to pursue their education according to the principles of academic freedom.