

**CHAPTER 6: Educational Program
BOARD POLICY NO. 6.35 (BP 4030)**

BOARD POLICY

San Mateo County Community College District

Subject: 6.35 ~~Study of Controversial Issues~~ Academic Freedom
Revision Date: Originally adopted January 1993; incorporated into Rules and Regulations
xx/xx
Policy References: Title 5 Section 51023; Accreditation Standard II.A.7

1. The San Mateo County Community College District is dedicated to maintaining a climate of academic freedom encouraging the sharing and cultivation of a wide variety of viewpoints. Academic freedom expresses our belief in inquiry, informed debate and the search for truth; academic freedom is necessary in order to provide students with a variety of ideas, to encourage them to engage in critical thinking and to help them understand conflicting opinions.
2. Academic freedom encompasses the freedom to study, teach, and express ideas, including unpopular or controversial ones, without censorship or political restraint. Academic freedom, rather than being a license to do or say whatever one wishes, requires professional competence, open inquiry and rigorous attention to the pursuit of truth.
3. The District's faculty have the right to express their informed opinions which relate, directly or indirectly, to their professional activities, whether these opinions are expressed in the classroom, elsewhere on campus or at college-related functions. In a search for truth and in a context of reasoned academic debate, students also have the right to express their opinions and to question those presented by others.
4. Employment by the District does not in any way restrict or limit the ~~First Amendment~~ rights enjoyed by faculty ~~as members of their communities under the California and United States Constitutions~~. Faculty members are free to speak and write publicly on any issue, as long as they do not indicate they are speaking for the institution.
5. Protecting academic freedom is the responsibility of the college community. Therefore, in a climate of openness and mutual respect, free from distortion and doctrinal obligation, the District protects and encourages the exchange of ideas, including unpopular ones, which are presented in a spirit of free and open dialogue and constructive debate.

~~6.35 Study of Controversial Issues~~

~~A.—Assumptions basic to District policy:~~

- ~~1.—That free discussion is a right guaranteed to all citizens, provided that no one has the right to abuse this freedom by advocating the overthrow of the United States government by force.~~
- ~~2.—That a free society functions efficiently only if its citizens have the right to discuss, to~~

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~~debate, and to disagree constructively.~~

~~3.—That the Constitutional guarantee of freedom of speech is made meaningful by a willingness of the majority to hear honest expressions of unpopular ideas by minority points of view.~~

~~4.—That an educated citizenry, fully aware of all the evidence, is the best able to preserve the valuable heritage of American democratic institutions.~~

~~5.—That each College has an obligation to its community to promote healthy discussion as an educative force.~~

~~B.—Within the framework of the orderly process of our democratic Constitutional society, the faculty and students of each College shall have the freedom to consider all issues which will contribute to the development of the District's students. The criteria to be followed in selecting issues for study shall be:~~

~~1.—The issue should contribute to the prescribed course of study and the general education program of the Colleges.~~

~~2.—The issue should be of sufficient interest to encourage participation by the students.~~

~~3.—The issue should provide opportunity for critical thinking, tolerance, and understanding of conflicting points of view.~~

~~4.—The issue should be one about which sufficient information is available to allow for discussion and evaluation on a factual and reasonable basis.~~