

Academic Freedom Statement - Some feedback from colleagues:

I am very much in support of a statement that reinforces and clarifies the district's commitment to Academic Freedom. In reviewing the proposed statement, however, I wonder if "For faculty, academic freedom in the classroom . . ." is too limited. What I mean is that communication and collaboration between faculty and students, or between colleagues, often occurs outside of the classroom. What about conversations and/or posters, bulletin boards, etc. in and around the office? Organized campus events (by faculty or by student clubs)? What about communication via email or through department or faculty websites? Does "in the classroom" include Distance Learning classes? Also, does Academic Freedom extend only to ideas, or to pedagogy as well?

Would a statement such as this one (very rough draft) have a place in the Academic Freedom declaration?

"Academic freedom for faculty extends to pedagogy, both in face-to-face and in online instruction, as well as to communication, collaboration, and interaction with students and/or colleagues in the office, through campus events, or through digital media such as email or faculty/department websites."

Perhaps something along these lines could be included in the Academic Freedom statement (inserted after the "For faculty, academic freedom in the classroom . . ." sentence).

- the statement as it is only mentions "in the classroom" which does not take into account (1) email and other written communications with students and peers, (2) presentations at conferences, workshops, etc., and (3) the many possible media and environments in which we may choose to communicate as teachers and academics that simply don't fit nicely under the "in the classroom" umbrella (if it even can be called an umbrella)

- the "choice of medium" issue is particularly important, in my opinion, with the new effort to push (some would say bully) everyone on campus into using MyBC, whether or not they wish to do so (the other issue here being one of transparency -- should we really be moving to a means of communication campus-wide that shuts out the rest of the world? Surely not everything we say/write is "eyes only" material here in our campus community)