

<b>Policy Title:</b>	Academic Freedom
<b>Policy ID:</b>	2-225
<b>Manual Classification:</b>	Academic Affairs
<b>Approved by Board of Governors (BoG):</b>	TBA
<b>Effective Date:</b>	TBA 2025
<b>Next Policy Review Date:</b>	TBA+3
<b>Contacts for Policy Interpretation:</b>	Executive Vice President Academic Experience

## 1.0 - Policy Overview

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Fleming College is committed to fostering an environment that upholds the principles of academic freedom as fundamental to its mission of providing excellence in education, research, and scholarship. Academic freedom ensures that faculty, staff, and students have the right to engage in open inquiry, critical thinking, and the exchange of diverse ideas without undue interference, restriction, or fear of reprisal. This policy aligns with the College's commitment to fostering innovation, critical inquiry, and the pursuit of truth in higher education.

## 2.0 - Purpose

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This policy defines the rights, obligations and responsibilities related to Academic Freedom when applied to scholarly activities conducted by College faculty, students, and staff.

## 3.0 - Definitions and Acronyms

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**Academic Freedom:** Includes the rights to teach, learn, research, publish, and express ideas in a manner that advances knowledge and benefits society, and the responsibility to maintain professional and ethical standards during those activities.

**Scholarly Activities:** Teaching or research endeavours in the pursuit, creation and dissemination of knowledge.

## 4.0 - Scope

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This policy applies to Fleming College faculty, staff and students during their engagement in scholarly activities.

## 5.0 – General Principles

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The Academic Freedom Policy underscores Fleming College's dedication to creating an inclusive and intellectually stimulating environment where diverse perspectives can flourish, contributing to the personal and professional growth of all members of its community. All members of the College community shall support and protect the fundamental principle of academic freedom.

## 5.1 – Ethical and Legal Requirements

All scholarly activities must be conducted ethically and in ways that fully adhere to all applicable laws, institutional policies and collective agreements, ministry directives, requirements of accrediting bodies, as well as program and curriculum requirements.

Academic freedom does not confer legal immunity from either criminal prosecution or civil action, whether from a claim in damages by a third party or seeking of indemnification and recovery by the College, nor does it prevent sanctions from external academic, research or professional bodies.

## 5.2 – Rights and Responsibilities

Fleming College affirms the rights of faculty, staff and students to research, enquire about, investigate without restriction, and engage in discussion about scholarly issues without fear of impairment to position or other reprisal.

Fleming College acknowledges that there will be diverse opinions on course content and affirms the rights of faculty, staff, and students to discuss topics pertinent to the achievement of course learning outcomes as documented in the course outline.

Faculty, staff and students are required to use their right to academic freedom responsibly, with respect for the rights of others. Academic freedom does not protect hate speech, hate crimes, violence, discrimination, intimidation or harassment, or any forms of expression prohibited by any other College policy, including notably 1-109 Free Speech, 3-311 Harassment and Discrimination Prevention and 3-343 Sexual Violence Prevention. All Fleming College community members are subject to Canadian federal and provincial laws regardless of compliance with Policy 2-225 – Academic Freedom

Academic freedom must be exercised in a manner that is appropriate to, and consistent with, an individual's College appointment or role. Academic Freedom does not relieve any member of the College from their obligations or duties inherent in the roles associated with the teaching and learning process.

In keeping with academic freedom, faculty, staff and students engaged in scholarly activities are free to act, write and speak in their capacity as public citizens provided that they indicate they are doing so as individuals and not acting as representatives of the College, as outlined in 3-300 Code of Conduct, 5.2 Standards of Performance and Professionalism.

## 6.0 - Related Documents

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- *Ontario Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.19, as amended
- *Criminal Code*, R.S.C., 1985, c. C-46, as amended
- *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. F.31, as amended
- Policy 5-506 Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Operating Procedure 5-506 Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Policy 9-903 Intellectual Property

- OP 9-903 Intellectual Property
- Policy 9-905 Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans
- Policy 9-906 Integrity in Research and Scholarship
- OP 9-906 Breaches of Integrity in Research and Scholarship
- 3-300 Code of Conduct
- OP 3-300 Code of Conduct

#### **History of Amendments/Reviews**

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<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Approved By</b>	<b>List of Approved Amendments / Review</b>
TBA 2025	Board of Governors	NEW