

WAC 132F-121-020 Student rights, freedoms, and responsibilities.

(1) Statement of student rights. As members of the academic community, students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in an independent search for truth. Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The freedom to learn depends upon appropriate opportunities and conditions in the classroom, on the campus, and in the larger community. Students should exercise their freedom with responsibility. The responsibility to secure and to respect general conditions conducive to the freedom to learn is shared by all members of the college community.

The following enumerated rights are guaranteed to each student within the limitations of statutory law and college policy which are deemed necessary to achieve the educational goals of the college:

(a) Academic freedom.

(i) Students are guaranteed the rights of free inquiry, expression, and assembly upon and within college facilities that are generally open and available to the public.

(ii) Students are free to pursue appropriate educational objectives from among the college's curricula, programs, and services, subject to the limitations of RCW 28B.50.090 (3)(b).

(iii) Students shall be protected from academic evaluation which is arbitrary, prejudiced, or capricious, but are responsible for meeting the standards of academic performance established by each of their instructors.

(iv) Students have the right to a learning environment which is free from unlawful discrimination, inappropriate and disrespectful conduct, and any and all harassment, including sexual harassment.

(b) Due process.

(i) The rights of students to be secure in their persons, quarters, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures is guaranteed.

(ii) No disciplinary sanction may be imposed on any student without notice to the accused of the nature of the charges.

(iii) A student accused of violating this code of student conduct is entitled, upon request, to procedural due process as set forth in this chapter.

(iv) Sexual misconduct investigations. Both the respondent and the claimant in cases involving allegations of sexual misconduct shall be provided the same procedural rights to participate in student discipline matters, including the right to participate in the initial disciplinary decision-making process and to appeal any disciplinary decision.

(2) Classroom freedom of expression. The district recognizes the rights of students to freedom of discussion and free expression of views. However, students' rights of classroom expression do not include expressions or conduct which create a hostile educational environment or violate chapter 49.60 RCW or other applicable law. It is the responsibility of the instructor to insure and encourage the realization not only of the fact but of the spirit of free inquiry. Instructors have the responsibility to maintain order, but this authority shall not be used to inhibit the expression of views contrary to their own. Students have the right to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they cannot do so in a disruptive manner that interferes with the educational process. Students are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. It also is the responsibility of the student to comply with

the instructor's efforts to assure freedom of expression and to maintain order.

(3) Protection against improper evaluation. Instructors shall give their students fair and consistent evaluations of the students' course performance. Toward this end, instructors are also responsible for establishing appropriate standards of academic performance for each course. Fair and consistent grading is a legitimate classroom experience.

(4) Protection against improper disclosure. Information about student views, beliefs, and political associations which is acquired by instructors in the course of their work as faculty or advisors, under circumstances which clearly indicate that it is intended to be confidential, shall be treated as confidential and shall not be disclosed to others, unless it relates to the apparent or intended commission of a crime or disclosure is required by law. Protection against improper disclosure of student education record information is a serious professional obligation incurred by the teaching profession and district administrators. However, evaluations of student ability and character may be provided to third parties with the student's consent or in accordance with applicable law.

(5) Nonacademic expression and inquiry. Students and student organizations are free to examine and to discuss all questions of interest to them and to express opinions publicly and privately, in accordance with law. They are free to support causes by orderly and lawful means which do not disrupt the operation of the institution and which comply with the district's policies regarding these activities.

(6) The district shall respect students' right to privacy. It will not inquire into the off-campus activities of its students without legal justification.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.50.140 and 28B.50.090(3). WSR 21-10-027, § 132F-121-020, filed 4/26/21, effective 5/27/21. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.50.140(13). WSR 16-04-025, § 132F-121-020, filed 1/25/16, effective 2/25/16. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.50.100, [28B.50].130, and/or [28B.50].140. WSR 03-16-015, § 132F-121-020, filed 7/28/03, effective 8/28/03.]