

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION POLICY			
Effective Date	October 29, 2019	Policy Type	Administrative and Academic
Responsibility	President and CEO	Cross-Reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Freedom Policy • Integrity in Research and Innovation Policy • Research and Ethics: Research involving Humans Policy • Sexual Misconduct Policy • Student Misconduct Policy • Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy • Visiting Scholar Policy • Employee Code of Conduct Policy • Safe Disclosure Policy • Progressive Discipline Policy • Respectful Workplace • Aboriginal Framework Policy • Enterprise Risk Management Policy • Fraud Policy • Online Social Networking Policy • Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms • Canadian Bill of Rights
Approver	Executive Council and Academic Council	Appendices	
Review Schedule	3 Years		

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 As a public, board-governed college operating as a comprehensive community institution under the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* of Alberta, GPRC offers regional learners instruction and support services that are learner-centred and responsive to the lifelong educational needs of full-time and part-time students of diverse, multicultural and Aboriginal backgrounds. This mandate includes the pursuit of truth, the dissemination of knowledge, and the fostering of democratic discourse. The College is proud of and committed to its longstanding commitment to protecting freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression, and the related freedoms of conscience, religion, association, and peaceful assembly.
- 1.2 In fulfilling its mandate, the College upholds the fundamental value of academic freedom, and it respects and protects freedom of inquiry and all forms of freedom of expression. It neither seeks to shield its community from controversial or objectionable views nor permits interference with the free expression of the full spectrum of human thought, within the limits that bind the College under Canadian and Alberta law, in particular the Charter of Rights and Freedom and the Canadian criminal code provisions concerning public incitement of hatred and willful promotion of hatred.

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- 1.3 The College acknowledges that free debate and critique are essential to the pursuit of knowledge. All members of College community—faculty, staff, and students, including both individuals and groups—and all visitors to the campus have the right to express their views freely.
- 1.4 All members of the community are expected to act in accordance with these values and applicable laws, which the College will safeguard by whatever steps it deems necessary. Visitors to the campus must also respect these values, relevant College policies, and applicable laws. Complaints in connection with this policy should be filed with the appropriate policy holder.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects basic rights and freedoms for all Canadians that are considered essential to preserve Canada as a free and democratic country.
- 2.2. The *Post-Secondary Learning Act* of Alberta provides the foundation in which the institution supports meaningful debate through the College's Academic Freedom Policy.

3. Policy Objective

- 3.1. The right to engage in frank and open debate, to share controversial and unpopular ideas, and to challenge society's core beliefs is essential for the pursuit of truth and for preserving a free and democratic society.
- 3.2. The College recognizes that freedom of expression is limited to peaceful means and non-coercive methods. The College expressly rejects the use of violence, physical force, and physical coercion as methods to express one's views or as methods to prevent others from expressing their views.

4. Scope

- 4.1. This policy applies to Members of the College Community.

5. Definitions

- 5.1. **"Members of the College Community"** means all employees, students, volunteers, contractors, visitors and other individuals who work, study, conduct research or otherwise carry on the business of the College.
- 5.2. **"Premises"** means College campus, grounds, and buildings that are owned, leased, or operated by the College.
- 5.3. **"Teaching"** the right to teach and propound academic and course subjects without fear of censorship and faculty members have the right to select course materials, content, methodology and sequence of subject in accordance with transfer agreements.

6. Guiding Principles

- 6.1. The freedom to debate and discuss the merits of competing ideas does not mean that individuals may say whatever they wish, wherever they wish. GPRC will restrict expression that violates the law that falsely defames a specific individual that constitutes a genuine threat or harassment, that unjustifiably invades substantial privacy or confidentiality interests, or that is otherwise directly incompatible with the functioning of the College, as per our Respectful Workplace Policy.

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- 6.2. GPRC may reasonably regulate the time, place, and manner of expression to ensure that it does not disrupt the ordinary activities of the College. But these are narrow exceptions to the general principle of freedom of expression, and it is vitally important that these exceptions never be used in a manner that is inconsistent with GPRC’s commitment to free and open discussion of ideas.
- 6.3. The College will apply this statement consistently and without discriminatory or preferential treatment toward any individual or group. The fact that an individual or group is permitted or invited to carry on an expressive activity on campus does not mean that the views of that individual or group are representative of the College’s views as an institution or the views of its leadership
- 6.4. The College accepts that the free and open exchange of ideas may generate controversy and disputes among members of the College Community.
- 6.5. Individuals can make a disclosure of wrongdoing through the Safe Disclosure Policy.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Stakeholder	Responsibilities
Executive Council and Academic Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approve and formally support this policy.

8. Exceptions to the Policy

- 8.1. There are no exceptions to this policy.

9. Inquiries

- 9.1. Inquiries regarding this policy can be directed to the President and CEO.

10. Amendments (Revision History)

- 10.1. Amendments to this policy will be published from time to time and circulated to the GPRC Community.