



## **ACADEMIC FREEDOM POLICY**

Authorizer: Vice President Academic/Student Affairs & Human Resources

Version: V2

Effective Date: 1/18/2012

### **POLICY STATEMENT:**

Conestoga functions within an academic community that aspires to the goal of mutual respect, and to providing an environment that is free of discrimination and harassment.

Conestoga recognizes the rights and privileges of faculty, staff, and students to undertake scholarly research, to perform teaching and learning activities, to explore and produce creative work, to engage in community service, and to hold academic discussion, within the parameters established by the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act (2002), Conestoga policies and procedures, ethical guidelines, and all applicable legislation.

To this end, Conestoga affirms the rights of faculty and staff to discuss aspects of topics pertinent to the achievement of the learning outcomes of the course being taught as documented in the course outline, which may include diverse opinions in order to gain a well-rounded understanding of an issue and taking place within Conestoga's academic community.

Conestoga further affirms that faculty and staff are free to act and speak in their capacity as public citizens provided they indicate they are speaking as individuals and not acting as representatives of Conestoga. As professionals and representatives of their discipline or field of study, faculty and staff have a responsibility to be honest, accurate, and respectful in their statements and activities. The freedom to express ideas carries with it an attendant responsibility and accountability.

### **SCOPE:**

The Academic Freedom Policy pertains to all members of Conestoga's academic community, including administration, faculty, staff, and students.

### **POLICY ELABORATION:**

Academic freedom includes the freedom of research, legitimate classroom discussion, and the advocacy of diverse opinions in Conestoga's learning environments.

Conestoga requires that its members exercise academic freedom responsibly. Academic freedom does not relieve any member of the academic community from his/her obligations or duties inherent in the roles associated with the teaching and learning process and with program learning outcomes or Ontario Human Rights Code and legislation and the Criminal Code of Canada.

This policy stands beside Conestoga's Student Code of Conduct policy, Violation of Student Code of Conduct and Appeal Procedure, Protection of Human Rights Policy and Procedure, Applied Research policies and approval procedures, Employee Code of Conduct, and Employee Discipline Procedures.

Concerns regarding the Academic Freedom Policy will be addressed using a discussion forum or mediation process and, if necessary, formal legal action.

**REFERENCES:**

*Criminal Code of Canada* <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-46/>  
*Ontario Human Rights Code* <http://www.ohrc.on.ca>

Applied Research Policy  
Conflict of Interest in Research Policy  
Employee Code of Conduct  
Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans  
Protection of Human Rights Policy and Procedure  
Research Integrity Policy  
Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy and Procedure  
Student Rights in Research Policy

**REVISION LOG:**

January 3, 2012	Policy and Procedure Committee
January 10, 2012	Degree Management Committee / Academic Forum
January 18, 2012	Academic Coordination Committee
November 20, 2019	Academic Forum - Reviewed
January 13, 2020	Academic Coordinating Committee