Academic Freedom Policy

POLICY: Academic Freedom			
POLICY NUMBER:	600.06.01	**CUSTODIAN:**	Academic Dean
APV'D DATE:	11/16/2021		
EFFECTIVE DATE:	7/21/2020	**REVIEW DATE:**	Oct 2021
REFERENCES:			
Student Handbook, Grievance Policy			

Part 1. Policy Background and Purpose

White Earth Tribal and Community College (WETCC) recognizes that Academic freedom is an essential characteristic of higher education as it gives faculty the right to full freedom in research and the publication of those results, freedom to open discussion in their classroom as it relates to their subject,and the right of faculty to be free from institutional censorship and/or discipline when theyspeak or write as citizens. However, as educators, faculty members should remember that the public may judge their profession and/or institution by their statements. Thus, faculty should at all times be accurate, exercise restraint, and show respect for the opinions of others, and clearly indicate when they are not speaking on behalf of WETCC.

Academic freedom principles contribute to a climate in which debate is encouraged about complex, challenging subjects, and issues about which reasonable people may disagree. This policy informs the nature of faculty engagement in student learning.

This policy protects the rights and recognizes the responsibilities of faculty and allows them to teach in an environment that supports student centered learning where students acquire knowledge and the critical thinking skills necessary to address the challenges and complexities of society.

Part 2. Definitions

Academic Freedom: freedom to express ideas without risk of official interference or professional disadvantage.

Part 3. Responsibilities

The Academic Dean is responsible for support of faculty in pursuing academic freedom.

Faculty members are responsible to advocate and utilize their rights to academic freedom while supporting students' points of view and academic experience.

Part 4. Policy

Faculty members are entitled to full academic freedom in the engagement of student learning. This freedom extends to classroom teaching and program development. While entitled to these rights, faculty should be guided by the principle that material presented in class serves the primary purpose of advancing student learning in the context of the course and/or program objectives. A faculty member does not have the right to intimidate students who express a contrary point of view.

Faculty members are entitled to full academic freedom in research and creative activity, in the publication, exhibition, or performance of the results, subject to the adequate performance of other academic duties and the requirements of research ethics and responsibilities.

Faculty always has a special obligation as members of a learned profession and officials of WETCC to be accurate and demonstrate a respect for the opinions of others.

WETCC will not discipline, demote, dismiss, or decline to reappoint or sanction a faculty member based on the exercise of any of the academic freedoms listed above. Furthermore, WETCC will not intimidate any faculty member through the implication that one will be disciplined, sanctioned, demoted, dismissed, or declined reappointment on the base of the exercise of any of the academic freedoms listed above.

In support of the protection of academic freedom, it is the right of every WETCC faculty member and student to have access to a fair and objective appeal process in situations of alleged infractions of academic freedom, in accordance with WETCC grievance policy and procedure.