

Academic Freedom-Teaching Controversial Issues
Code No. 603.9R1

A “controversial issue” is a topic of significant academic inquiry about which substantial groups of citizens of this community, this state or this nation hold sincere, conflicting points of view.

It is the belief of this Board that controversial issues should be fairly presented in a spirit of honest academic freedom, so that students may recognize the validity of other points of view but can also learn to formulate their own opinions based upon dispassionate, objective, unbiased study and discussion of the facts related to the controversy.

It is the responsibility of the instructor to present full and fair opportunity and means for students to study, consider, and discuss all sides of controversial issues, including but not limited to political philosophies.

It is the responsibility of the instructor to protect the right of the student to study pertinent controversial issues within the limits of good taste, and to allow the student to express personal opinions without jeopardizing the responsibility of the instructor to refrain from advocating partisan causes, sectarian religious views, or selfish propaganda of any kind through any classroom or school device; however, an instructor shall not be prohibited from expressing a personal opinion as long as students are encouraged to reach their own decisions independently.

It is the policy of this school system to encourage full discussion of controversial issues, in a spirit of academic freedom that shows students that they have the right to disagree with the opinions of others, but that they also have the responsibility to base the disagreement on facts and to respect the right of others to hold conflicting opinions.

Legal Reference: § 279.8; § 280.3; § 280.6

Cross Reference:

502.03	Student Expression and Student Publications Code
502.03-R(1)	Student Expression and Student Publications Code - Regulation
903.05	Distribution of Materials
903.05-R(1)	Distribution of Materials - Regulation

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