

Link to Current Policy: [Academic Freedom](#)

PROPOSED REVISED Policy 317: ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Section: 300
Section Title: Academic Affairs
Policy Number: 317
Policy Name: Academic Freedom
Approval Authority: Board of Trustees
Responsible Executive: Provost/Vice President for Teaching, Learning & Growth
Responsible Unit: Office of the Provost
Date Adopted: July 7, 1976
Date Last Revised: June 7, 1995; (Proposed November 2024)

Policy Statement

As the designated public liberal arts college of the state of New Jersey, Ramapo College is committed to the free exchange of ideas in pursuit of truth and knowledge and to the provision of learning environments and opportunities that foster interdisciplinary study and the development of deep content knowledge and critical thinking. The College acknowledges that Academic Freedom, distinct from Freedom of Speech, is a foundational condition that should exist for the successful pursuit of these goals.

Further, Ramapo College promotes a campus environment where faculty, within their contractual responsibilities, have the right to open and free expression and are entitled to prerogative in teaching, scholarly/creative production, and its dissemination. Faculty acknowledge that, along with these rights, and in accordance with standards dictated by law, labor agreements, and other policies of the State of New Jersey and the College, their responsibilities include but are not limited to having an academic foundation for their speech and to work toward providing the best possible education for our students.

As such, Ramapo College affirms the principles of Academic Freedom pursuant to New Jersey Administrative Code 9A that, in pertinent part, provides the following three criteria:

1. Freedom in research and publication where these activities do not interfere with adequate performance of academic duties;

2. Freedom in the classroom to discuss controversial issues pertinent to the discipline;
and

3. Retention of all rights as a citizen¹ to free speech and publication. Such rights are not, as such, subject to institutional censorship or discipline.

The aforementioned expression must be in accordance with New Jersey Administrative Code 9A, Article V on Academic Freedom in the Master Agreement between the State of New Jersey and Council of New Jersey State College Locals/AFT/AFL-CIO, and the New Jersey State Policy Prohibiting Discrimination in the Workplace.

Reason for Policy

Sets forth policy affirming the importance of Academic Freedom and the ability of full- and part-time faculty and adjuncts, as well as professional staff who teach (but only in their capacity as instructors), to teach and engage in scholarship, research, and creative activities without regard to inhibitive interference.

To Whom Does the Policy Apply

Full- and part-time faculty and adjuncts, within their contractual responsibilities; and professional staff who teach, but only in their capacity as instructors

Supplemental Resources

- Master Agreement, State of New Jersey and Council of New Jersey State College Locals/AFT/ AFL-CIO: State Colleges and Universities Unit (hyperlink pending from the State of NJ)
- [NJ Administrative Code: Title 9A 1-1.8f, 1-4.6](#)
- [Policy 216: New Jersey State Policy Prohibiting Discrimination in the Workplace](#)

Contacts

Office of the Provost/Vice President for Teaching, Learning and Growth

¹ For the purposes of this policy, Ramapo College of New Jersey defines the term "citizen" to include all members of the College's instructor community, regardless of whether they are U.S. Citizens, naturalized or otherwise, including full- and part-time faculty and adjuncts; and professional staff who teach but only in their capacity as instructors.