



CONESTOGA
Connect Life and Learning

Approved by: **Academic Coordinating Committee**

Authorizer: **Executive Dean, Academic Administration**

Effective Date: **January 2012**

Policy Title: **Academic Freedom**

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:

- Applied Research Policy
- Conflict of Interest in Research
- Criminal Code of Canada <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-46/>
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Employee Discipline Procedures
- Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans
- Integrity in Research
- Ontario Human Rights Code <http://www.ohrc.on.ca>
- Protection of Human Rights Policy and Procedure
- Student Code of Conduct Policy
- Student Rights in the Conduct of Research
- Violation of Student Code of Conduct and Appeal Procedure

Revision Log:

Revision Date	Summary of Changes
Jan. 3, 2012	Policy and Procedure Committee
Jan. 10, 2012	Degree Management Committee / Academic Forum
Jan. 18, 2012	Academic Coordinating Committee