

Support for the Inclusion of Academic Freedom in AFT 1493 Contract with SMCCCD

Whereas, Academic freedom is defined by the American Association of University Professors as an “indispensable requisite for unfettered teaching and research in institutions of higher education,” and that “institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual [employee] or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition”¹;

Whereas, Academic freedom has become more important and more contested in higher education, as evidenced by the Academic Senate of California Community Colleges adopting five separate resolutions focused on the issue of academic freedom since Fall 2020²;

Whereas, Skyline College, Cañada College, and College of San Mateo Academic Senates have each individually, within the past year, passed resolutions that specifically affirmed the importance of academic freedom³; and

Whereas, The Academic Senate of California Community Colleges’ Fall 2020 position paper on academic freedom recommends that “Local senates should collaborate with union colleagues on codifying the protection and parameters of academic freedom in contract in light of faculty evaluations, curriculum, online instruction, dual enrollment, open educational resources, guided pathways, and other relevant issues”⁴.

Resolved, That the Academic Senate of College of San Mateo supports including Academic Freedom as part of the AFT 1493 contract with the District; and

Resolved, That the Academic Senate of the College of San Mateo recommends that the San Mateo Community College District Academic Senate forward at least one faculty member to engage the AFT 1493 on their work in developing a proposed article on academic freedom for the AFT 1493 contract.

¹ [“1940 Statement of Principles of Academic Freedom and Tenure.”](#) American Association of University Professors.

² 1) Fall 2020 6.02 [Legislative and Systemic Support for Academic Freedom](#), 2) Fall 2020 19.01 [Adopt the Paper Protecting the Future of Academic Freedom in a Time of Great Change](#), 3) Spring 2022 6.02 [Support SR 45 \(Min, 2021\) on Academic Freedom as of March 17, 2022](#), 4) Spring 2023 13.04 [Resolution in Support of Academic Freedom/Solidarity with Faculty Across the Nation](#), and 5) Spring 2024 111.02 [Affirm Commitment to the Protection of Academic Freedom in the Face of Censorship Around Current Conflict in Palestine and Israel](#).

³ March 7, 2024 – [A Resolution of Skyline College Academic Senate to extend the College’s commitment to anti-racism to include Palestinian & Southwest Asia and North Africa \(SWANA from here on\) communities and to call for a ceasefire in Gaza](#); May 16, 2024 – [Resolution of the Cañada College Academic Senate to support student success and mental health, to uphold academic freedom in regard to the Israel-Gaza crisis, and to affirm the Associated Students of Cañada College in their statement of Solidarity for the](#); and November 26, 2024 - [Resolution of the College of San Mateo Academic Senate to support student success and mental health, to uphold academic freedom in regard to the Gaza crisis, and to affirm the Associated Students of College of San Mateo in their “Stance on the Oppression.”](#)

⁴ ASCCC Fall 2020 position paper [“Protecting the Future of Academic Freedom During a Time of Significant Change.”](#)

