

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION POLICY			
<b>Effective Date</b>	March 12, 2024	<b>Policy Type</b>	Administrative and Academic
<b>Responsibility</b>	President and CEO	<b>Related Policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Freedom Policy</li> <li>• Research and Ethics: Research involving Humans Policy</li> <li>• Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy</li> <li>• Adjunct Faculty Policy</li> <li>• Employee Code of Conduct Policy</li> <li>• Safe Disclosure Policy</li> <li>• Progressive Discipline Policy</li> <li>• Respectful Workplace</li> <li>• Enterprise Risk Management Policy</li> <li>• Fraud Policy</li> <li>• Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms</li> <li>• Canadian Bill of Rights</li> </ul>
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Executive Council	<b>Review Schedule</b>	3 Years

## 1. Policy Statement:

1.1 As a public, board-governed polytechnic institution operating under the Post-Secondary Learning Act of Alberta, NWP offers instruction and support services that are learner-centred and responsive to the lifelong educational needs of students of diverse backgrounds. This mandate includes the pursuit of truth, the dissemination of knowledge, and the fostering of democratic discourse. The Polytechnic is proud of and committed to its longstanding commitment to

protecting freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression and the related freedoms of conscience, religion, association, and peaceful assembly.

- 1.2 In fulfilling its mandate, the Polytechnic upholds the fundamental value of academic freedom, and it respects and protects freedom of inquiry and all forms of freedom of expression. It neither seeks to shield its community from controversial or objectionable views nor permits interference with the free expression of the full spectrum of human thought, within the limits that bind the Polytechnic under Canadian and Alberta law, in particular the Charter of Rights and Freedom and the Canadian criminal code provisions concerning public incitement of hatred and willful promotion of hatred.
- 1.3 The Polytechnic acknowledges that free debate and critique are essential to the pursuit of knowledge. All members of Polytechnic community—faculty, staff, and students, including both individuals and groups—and all visitors to the campus have the right to express their views freely.
- 1.4 All members of the community are expected to act in accordance with these values and applicable laws, which the Polytechnic will safeguard by whatever steps it deems necessary. Visitors to the campus must also respect these values, relevant Polytechnic policies, and applicable laws. Complaints in connection with this policy should be filed with the appropriate policy holder.

## **2. Background:**

- 2.1. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects basic rights and freedoms for all Canadians that are considered essential to preserve Canada as a free and democratic country.
- 2.2. The Post-Secondary Learning Act of Alberta provides the foundation in which the institution supports meaningful debate through the Polytechnic's Academic Freedom Policy.

## **3. Policy Objective:**

- 3.1. The right to engage in frank and open debate, to share controversial and unpopular ideas, and to challenge society's core beliefs is essential for the pursuit of truth and for preserving a free and democratic society.
- 3.2. The Polytechnic recognizes that freedom of expression is limited to peaceful means and non-coercive methods. The Polytechnic expressly rejects the use of intimidation, harassment, violence, physical force, and physical coercion as

methods to express one's views or as methods to prevent others from expressing their views.

## 4. Scope:

4.1. This policy applies to Members of the Polytechnic Community.

## 5. Definitions:

5.1. "Members of the Polytechnic Community" means all employees, students, volunteers, contractors, visitors and other individuals who work, study, conduct research or otherwise carry on the business of the Polytechnic.

5.2. "Premises" means Polytechnic campus, grounds, and buildings that are owned, leased, or operated by the Polytechnic.

5.3. "Teaching" means the right to teach and propound academic and course subjects without fear of censorship and faculty members have the right to select course materials, content, methodology and sequence of subject in accordance with transfer agreements.

## 6. Guiding Principles:

6.1. The freedom to debate and discuss the merits of competing ideas does not mean that individuals may say whatever they wish, wherever they wish. NWP will restrict expression that:

- violates the law,
- falsely defames a specific individual,
- constitutes a genuine threat or harassment,
- unjustifiably invades substantial privacy or confidentiality interests, or
- is otherwise directly incompatible with the functioning of the Polytechnic, as per our Respectful Workplace Policy.

6.2. NWP may reasonably regulate the time, place, and manner of expression to ensure that it does not disrupt the ordinary activities of the Polytechnic. But these are narrow exceptions to the general principle of freedom of expression, and it is vitally important that these exceptions never be used in a manner that is inconsistent with NWP's commitment to free and open discussion of ideas.

6.3. The Polytechnic will apply this statement consistently and without discriminatory or preferential treatment toward any individual or group. The fact that an individual or group is permitted or invited to carry on an expressive activity on campus does not

mean that the views of that individual or group are representative of the Polytechnic's views as an institution or the views of its leadership.

6.4. The Polytechnic accepts that the free and open exchange of ideas may generate controversy and disputes among members of the Polytechnic Community.

6.5. Individuals can make a disclosure of wrongdoing through the Safe Disclosure Policy.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

Stakeholder	Responsibilities
Executive Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approve and formally support this policy</li></ul>

## 8. Exceptions to the Policy

8.1. There are no exceptions to this policy.

## 9. Inquiries

9.1. Inquiries regarding this policy can be directed to the President and CEO.

## 10. Amendments (Revision History)

10.1. Amendments to this policy will be published from time to time and circulated to the NWP Community.

Reviewed, revised, and approved March 12, 2024