

5.1.1p. OFTC Academic Freedom Procedure

Oconee Fall Line Technical College (OFTC) fully supports the right to academic freedom for all faculty members and students. The procedure below outlines the freedoms which faculty members and students possess. This procedure is in accordance with the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) State Board Policy 5.1.1p Academic Freedom.

As a community of scholars dedicated to the premise of life-long learning, OFTC encourages faculty and students to examine and discuss questions and issues of interest to them. In the development of knowledge, research endeavors, and creative activities, faculty and students must be free to cultivate a spirit of inquiry and scholarly criticism. Fundamental to an opportunity for free inquiry and expression is the right to assemble in accordance with College and Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) policies.

Faculty members and students are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject. Caution must be used not to introduce material that has no relation to the instructional field. Faculty and students must be able to examine ideas in an atmosphere of freedom and confidence and to participate as responsible citizens in community affairs.

Faculty members must fulfill their responsibilities to society and their profession by manifesting competence, professional discretion, and good citizenship. They will be free from institutional censorship or discipline when they speak or write as citizens. As professional educators, faculty members must be accurate, exercise appropriate restraint, show respect for the opinions of others, and make every effort to indicate they are not speaking for the institution.

The principles of academic freedom shall not prevent the institution from making reasonable efforts to ensure the best possible instruction for all students in accordance with the objectives of the institution.

Faculty members at OFTC enjoy the following academic rights:

- To develop curriculum, including academic programs, courses, course descriptions, course outlines, course goals, objectives, and standards in accordance with college procedures that have been mutually agreed upon by the Technical College System of Georgia, the Vice President for Academic Affairs of Oconee Fall Line Technical College and in conformity with state requirements and existing articulation agreements with other institutions of higher education faculty.
- To develop course instructional content consistent with faculty-generated course outlines.
- To experiment with and choose methods of instruction and evaluation consistent with approved course outlines; and, where appropriate, agree as a faculty within a discipline to use common methods of instruction and/or evaluation in certain courses for program consistency.

- To choose what kinds of technology will be used to support achievement of course objectives; and, where appropriate, to agree as a faculty within a discipline to use common technological devices, methods, and/or programs in certain courses for program consistency.
- Within a discipline, to select the textbook(s) and other instructional materials that will be used in that discipline to cover the content of the approved course outlines; and, where appropriate, to agree as a faculty within a discipline to use a common textbook(s) in certain courses for program consistency.
- To assign student grades in a manner that is consistent with the TCSG/college's grading policy.
- To demonstrate and foster critical thinking and to encourage opportunities for different sides of issues to be shared and debated, not only among students within the classroom, but also among their colleagues.

Due Process

Due process in academic freedom disputes between a faculty member and a supervisor, or between faculty members is to follow the guidelines in the Technical College System of Georgia State Board Policy 4.4.3 Employee Complaint Resolution. Due process in academic freedom disputes between a faculty member and student is to follow the guidelines in the Technical College System of Georgia State Board Policy 6.5.3p. Student Grievances.

Adopted: October 21, 2011

Last Reviewed: July 9, 2025, March 26, 2026

Revised: July 9, 2025