

STUDENT AFFAIRS, NEBRASKA STATE COLLEGES

POLICY: 3250 Student Rights and Responsibilities

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BOARD POLICY

1. General Rights and Responsibilities in the Academic Community

All members of the academic community have the responsibility to create and support an educational environment which will achieve the basic purposes of an institution of higher learning. Each member of the community should be treated with respect and dignity. Each has the right to learn which imposes a duty not to infringe upon the rights of others.

Views and beliefs expressed by a member of the academic community should be kept within the community unless released by the individual who expressed them. The academic community environment should encourage a variety of modes in thought, behavior, and values within the guidelines of the community. An important aspect of the community is the recognition of differences between individuals. In all instances, including informal campus activities and associations, each individual should be assured that judgements about an individual are made on relevant criteria, and that each member of the community actively encourage practices that insure that all persons, irrespective of any irrelevant characteristics, are welcome on the campus and are extended all the privileges of the academic community to which they are entitled.

2. Rights and Responsibilities in the Classroom

a. Freedom of Expression

Students have the right of expression in the classroom and the responsibility to learn from the course of study according to the standards of performance established by the faculty. Student behavior in a classroom should contribute to the learning process.

b. Instructional and Grading Procedures

The faculty determines the character of courses which includes content and instructional and grading procedures. Students have the right to be informed at the beginning of each course of the nature of the course, course expectation, evaluation standards, and the grading system.

Each student has the right to a course grade based upon a sound academic evaluation and upon a specified grading procedure. A student has the right to receive upon request a clarification of the grade received. The faculty of each department, school, division, or equivalent unit, shall provide a committee to consider the appeal of those cases in which a student feels the performance evaluation was unfair. Colleges shall provide standing committees to consider cases in which the student or faculty member chooses to appeal the initial decision. Any of these committees shall have the authority to recommend to the Academic Vice President changes in the grade based upon its findings.

c. Instructor-Student Consultation

Instructors should be available on a regular basis for consultation with students. Students may ask for an evaluation of their performance during the progress of a course. If a student conveys information of a confidential nature to a member of the faculty, this confidence should be respected.

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d. Student Evaluation of Instruction

Students can contribute significantly to the evaluation of instruction. The faculty has the obligation to solicit students' evaluation of their educational efforts and to make changes in accordance with their best judgment. To assist the faculty in the task of providing the best possible education, students should express their reactions and opinions about the character and relevancy of the instruction to the department or college involved. Each college, school, or division should establish a standing procedure through which student evaluations can be expressed.

3. Rights and Responsibilities in Other Instructional Settings

a. Freedom of Expression

The acquisition, understanding, and interpreting of knowledge can be facilitated by the study and evaluation of controversial issues and positions. Free expression in the academic community shall not be abridged by special restrictions or censorship on publications, speakers or broadcasting. Any student group shall be allowed to invite and hear any person of its own choosing. Those procedures required by the institution before a guest speaker appears on campus should insure orderly scheduling of facilities and adequate preparation for the event. The event should be conducted in a manner appropriate to an academic community. The institutional control of campus facilities should not be used as a device of censorship.

It should be made clear to the academic and larger communities that sponsorship of events and speakers does not necessarily imply approval or endorsement of the views or actions by either the sponsoring group or the College. Participation in the exchange of ideas through these media is a normal expectation of the academic community.

b. Student Government

Students should be free, individually or collectively, to express their views on issues of institutional policy and on matters of general interest to the student population. The students should have clearly defined means to participate equitably in the formulation of institutional policies and procedures which affect student life. Student government is the principal agency for student participation in the decision-making process of the College.

c. Student Organizations

Students bring to the campus a variety of interests and can be expected to develop new interests as members of the academic community. They should be free to organize and join associations to promote their common interests, provided those associations are not likely to materially and substantially disrupt the operation of the College. Students should be able to participate in those organizations provided they meet the membership requirements set up by the organization; in no instance will these criteria for membership violate the College's non-discrimination policy.