

Support for Including 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 teacher or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition”; and

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 2020; and

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 freedom; 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”(p. 16).

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

Resolved, That the San Mateo Community College District Academic Senate forwards 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.