

MSJC Academic Senate
Resolution of the Mt. San Jacinto College Academic Senate
Protection of Academic Freedom
Adopted February 22, 2023

WHEREAS, Academic Freedom is defined by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), as “indispensable requisite for unfettered teaching and research in institutions of higher education”

WHEREAS, the AAUP statement protects freedom in research and publications, in presentations and discussions of subject matter in the classroom, and from institutional censorship when expressing opinions outside the institution based on an instructor’s “expertise within the field”

WHEREAS, Mt. San Jacinto College (MSJC) Board Policy 4030, referencing Title 5, Section 51023, Accreditation Standard 2.2, explains academic freedom in line with the AAUP statement.

WHEREAS, multiple states, counties, cities, and school boards have passed or are debating passing legislation to limit academic freedom within primary, secondary and higher education, specifically targeted at Critical Race Theory, diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and racial and social justice.

WHEREAS, The MSJC Equity Pledge and Call to Action align with the principles of Academic Freedom, and the MSJC Mission Statement which states Mt. San Jacinto College offers quality, accessible, equitable and innovative educational programs and services to students aspiring to achieve their academic, career and personal development goals; is not possible without supporting Academic Freedom.

WHEREAS, the MSJC Academic Senate Constitution Article II, Section 1 states, The Senate shall be the executor and shall serve as the official representative body of the faculty. The purpose of the Senate shall be to ensure the Mt. San Jacinto College District Faculty formal and effective procedures for the formulation and implementation of district policies on academic and professional matters.

RESOLVED, that the MSJC Academic Senate opposes any legislation or codification of documents that undermine academic and intellectual freedom, limits free speech, and/or interferes with the established norms and values of scholarship and educational excellence.

RESOLVED, that the MSJC Academic Senate calls on current and future leaders of the MSJC Board of Trustees, Executive Cabinet, Classified Professionals, and Faculty to reject all attempts by external groups to restrict or dictate college curriculum on any matter, including but not limited to, matters related to diversity, equity, inclusion,

accessibility; and racial and social justice; and to stand firm against encroachment on faculty authority.

RESOLVED, the MSJC Academic Senate stands with our colleagues in higher education and K-12 throughout the county, state, and country who may be affected by similarly harmful legislation.

References:

AAC&U. (2006). Academic Freedom and Educational Responsibility. Association of American Colleges & Universities. Retrieved from Association of American Colleges & Universities Website: <https://www.aacu.org/about/statements/academic-freedom>

AAUP. (1970). 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure with 1970 Interpretive Comments. American Association of University Professors. Retrieved from American Association of University Professors website: <https://www.aaup.org/report/1940-statement-principles-academic-freedom-...>

MSJC Board Policy Adoption BP 4030 (2018). Retrieved from Board Docs: <https://go.boarddocs.com/ca/msjc/Board.nsf/Public#>

MSJC Equity Pledge, Call to Action, and Mission Statement. Retrieved from <https://msjc.edu/academicsenate/Academic-Senate-Constitution.html>