

# Free Speech

## CS-001

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Director, Campus Safety Services	<i>Roman Calvano</i>	12/12/2018
<b>Policy Holder</b>	<b>Print Name</b>	<b>Date (MM/DD/YYYY)</b>

College Council	
<b>Advising Body</b>	<b>Date Consulted (MM/DD/YYYY)</b>

Vice President, Corporate Services and Innovation	Angela Lockridge	12/12/2018
<b>Approver</b>	<b>Print Name</b>	<b>Date (MM/DD/YYYY)</b>

## Purpose

This document outlines the requirement for Georgian to maintain the right of freedom of expression among members of the college community, as per the Policy Statement on Upholding Free Speech developed by Colleges Ontario and adopted by the presidents of all Ontario Colleges, effective Jan. 1, 2019.

## Scope

This policy protects freedom of expression at Georgian College, within the parameters described in the following procedure.

Freedom of expression, which means the right to speak, write, listen, challenge and learn, is essential to discovery, critical assessment and the effective dissemination of knowledge and ideas and leads to social

and economic advancement—a key role of colleges as described in the Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002.

Speech that violates the law, including the Ontario Human Rights Code, is not allowed. Speech that constitutes harassment, a threat or hate speech is not allowed. Other context-specific boundaries to freedom of expression may also apply.

This policy and procedure applies to all college faculty, students, staff, management, guests and others who are present at the college.

## Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Freedom of expression	the right to speak, write, listen, challenge and learn

## Responsibility

- **Georgian College** must be a place that allows for open discussion and free inquiry, where diverse voices can be heard and ideas and viewpoints can be explored and discussed freely and debated openly without fear of reprisal, even if these are considered to be controversial or conflict with the views of some members of the college community.
- **Members of the college community** are free to criticize and contest the views of others; however, they may not obstruct or interfere with the freedom of others to express their views.

## Policy

Georgian will protect freedom of expression among all members of the college community, as per the Policy Statement on Upholding Free Speech developed by Colleges Ontario and approved by all Ontario college presidents, effective Jan. 1, 2019.

## Procedures

### 1.1 Protection of free speech

- 1.1.1 The **college** may reasonably regulate the time, place and manner of freedom of expression to ensure that it does not disrupt normal college operations and ordinary college activities or endanger the safety of others.

- 1.1.2 Speech that violates the law, including the Ontario Human Rights Code, is not allowed. Speech that constitutes harassment, a threat or hate speech is not allowed.
- 1.1.3 Although the college greatly values civility and **all members of college community** share responsibility for maintaining a climate of mutual respect, it is not the role of **Georgian** to shield members of the college community from ideas and opinions that they may find disagreeable or offensive. It is up to individuals – and not the college – to make such judgments for themselves and to debate and challenge ideas that they find unacceptable.
- 1.1.4 **Members of the college community** are free to criticize and contest the views of others; however, they may not obstruct or interfere with the freedom of others to express their views. The rights of others to express or hear ideas must also be respected.
- 1.1.5 Other context-specific boundaries to freedom of expression may also apply, such as those arising out of the terms of employment and collective agreements.
- 1.1.6 This policy statement is aligned with other college policies, all of which shall be read in harmony.

## 1.2 Complaints

- 1.2.1 Existing college mechanisms and processes will be used to handle complaints and ensure compliance with the policy.
- 1.2.2 Complaints that remain unresolved may be referred to the Ontario Ombudsman.
- 1.2.3 Existing disciplinary measures will apply to those whose actions are contrary to the policy.

## 1.3 Compliance by student groups

- 1.3.1 Georgian will consider official student groups' compliance with the policy as a condition for ongoing financial support or recognition.
- 1.3.2 Georgian will encourage student groups to adopt policies that align with this policy.

## Related Materials

- *Policy Statement on Upholding Free Speech: Colleges Ontario, 2018*
- *Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology Act, 2002*
- *Ontario Human Rights Act*
- *Georgian College Employee Code of Conduct*
- *Georgian College Student Code of Conduct*
- *CAAT academic and support staff agreements*