



Purpose:

As a public institution of higher learning whose mandate includes the pursuit of truth, the dissemination of knowledge, and the fostering of democratic discourse, Portage College is proud of its long-standing and continuing commitment to protecting freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression, and the related freedoms of conscience, religion, association, and peaceful assembly, all as enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Portage College is a place of free and open inquiry in all matters. The purpose of this guideline is to ensure all members of the Portage College community are guaranteed the broadest possible latitude to speak, write, listen, challenge, and learn.

Responsibility: President & CEO

Scope

This guideline applies to all members of the College Community, including invited guests and visitors, who use College space or resources or take part in off campus activities sponsored by the College.

This guideline does not apply to the responsibilities and obligations to and of the College as stated in other college policies.

Guidelines:

1. Members of the Portage College community have the right to criticize and question other views expressed on campus, but must not obstruct or otherwise interfere with others' freedom of expression.
2. Mutual respect and civility are valued, but the lack of them, in and of itself, does not constitute sufficient justification to limit freedom of expression.
3. Freedom of expression may only be restricted if it violates the law, falsely defames an individual, constitutes a genuine threat or harassment, or unjustifiably invades substantial privacy or confidentiality interests. Activities must be compliant with Canadian and Alberta Law.
4. Portage College shall apply this statement consistently and without discriminatory or preferential treatment toward any individual or group.
5. The fact that an individual or group is permitted or invited to carry on an expressive activity on campus does not mean that the views of that individual or group are representative of Portage College's views as an institution, or the views of its leadership.
6. Debate and deliberation must not be suppressed simply because the ideas put forward are thought by some, or even most, to be unwelcome, uncomfortable, unwise, wrongheaded, disagreeable, deeply offensive, immoral or false.
7. It is not Portage College's role to shield individuals from such ideas. It is for individuals to judge the nature of ideas and opinions for themselves, and to act on those judgments not by seeking to suppress expression but by openly and vigorously contesting the ideas that they oppose.
8. Portage College may reasonably regulate the time, place, and manner of expression to ensure that the expression does not disrupt the ordinary activities of Portage College.



Procedures:

1. In the event that there is a complaint about restriction of freedom of expression or what constitutes' freedom of expression these should be brought forward to the Director of Human Resources and Compliance.
2. The Director of Human Resources and Compliance or designate shall review each complaint and respond within 3 working days.
3. In cases in which a full investigation is warranted such as instances where there the freedom of expression is being perceived as harassment the Director of Human Resources and Compliance or designate will make every attempt to complete the investigation within 10 working days.
4. Decision can be appealed to the President & CEO or designate within 3 days after the decision has been given.
5. Appeals will be heard within 5 working days of filing the appeal.

Approved by Executive Committee

President

September 19, 2023
Approved Date

September 19, 2023
Effective Date