

EDUCATIONAL ROLE, MISSION, PURPOSE, AND RESPONSIBILITY

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(LOCAL)

PURPOSE

The purpose of the College District is to prepare students for successful living and responsible citizenship in a rapidly changing local, national, and world community. The College District does this by providing accessible, accredited, affordable, cost-effective, quality learning opportunities for development of intellectual skills, job skills, personal growth, and/or transfer to a baccalaureate program. In fulfilling the purpose, the College District furthers cultural, economic, and workforce development in the communities served. In all its efforts, the College District strives to meet the needs and exceed the expectations of those the College District serves.

More specifically, the College District's purpose is to provide:

1. Technical programs up to two years in length leading to associate degrees or certificates;
2. Vocational programs leading directly to employment in semi-skilled and skilled occupations;
3. Freshman and sophomore courses in arts and sciences;
4. Continuing adult education programs for occupational or cultural upgrading;
5. Compensatory education programs designed to fulfill the commitment of an admissions policy allowing the enrollment of disadvantaged students;
6. A continuing program of counseling and guidance designed to assist students in achieving their individual educational goals;
7. Workforce development programs to meet local and statewide needs;
8. Adult literacy and other basic skills programs for adults; and
9. Other purposes as may be prescribed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board or the College District's Board in the best interest of postsecondary education in Texas.

THE STUDENTS

As an open-door institution, the College District has built its programs to meet the needs of a varied student body. The students bring diversity of purpose, circumstance, background, skill, and ability. They come with many different expectations. The majority come on a part-time basis, often balancing work and family responsibilities while pursuing their studies. They come because we provide high-quality, convenient, low-cost education.

It then becomes the College District's task as an educator to achieve the best possible match between students' needs and desires and the educational programs and services of the College District. It becomes the College District's task, as it builds its community of teaching and learning, to involve the students in

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ways that increase their commitment to learning and their desire to learn through a lifetime. As the College District builds the strongest possible community of learning for students, the College District is committed to:

1. Securing greater opportunity for students' success by assessing, advising, placing, orienting, and supporting them as they develop their educational goals, helping them in ways that both respect their diversity and accelerate their achievement.
2. Providing students quality learning experiences in the classroom, encouraging them to build relationships with faculty and other students and applying organizational resources to make that possible.
3. Involving as many students as possible in various aspects of campus life, offering outstanding student programs and services and a supportive learning environment, and encouraging them, through campus life, to understand points of view and experiences different from their own.
4. Designing curriculum to build basic and technical literacy, general education, university transfer, preparation for work, and lifelong education in ways that underscore the value of completing programs and help students understand relationships across the curriculum.
5. Cultivating in students an understanding of community that encompasses the global community, values civic responsibility, and develops leadership abilities.

THE COLLEGE  
DISTRICT COMMUNITY

The College District must itself be a community before it can effectively serve the larger community. The quality of services offered students and Dallas County must be clearly correlated with the College District's ability to build an internal community. The essence of such an undertaking is to create a caring and renewing environment, one which frees us from barriers based on age, gender, race, religion, or role. It is an undertaking that requires leaders who understand and are aligned with the central purpose.

As the College District ensures the strength of its faculty, administrators, and staff, the College District is committed to:

1. Valuing all members, all segments, and all aspects of organizational life, recruiting and retaining members who will increase our diversity, and encouraging broad-based participation and collaboration across disciplines, professional designations, and functional units.

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2. Supporting the key role of faculty in building a community of learning, encouraging their involvement in decisions which affect the central purpose.
3. Focusing, integrating, and allocating resources for our programs and services in ways that support students and tie all facets of institutional life to the central purpose.
4. Providing growth experiences for all staff in support of our priorities, giving particular attention to the development of leaders at all levels of the organization.
5. Offering frequent, significant opportunities to recognize and celebrate the institution's successes in pursuit of our central purpose.
6. Assessing effectiveness in achieving our purpose to maintain the trust of those we serve.

THE DALLAS COUNTY  
COMMUNITY

As is appropriate for a community college, the College District defines its programs and services through outreach. Thus, the final component of building a community of teaching and learning rests on our ability to establish the healthiest possible relationships between the College District and the larger Dallas community. This means clearly demonstrating the College District to be an effective steward of the public dollar. It means strengthening and tending existing ties with other segments of education, with the business community, and with social agencies and policy groups. It means strengthening the ability to seek out likely new partners.

As the College District relates to various groups within the community, the College District is committed to:

1. Increasing our understanding of organizations and neighborhoods within the community.
2. Meeting the needs the College District discovers within the community that are appropriate to the purpose of the College District.
3. Building long-term relationships with other community entities whose work has impact on the College District.
4. Demonstrating the College District's resource accountability by documenting both the efficiency and the economic impact of the College District on the community.
5. Planning and evaluating in ways that anticipate changes in community needs and interests as the College District serves this complex metropolitan area.
6. Underscoring the importance of reciprocity in all these outreach relationships.

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This, then, is our intended purpose: to equip students for effective living and responsible citizenship. The College District is intent on building a community of teaching and learning. Our purpose is ongoing and requires constant attention. It asks that we make a singular commitment to our students. It asks that we commit to one another, to our local community, and to our task as educators. It asks that we demonstrate the values of community through a concern for the whole, for integration and collaboration, for openness and integrity, for inclusiveness and self-renewal (AACJC Commission on the Future of Community Colleges, Building Communities: A Vision for a New Century. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, 1988). It is a purpose which acknowledges teaching as the central process in building a learning community since dedicated teaching is our best opportunity to involve students. We commit ourselves to these important tasks.

PHILOSOPHY OF  
OPEN DISCUSSION

In a world of rapid change the Board believes that:

1. A college best serves its community not as a stronghold of rigid tradition, but as an open intellectual forum where varying viewpoints may be freely expressed and fairly debated.
2. A free society functions efficiently only if its citizens have a right to discuss, debate, and agree or disagree constructively.
3. An educated citizenry, fully aware of all the evidence, is best able to preserve the valuable heritage of American democratic institutions.
4. The community college has an obligation to its community and its students to promote healthy discussion as an educative force.

The Board desires to foster in students a respect for differing points of view, the ability to discriminate between fact and fiction, and the capacity to think intelligently.

The Board encourages the colleges to invite visits from outside speakers representing diverse points of view. In return, it reserves the right to impose specific conditions ensuring that opportunity be provided for students to hear opposing sides of a question.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The College District, like all other institutions of higher learning, serves the common good, which depends upon an uninhibited search for truth and its open expression. The points enumerated below constitute the College District's position on academic freedom:

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1. Faculty members are appointed to impart to their students and to their communities the truth as they see it in their respective disciplines.
2. Subject to legal constraints, the following are among the responsibilities that reside primarily with the faculty: planning and revising curricula, selecting textbooks and other instructional materials and activities, choosing instructional methodologies, evaluating learners, assigning grades, and maintaining classroom discipline.
3. It is essential that faculty members be free to pursue scholarly inquiry and to voice and publish their conclusions without fear of institutional censorship or discipline.
4. Faculty members are citizens and, therefore, possess the rights of citizens. These rights include, among others, the right as private citizens to speak freely outside the classroom on matters of public concern and to participate in lawful political activities.
5. Prior restraint or sanctions will not be imposed upon faculty members in the exercise of their rights as citizens or duties as teachers. Nor will faculty members fear reprisal for exercising their civic rights and academic freedom.

ACADEMIC  
RESPONSIBILITY

The academic freedom of faculty members is accompanied by equally compelling obligations and responsibilities to their profession, their students, their College District, and their community. Faculty members must defend the rights of academic freedom while accepting willingly the responsibilities enumerated below:

1. Faculty members will be judicious in the introduction of material in the classroom without forfeiting the instructional benefits of controversy.
2. No faculty member will attempt to force on students a personal viewpoint intolerant of the rights of others to hold or express diverse opinions.
3. Faculty members must recognize their responsibility to maintain competence and adapt to change in their disciplines through continued professional development and to demonstrate their competence through consistently adequate preparation and performance.
4. Faculty members must recognize that the public will judge the College District and their profession by their public conduct. Therefore, faculty members will make clear that the views they express are their own and should avoid creating the im-

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pression that they speak or act on behalf of the College District or of the profession.