



FCCC
Faculty Council
of Community Colleges

Faculty Council of Community College Resolution: DEI-1-25/26

Academic Freedom and Legal Guidance for Faculty

Passed unanimously (23-0-0) October 18, 2025

WHEREAS the Faculty Council of Community Colleges (FCCC) of the State University of New York (SUNY) has, for more than five decades, exemplified excellence in shared governance through constructive partnership among faculty, students, trustees, presidents, and system leadership; and

WHEREAS the State University of New York (SUNY) amended Resolution 2012-48, *General Education Framework*, with the passage of Resolution 2024-64 (December 17, 2024), effective for Fall 2026; and

WHEREAS the new SUNY General Education Framework added *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice (DEISJ)* as a new required Knowledge and Skills Area and has further amended the General Education Framework to add *Civic Discourse* as a Core Competency; and

WHEREAS the implementation of DEISJ and Civic Discourse graduation requirements relies upon faculty engagement with controversial and complex issues; and

WHEREAS the SUNY Board of Trustees called upon SUNY System Administration to work with campuses to ensure that faculty have the training and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning in DEISJ and Civic Discourse; and

WHEREAS Chancellor John B. King stated in his *State of the University Address* (May 2025), "At SUNY, DEI is not only one of our pillars; it's in our DNA"; and

WHEREAS the current political climate presents challenges to both faculty and students engaging in dialogue, both inside and outside the classroom, resulting in a notable chilling of academic freedom; and

WHEREAS the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) reported that “one in three faculty say they have less academic freedom today when it comes to teaching content without interference, speaking freely as citizens, and speaking freely when participating in institutional governance” (January 6, 2025); and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Council of Community Colleges (FCCC) calls upon the SUNY Chancellor, SUNY Board of Trustees, Campus Boards of Trustees, Campus Presidents, and Campus Chief Academic Officers to strengthen and safeguard *Academic Freedom Protections* for faculty; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Faculty Council of Community Colleges calls upon SUNY Chancellor John B. King to provide clear *guidance for faculty teaching controversial topics* to ensure that students meet the graduation requirements for DEISJ and Civic Discourse; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Faculty Council of Community Colleges calls upon Chancellor King and SUNY Legal Counsel to *clarify the legal protections* for faculty teaching content aligned with DEISJ and Civic Discourse requirements, as well as Academic Freedom across all subject areas.

Sources:

SUNY General Education Framework

<https://system.suny.edu/academic-affairs/acaproplan/general-education/suny-ge>

Chancellor King State of the Union May 21,2025

<https://www.suny.edu/suny-news/press-releases/5-25/5-21-25/sotu.htm>

AAUP: Faculty Report Less Academic Freedom

<https://www.aaup.org/news/faculty-report-declining-academic-freedom>