

PRIVACY, ACADEMIC FREEDOM, AND COLLEGIALITY

April 3, 2018

As many of you have seen and heard, MassArt has been in the news in the last few days. Some of you have raised questions about what you're reading and seeing on social media. While I cannot answer every question, I'd like to be as direct as I can about some important matters.

We protect employees' right to privacy.

By policy and law, employees have a right to privacy. I therefore cannot discuss personnel matters.

We protect academic freedom.

Academic freedom and creative expression are essential to the identity of MassArt. We therefore maintain an environment of free inquiry for students, faculty, and staff because it is vital to our mission as a university.

No faculty member has had their academic freedom abridged in a disciplinary action and no faculty member has been forced to retire over matters of academic freedom. Any reports to the contrary, in the news or on social media, are untrue.

We protect the right of our employees and students to work and learn in an environment free of harassment and hostility.

With freedom comes responsibility. We share a mutual responsibility to respect the dignity of every person and to engage with one another in a collegial manner. When respect and collegiality are stifled, both freedom and creativity suffer.

I want to reiterate what I've said previously about these matters:

As an art and design college, academic freedom and creative expression are essential to MassArt's mission. We believe that freedom and creativity thrive on a campus where students, faculty, and staff respect the dignity of one another and practice collegiality. When respect and collegiality are stifled, both freedom and creativity suffer.

I am committed to uphold each of these values on our campus and appreciate your partnership toward that end.

David

David Nelson
President, Massachusetts College of Art and Design