

## **Academy for Lifelong Learning Code of Conduct**

The Academy for Lifelong Learning is an organization that offers a variety of workshops across a broad range of disciplines. As such it attracts those who wish to examine the world of ideas and who wish to explore and understand the complex issues facing society. It is understandable that people engaged in exploring sensitive topics may feel passionately about their personal positions and assertive in refuting the positions of others.

It is critical to our mandate as an educational organization to permit as much latitude as possible in protecting the rights of our members to freedom of expression. The free exchange of ideas cannot thrive in an atmosphere where minority opinions or unorthodox ideas are discouraged or suppressed. At the same time, freedom of expression does not extend to the promotion of hatred for any group in society, or to ad hominem attacks on someone with an opposing view. In the language of the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, the Academy fosters "a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of each person so that each person feels a part of the community and able to contribute fully to the development and well-being of the community."

Membership in the Academy is dependent on the observance of the following conditions. Members may not subject fellow members to:

- Abusive language
- Discourtesy or rudeness
- Bullying or harassment, of any kind, whether in person, online, or written
- Personal attacks on a member's reputation or character
- Any other conduct which threatens or undermines the collegiality of the Academy

Members who believe they have been subject to an attack by a fellow member are invited to express their concerns by writing in confidence to the President or Vice-President who will meet with both parties, either separately or together to resolve the issue or issues between them. The goal of this procedure is to prevent the spread of hard feelings and restore mutual respect as quickly as possible. If the situation cannot be resolved in this manner to the mutual satisfaction of the parties, the President or Vice-President may bring the issue to the attention of the Board. The parties will each be invited to present their respective cases to the Board if they wish to do so, either at the same time or at separate times, at the discretion of the Board. The Board may then make a determination that the Code of Conduct has been breached, that the behavior is unacceptable, and issue a warning that future transgressions will not be permitted. Or, if, in the opinion of the Board, the situation requires a more severe response, the Board may permanently revoke the membership of the transgressor by a vote of 2/3 of voting directors.

CONFIRMED BY THE MEMBERS at the Annual General Meeting of 6 June 2017.