

Descriptor Term: TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

Descriptor Code: IKB

Rescinds: IKB

Board Approved: 8/28/2006

Previously Approved: 2/1/1988

Controversial issues are defined as those problems, subjects or questions where there are major differences of opinion, no easy answers, and discussion of which generally create strong feelings among people.

Controversial issues, however, provide stimulation to learning by creating intellectual excitement and are thus an important part of the classroom environment. Free inquiry in a democratic society requires that controversial issues arising in the classroom be handled as a regular aspect of instruction and learning in such a way as to not inhibit the dignity, the personality, or the intellectual integrity of either the teacher or the students.

Legal Reference: Parducci v. Rutland, 316 F. Supp. 352 (M.D. Ala. 1970); Epperson v. Arkansas, 393 U.S. 97 (1986)