

Appendix A: Template Resolution in Support of Free Expression

Be it resolved that:

- (1) The University recognizes that within the unique university context, the most crucial of all human rights are freedom of expression and academic freedom. The University affirms that these freedoms are meaningless unless they include the right to raise disturbing questions and provocative challenges to the values embraced by society at large, and even by the University itself. The right to engage in open debate, criticize ideas, express controversial and unpopular ideas, and to challenge society's core beliefs, is essential for the pursuit of truth, and for preserving a free and democratic society.
- (2) The principle purpose of a University is to prepare students for a life of usefulness and success in the broad and diverse world. It would be a profound institutional failure to create a false environment where students are taught and enabled to echo only their own pleasing sentiments and are not trained to engage different views through critical thinking, respectful dialogue, while under the control of their intellect and reason.
- (3) The University has a duty to actively support this human right to unfettered, critical dissemination, teaching and research, because, apart from the University, there is no other institution or office in our modern liberal democracy which is the custodian of this most precious and vulnerable right of the liberated human spirit.
- (4) The University affirms that the principles of academic freedom, which protect the right of professors to pursue controversial areas of research and to express and disseminate unpopular and even offensive ideas, apply equally to students. All students enjoy the freedom to study, debate, and disseminate ideas, regardless of their popularity.
- (5) The University accepts that the free and open exchange of ideas will generate controversy, lead to academic disputes, and cause discomfort among members of the University, and in the wider community. In such cases, the University will support and protect the free speech rights of all persons, including and especially those who adhere to unpopular beliefs or controversial opinions.
- (6) The University recognizes that it is not the proper role of the university to attempt to shield individuals from ideas and opinions they find controversial, unwanted, or offensive. Concerns about civility and mutual respect must never be used as a justification for silencing debate, however offensive or disagreeable those ideas may be to some.
- (7) The University recognizes that freedom of expression is limited to peaceful means and non-coercive methods. The University expressly rejects the use of violence, physical force, and physical coercion as methods to express one's views, or as methods to prevent others from expressing their views. Controversial or unpopular ideas should be addressed through debate, reason, and argument, and not by silencing one's opponents

- through blocking, obstructing, disrupting or otherwise suppressing unpopular or controversial speech on campus.
- (8) The University recognizes that the *Criminal Code of Canada* places certain restrictions on freedom of expression. Apart from these restrictions, the peaceful expression of ideas on campus should be supported and encouraged.
 - (9) The right to free expression is complemented by the right to freedom of association, whereby individuals are free to cooperate in groups. All students enjoy the right to form and join the campus club (or clubs) of their own choosing, to hold and advertise meetings, to invite speakers on campus, to sponsor debates, to engage in peaceful assemblies and demonstrations, and to have equal access to University facilities, spaces and resources. No student, and no campus club, shall be discriminated against on the basis of belief, opinion, or viewpoint.
 - (10) The University will interpret and apply its founding documents, rules, by-laws, regulations, policies and procedures in accordance with these principles.