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OPEN EXPRESSION POLICY

Policy

As an institution of higher education, NewU is committed to free and open inquiry, deliberation and debate in all matters. It is NewU's policy to provide all members of the University community, including faculty, students, and staff, the broadest possible latitude to speak, write, listen, challenge, and learn.

The ideas of different members of the University community will often and naturally conflict. It is for the individual members of the University community, not for the University as an institution, to judge the value of ideas, and to act on those judgments not by seeking to suppress speech, but by openly and vigorously contesting those arguments and ideas that they oppose. Fostering the ability of members of the University community to engage with each other in an effective and responsible manner is an essential part of the University's educational mission.

The freedom to debate and discuss the merits of competing ideas does not mean that individuals may say whatever they wish, wherever they wish. The University prohibits expression that violates the law, falsely defames a specific individual, constitutes a genuine threat, violates the University's Harassment Policy, or unjustifiably invades substantial privacy or confidentiality interests. In addition, the University may reasonably regulate the time, place, and manner of expression to ensure that it does not disrupt the ordinary activities of the institution. Finally, to the extent that appointment letters, confidentiality agreements or policies, professional conduct policies, or HR policies regulate conduct that may include speech and expression, they are not superseded by this policy. But these are narrow exceptions to the general principle of freedom of expression, and it is vitally important that these exceptions not be used in a manner that is inconsistent with the University's commitment to a free and open discussion of ideas.

As a corollary to the University's commitment to protect and promote free expression, members of the University community must also act in conformity with the principle of free expression. Although members of the University community are free to criticize and contest the views expressed by other members of the community, or by individuals who are invited to campus, they may not obstruct or otherwise interfere with the freedom of others to express views they reject or even loathe. To this end, the University has a solemn responsibility not only to promote a lively and fearless freedom of deliberation and debate, but also to protect that freedom when others attempt to restrict it.

Because it is essential to free and open inquiry, deliberation, and debate, all members of the University community share in the responsibility for maintaining civil and respectful discourse.

[End]