



**ADOPTION OF OHIO STATE PHILOSOPHY ON INSTITUTIONAL AND LEADERSHIP STATEMENTS IN
SUPPORT OF THE CHICAGO PRINCIPLES**

Resolution No. 2024-34

Synopsis: Adoption of The Ohio State University's philosophy on institutional and leadership statements, which is consistent with the University of Chicago's 2014 Report of the Committee on Freedom of Expression ("Chicago Principles"), which was created in confirmation of the University of Chicago's 1967 Kalven Committee Report on the University's Role in Political and Social Action ("Kalven Report").

Universities have a vital role to play in contributing to the local, state, and national discourse. Ohio State and other institutions of higher education advance society by supporting the free expression of ideas and providing academic community members the freedom to share their research and study through discussion, debate, and publication of ideas without censorship or limitation.

Ohio State takes seriously its role in promoting and supporting public discourse and is steadfastly committed to protecting the First Amendment right to free speech and expression. Since the university's founding, its land-grant mission has been to create pathways to accessible education, promote the exchange of ideas, and encourage debate and civil discourse.

The Board of Trustees believes that the Chicago Principles provide an important framework for carrying out this mission. While diverse groups of individuals will naturally and inevitably disagree with each other over issues of consequence, the Chicago Principles recognize that the fact of such disagreement alone is not cause for a university to limit ideas or restrict speech. Further, though the university can reasonably regulate the time, place, and manner of speech to protect its operations, and may address speech that, for example, violates the law or constitutes harassment or threatening behavior, these are rare exceptions to the general rule of supporting free expression broadly.

While universities have an independent right, and in some cases a responsibility, to speak on their own behalf, the Board of Trustees recognizes that institutional speech carries a corresponding responsibility to be judicious and transparently principled in deciding if, when, and how to engage in such speech so as not to harm the core values of free expression and intellectual diversity.

The Board of Trustees therefore wishes to reconfirm the university's foundational commitment to free speech, register support for the vision set forth in the Kalven Report and the Chicago Principles, and adopt Ohio State's philosophy on institutional and leadership statements, which sets forth the principles to which the institution holds itself in determining when to engage in speech.

WHEREAS the Board of Trustees recognizes that as the state's flagship public, land-grant university Ohio State's mission is to create and support an intellectually diverse community empowered to engage in free and open debate, expression, and research in the pursuit of knowledge and the betterment of society; and

WHEREAS, because of its sustained commitment to supporting this educational community, and because of the exemplary academic work of the students, faculty and staff who make up this community, Ohio State has a reputation for excellence both nationally and internationally, which gives the university's voice significant weight across the world; and

WHEREAS the Board of Trustees affirms that institutional speech may properly be made to defend and uphold the university's mission and values, but that such speech must be limited to issues of foundational importance to the university to protect its commitment to intellectual diversity; and



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WHEREAS the Board of Trustees recognizes that the university has established a thoughtful and consistent set of principles for evaluating if, when, and how statements will benefit the university and

the state of Ohio without causing unintended consequences to the academic community that drives its success, or its commitment to intellectual diversity and free speech; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees agrees that Ohio State should only issue public statements in situations that directly impact the university and its operations; that impact its students, faculty or staff in such a way that the university must respond to provide support, resources or articulate what the institution is doing to resolve a situation; or that are of importance to the city, region or state and the university can play a vital role in sharing information with the public; and

WHEREAS, regardless of whether the university engages in speech on a particular issue, the Board of Trustees believes the university's role appropriately includes taking action to support impacted members of its community, and encourages impactful, targeted outreach by appropriate representatives of the university in such situations; and

WHEREAS the Board of Trustees has already adopted a university free speech policy affirming the principles of campus free speech and in alignment with the university's Shared Values:

NOW THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees hereby acknowledges support for the Chicago Principles, and adopts the attached university philosophy on institutional and leadership statements.

CERTIFIED

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate excerpt from the minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting held August 17, 2023.

Jessica A. Eveland
Secretary