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## **FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**

### POLICY

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## POLICY

NAME	<b>Freedom of Expression</b>
CATEGORY	Board of Governors - Governance
POLICY NUMBER	BGOV-04
<b>ACCOUNTABILITY</b>	
Office of Accountability	Board of Governors
Office of Administrative Responsibility	Office of the President
Approved By	Board of Governors
<b>RELEVANT POLICY DATES</b>	
Last Approved	October 2024
Changes Effective	October 2024
Review Frequency	5 years (BofG Fall Meeting in 2029)
<b>MODIFICATION HISTORY</b>	
September 2019	

## POLICY STATEMENT

The King's University (King's) values learning that is open and explores all dimensions of our world. We are dedicated to academic freedom and engaging well across differences of opinion, belief, and expression. The University recognizes that free speech, debate and critique are essential to the pursuit of knowledge.

All members of the King's community – board members, faculty, staff, and students – have the right to express their views freely, within the context of The King's University mission, vision, and values, and Canadian and Alberta law. Visitors to campus must respect and follow any relevant University policies, and applicable laws.

## DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
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### Academic Freedom

**The King's University** recognizes academic freedom as a necessary condition for carrying out its mission and vision. Academic freedom is principally the freedom of all community members to teach, conduct research, and engage in other characteristic activities of a scholarly community – all without penalty of censorship or similar means of coercion (Policy – Academic Freedom, 2023).

**Academic freedom is the freedom to teach and conduct research in an academic environment** (*Universities Canada 2011*). Academic freedom is fundamental to the mandate of universities to pursue truth, educate students and disseminate knowledge and understanding.

In teaching, academic freedom is fundamental to the protection of the rights of the teacher to teach and of the student to learn. In research and scholarship, it is critical to advancing knowledge. Academic freedom includes the right to freely communicate knowledge and the results of research and scholarship.

Unlike the broader concept of freedom of speech, academic freedom must be based on institutional integrity, rigorous standards for enquiry and institutional autonomy, which allows universities to set their research and educational priorities (*Universities Canada 2011*).

## Freedom of Expression

**Freedom of thought, belief, opinion, and expression, including freedom of the press and other media communication** (*Section 2(b), Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*)

Under section 2 of the Charter, Canadians are free to follow the religion of their choice. In addition, they are guaranteed freedom of thought, belief, and expression. Since media are an important means for communicating thoughts and ideas, the Charter protects the right of the press and other media to speak out. Our right to gather and act in peaceful groups is also protected, as is our right to belong to an association like a trade union.

These freedoms are set out in the Charter to ensure that Canadians are free to express their ideas, gather and discuss them, and communicate them widely to other people. These activities are basic forms of individual liberty. They are also important to the success of a democratic society like Canada. In a democracy, people must be free to discuss matters of public policy, criticize governments, and offer their own solutions to social problems.

Even though these freedoms are very important, governments can sometimes limit them. For example, freedom of expression may be limited by laws against hate propaganda or child pornography because they prevent harm to individuals and groups (*Government of Canada's Guide to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*).

## Alberta principles & guidelines

### Principles

- We believe in free and open enquiry in all matters.
- We believe individuals have the broadest latitude to speak, write, listen, challenge ideas and learn.
- We believe individuals have the right to challenge, debate, and criticize the views of others but not obstruct the right of others to freely express their views.
- We believe the offensiveness of ideas should not be a barrier to individuals having the freedom to express their ideas of points of view.
- We believe it is up to individuals not the institution to make judgements about the ideas put forward.

### Guidelines

- Activities must ensure compliance with Canadian and Alberta law.
- Institutions need to restrict activities that seek to falsely defame any individual, constitute a genuine threat or harassment or unjustifiably invades substantial privacy or confidentiality interests.
- The Institution will reasonably regulate time, place and manner of expression to ensure events do not disrupt the ordinary activities of the institution.
- Institution specific guidelines consistent with the individual mission and values can also be added.

*(Council of Post-Secondary Presidents of Alberta, at the request of the Government of Alberta for system-wide principles for Freedom of Speech)*

**University mission & vision**      The King’s University exists to provide university education that inspires and equips learners to bring renewal and reconciliation to every walk of life as followers of Jesus Christ, the Servant-King.

To be widely known as a Christian university serving to build a more humane, just, and sustainable world.

**University values**      *(excerpts from The King’s University Academic Calendar 2019-2020 & Statement on Inclusion, 2019)*

- mutual encouragement, openness, and respect among students, staff, and faculty
- our calling to contribute to the public good
- interest in exploring all dimensions of our world
- social transformation rooted in a biblical vision of justice and compassion
- a safe, inclusive environment of mutual respect where all may belong and flourish (Statement on Inclusion)
- equity of access and opportunity for all our students, faculty and staff (Statement on Inclusion)

**Related Policy & Procedure**

1. Academic Freedom (Academic Affairs)
2. Visitors and Solicitation on Campus (Facilities Access and Security)
3. Posters and Hanging (Facilities Access and Security)
4. Facilities Booking (Facilities Access and Security)
5. Internal Digital Signs (Information Technology)

**Last Reviewed Dates**

September 2019  
September 2024