

Since the founding of the Jesuit order by Saint Ignatius in 1534, Jesuit institutions have relentlessly pursued academic growth through the questioning of established beliefs, openness to new concepts, and the assessment of ideas through intellectual scrutiny. Several centuries of determined academic inquiry have allowed Jesuit institutions, and the scholars within, to “go forth and set the world on fire” with new ways of engaging and developing our society.

As a Catholic Jesuit institution of higher education, Marquette University recognizes its duty to be an institution of intellectual growth, openness, and free expression. Marquette University also endorses the Chicago Principles established by the University of Chicago in 2014 and adopted by numerous Universities in the United States to further free speech and expression in higher education. Therefore we, the Marquette Community, commit ourselves to free and open inquiry in all matters, yielding the broadest possible latitude for all students, faculty, staff, and administrators to speak, write, listen, challenge, and learn.

The ideas of different members of the Marquette Community will often and quite naturally conflict. However, Marquette University acknowledges that to shield individuals from ideas and opinions they find unwelcome, immoral, wrongheaded, or disagreeable is to leave individuals unprepared to question the validity of their own assumptions and engage in intellectual debate outside of Marquette’s classrooms. Although Marquette University greatly values civility and mutual respect, concerns about civility and mutual respect can never be used as a justification for closing off the discussion of ideas, however disagreeable those ideas may be to some members of our community.

Nevertheless, the freedom to debate and discuss the merits of competing ideas, while essential, is not unlimited. This freedom does not afford individuals the right to say whatever they wish, wherever they wish. Marquette University may restrict speech and expression that violates the law, uses slander or libel, falsely defames an individual or group, constitutes a genuine threat or harassment, or unjustifiably invades substantial privacy or confidentiality interests. Further, Marquette condemns hate speech, defined as speech or expression that directly intends to encourage violence against, threaten the security of, use racial or ethnic slurs to cause direct harm or unrest, or suppress the rights of an individual or group due to the immutable characteristics of the individual or group. But these are narrow exceptions to the general principle of freedom of expression, and Marquette University commits to never use these exceptions to silence a speaker’s Constitutional rights to peacefully voice their views and beliefs nor in a manner that hinders Marquette’s commitment to free and open discussion of ideas.

The Marquette Community recognizes that the free exchange and discussion of ideas in educational environments is necessary for the educational growth of our student body. Therefore, protecting free speech and expression in our classrooms is a top priority. Our faculty recognize no hierarchy in the world of ideas and commit themselves to fostering a space in which students of all perspectives and opinions feel welcome to contribute. Likewise, our students pledge to come to campus ready to listen and discuss ideas both within and outside their own perspectives. In doing so, our students and faculty commit to working together to

promote an environment where students of all views can share their ideas in civil discussion and respectful debate.

Protecting free speech and expression is a community effort. Although members of the Marquette Community are free to criticize and contest the views expressed on campus, and to criticize and contest speakers who are invited to present their views on campus, they may not obstruct or otherwise interfere with the freedom of others to express opinions they reject or even loathe. To this end, Marquette University has a solemn responsibility not only to promote lively freedom of debate and deliberation, but also to protect that freedom when others attempt to restrict it.

To secure our commitment to the principles established above, Marquette University hereby fully adopts the statement above and the following Five Pillars of Free Speech and Expression:

- I. Marquette University recognizes and affirms the right of all students, faculty, staff, administrators, and speakers on Marquette's campus to engage in all forms of speech and expression that does not violate the exceptions of our Fourth Pillar of Free Speech and Expression.
- II. Marquette University recognizes and affirms that it is the University's role to foster an environment that promotes the active participation of every member of the community to engage in free discussion, dialogue, and debate. To foster this environment, Marquette University commits to protecting the right of all individuals to express their ideas through presentations, written works, class discussion, open dialogues, public assemblies, civil debates, and all other means of communication.
- III. Marquette University recognizes and affirms that the University's role is not to shield individuals from ideas and opinions they find unwelcome, immoral, wrongheaded, or disagreeable.
- IV. Marquette University recognizes and affirms that that the University may restrict speech and expression that violates the law, uses slander or libel, falsely defames a specific individual or group, constitutes a genuine threat or harassment, uses hate speech as defined in the statement above, or unjustifiably invades substantial privacy or confidentiality interests.
- V. Marquette University recognizes and affirms that the University's administration will work with its colleges, academic departments, and students to continually assess and improve our campus's commitment to free speech and expression.

We vow to uphold these Pillars and promote them as central to Marquette University's mission, which is to endow our community with a rich Catholic Jesuit education that prepares students to "be the difference."

Organizations signed on:

Black Student Council

College Democrats

Eagle Free Press

Gender and Sexuality Alliance

Graduate Student Organization

Political Science Honors Society

TEDxMarquetteU

Young Americans for Freedom