

FREE SPEECH AND THE INCLUSIVE CAMPUS

1

Focus on the options.

2

Listen to other voices.
Listening is as important as speaking.

3

Consider each approach fairly, looking at its benefits and its trade-offs.

4

Everyone is encouraged to participate. No one or two individuals should dominate.

5

It's okay to disagree, but do so with curiosity, not hostility. Learning more about how others think is one of the most interesting parts of a forum.

6

Keep an open mind. Avoid coming to conclusions until we've deliberated on all the options.

OPTION 1

Prioritize student safety and well-being. The institution's primary responsibility is to protect student safety no matter the cost.

Questions for Deliberation:

- Should institutions spare no expense to provide resources to ensure safety, or is the possibility of students still being harmed or for institutional liability to increase too high?
- How should we respond to racism and hate within the campus community to ensure student safety?
- In cultivating a safe campus community, should institutions allow speakers or groups with no formal affiliation with the institution to use the campus space? Even if the presence of those groups or their message make certain student groups feel unsafe?

OPTION 2

Affirm the educational value of intellectual curiosity and engaging with ideas across difference. Learning often requires discomfort. Instead of limiting that discomfort, we should guide students through interpreting their feelings, thoughts, and experiences when they are uncomfortable.

Questions for Deliberation:

- What should colleges and universities do to encourage freedom in the classroom as well as flexible and responsive critical thinking?
- How should colleges and universities provide the academic freedom needed for lifelong learning?
- Can we meet the needs of our national, state, and local economies without addressing campus culture and inclusivity?

OPTION 3

Uphold the ideals of free speech. Institutions should welcome free speech in all its forms, even when it is potentially controversial and/or offensive.

Questions for Deliberation:

- How should colleges and universities prepare for the questions and contests between academic freedom and structural discrimination?
- How do campus cultures understand trigger warnings and microaggressions, which can include statements, actions, or incidents regarded as instances of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group such as a racial or ethnic minority?
- Where are safe spaces allowed, and for whom?