

STATEMENT ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why now?

Alberta's Minister of Advanced Education has directed the Boards of Governors of all postsecondary institutions to demonstrate their commitment to freedom of expression through a resolution incorporating the key principles of the [University of Chicago's Report of the Committee on Freedom of Expression](#). The college's Statement meets the Minister's requirements and is appropriate to our context.

What does this change?

The Statement formally affirms the college's longstanding commitment to freedom of expression, which is central to its mandate as a public institution for higher education. The college's position has not changed, but now it is available in written format for members of the college community and the public to access.

How does this relate to a respectful campus?

All members of the college community should be respectful and civil in their expression. The college's other policies, notably the Respectful Campus Policy and the Student Rights and Code of Conduct Policy, continue to apply.

Expression which violates the law, falsely defames an individual, constitutes a genuine threat or harassment, or unjustifiably invades substantial privacy or confidentiality interests will not be tolerated. Canadian law prohibits certain forms of expression, like obscenity, hate speech, violence and threats of violence, and false advertising.

Canada's courts have taken a balancing approach to evaluating when expression interferes with other rights and freedoms – including another person's own right to expression. Balancing rights is always difficult, complex, and dependent on the context. Lethbridge College is a diverse and inclusive campus where people live, work, and learn. Therefore, expression which is appropriate in one context may not be appropriate in another. The college and its employees may reasonably regulate the time, place, and manner of expression based on the context. Relevant factors may include an individual's ability to respond to or avoid exposure to expression which they consider undesirable, and the purpose of the expression.

Will allowing certain forms of expression harm the college's reputation?

The fact that an individual or group is permitted or invited to carry on an expressive activity on campus does not mean that the views of that individual or group are representative of the college's views as an institution, or the views of its leadership. Allowing expression on campus is

not an endorsement of that expression. The college is proud of its reputation for diversity, inclusion, and open debate. The college equips its students to evaluate ideas for themselves and to participate in democratic discourse.

Whom should I contact if I have concerns about how the Statement is applied?

Students should refer to the Student Rights and Code of Conduct Policy; start by talking to your instructor or assistant dean. Employees should refer to the Respectful Campus Policy; start by talking to your supervisor.