



Freedom of Expression and Dissent

Additional Details

POLICY ID

038-0011

EFFECTIVE DATE

July 1, 2015

LAST REVISED DATE

April 2, 2025

DIVISION

Office of the Provost

OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITYOffice of the Provost (<https://www.dartmouth.edu/provost/>)**LAST REVIEWED DATE**

April 2, 2025

NEXT REVIEW DATE

2032

Summary of Policy

This policy is Dartmouth's statement of principles concerning freedom of expression. It provides guidance to the institution and its students on freedom of expression and its bounds at Dartmouth. Dartmouth policies and actions related to expressive activity must be consistent with the principles articulated in this statement.

Reason for Policy

Dartmouth prizes, defends, and upholds freedom of expression and dissent as fundamental to its academic mission, which relies vitally on open discourse and the free exchange of ideas. The right to this freedom is not unfettered. Its exercise must reciprocally allow for others at Dartmouth to exercise the same freedom, must not deliberately obstruct the principal functions and activities of the institution, and must not constitute unlawful activity or prohibited conduct such as harassment, discrimination, retaliation, coercion, or threat. Within those general bounds, freedom of expression and dissent is broadly protected and any limitation imposed by Dartmouth on expressive activity must be content and viewpoint neutral and narrowly tailored to serve a substantial institutional interest. Dartmouth expects its campus to be a space for lively discussion and that limitations of expressive activities will be the exception not the norm. Students are encouraged to exercise the right of freedom of expression and dissent and are responsible for respecting its boundaries.

Affected Parties

All Students

Policy Statement

Statement of Principles

I. FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND DISSENT AND ITS GENERAL BOUNDS

Dartmouth prizes and defends freedom of expression and dissent as fundamental to its academic mission of learning, teaching, research, discovery, scholarship, and creative work, which relies vitally on open discourse and the free exchange of ideas. Dartmouth therefore upholds and protects the right of its students to exercise that freedom.

At the same time Dartmouth recognizes that this freedom exists in the context of its residential community and mission as an academic institution, in the context of federal and state law and local ordinances, and in responsibility for one's own actions. The right to free expression and dissent is not unfettered. Its exercise must reciprocally allow for others at Dartmouth to exercise the same freedom, must not deliberately obstruct the principal functions and activities of the institution, and must not constitute unlawful activity or prohibited conduct (<https://policies.dartmouth.edu/policy/nondiscrimination-and-anti-harassment-policy-and-resolution-procedures>), such as harassment, discrimination, retaliation, coercion, or threat. (See also: the standards of conduct adopted by Dartmouth's schools.)

Within those general bounds, freedom of expression and dissent is broadly protected and any limitation imposed by Dartmouth on expressive activity must be content and viewpoint neutral and narrowly tailored to serve a substantial institutional interest. Expressive activity, and the right to refrain from it, will not be restricted because of subject matter, message, or point of view. This is equally true whether the expression is, for example, popular or unpopular, accepted or contested, considered sympathetic or offensive, or whether it is made in celebration or protest, joy or sorrow, affirmation or dissent. Dartmouth expects its campus to be a space for lively discussion and that limitations of expressive activities will be the exception not the norm.

II. EXPRESSION IN THE CONTEXT OF FORMAL ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION

Formal academic instruction depends in part on the imposition of constraints on expression and expressive conduct. The constraints are ordinary and familiar. Academic assignments such as projects, exams, presentations, or papers are all forms of expression that, for the purpose of instruction, may reasonably be required, limited, or evaluated, including with respect to content and viewpoint. Not all ideas, claims, arguments, or creative works are equal in the context of academic study, for here they are answerable to standards of evidence, truth, reason, inquiry, and technique within their disciplines. A key purpose of education is to learn to ascertain the differences. Likewise, class instruction and discussion — even comparatively free-wheeling class conversation — involve ordinary and reasonable regulation of expressive conduct: orderly discussion, quiet as needed, answering questions, staying on topic, making relevant criticisms, receiving feedback, affording mutual respect, and so on. The same holds true whether the relevant class forum is in person or in another medium or format.

Such local constraints on expression in formal academic instruction are grounded in standards of competency in the subject matter and methods of the relevant disciplines and determined by the faculty in accordance with the principles of academic freedom. They are local because they extend only as far as the borders of the course: they do not constrain extra-curricular expression. But within those borders, they establish valid limits. By choosing to enroll in a given course of formal academic instruction, students consent to local constraints of this sort on their expressive activities, and they consent to constraints arising from principles of academic honor (rules on citation, prohibitions against plagiarism or cheating, etc.).

III. EXPRESSION IN THE CONTEXT OF FORMAL ATHLETICS PROGRAMS AND INSTITUTIONAL ARTS PROGRAMMING

Formal athletics programs — including varsity, club, and intramural athletics — also depend in part on local constraints on expression and expressive conduct, based on principles of sportsmanship and ethical conduct integral to the role of athletics in the educational mission at Dartmouth. Rules of respect, fairness, civility, and responsibility at practices or contests, for example, may reasonably require or limit expressive activity by student athletes or spectators (e.g., prohibiting abusive or derogatory language at events), while also taking care to respect Dartmouth's general commitment to freedom of expression and dissent (e.g., permitting non-disruptive acts of protest or demonstration). Such rules are grounded in standards and methods of the relevant athletics disciplines and are determined by Dartmouth athletics officials and coaches in accordance with the principles of collegiate athletics. By choosing to participate in or attend formal athletics programs or events, students consent to local constraints of this sort on their expressive activities.

See also: Dartmouth's [Spectator Policy \(https://student-affairs.dartmouth.edu/policy/spectator-policy\)](https://student-affairs.dartmouth.edu/policy/spectator-policy), [Dartmouth College Athletics Department Code of Conduct \(https://tickets.dartmouth.edu/Online/default.asp?BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::permalink=conduct&BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::context_id\)](https://tickets.dartmouth.edu/Online/default.asp?BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::permalink=conduct&BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::context_id), and [Student-Athlete Handbook \(https://dartmouthsports.com/documents/2023/10/10/2023-2024_Dartmouth_Athletics_Handbook.pdf\)](https://dartmouthsports.com/documents/2023/10/10/2023-2024_Dartmouth_Athletics_Handbook.pdf).

Similarly, institutional arts programming — for example, exhibitions, screenings, or performances hosted by the Hood Museum or Hopkins Center — rely on principles of civility and respect in order to serve their roles in the educational mission and may establish related codes of conduct, as determined by Dartmouth's arts program directors and curators, in accordance with principles of the wider academic arts field. Local constraints and codes of conduct of this sort are valid with respect to activity within the scope of the relevant athletics or arts program, in whatever forum, medium or format in which that program's related activities take place; they do not constrain expression outside of it. By choosing to participate in or attend formal arts programs or events, students consent to local constraints of this sort on their expressive activities.

See also: the [Hopkins Center Visitor Code of Conduct \(https://hop.dartmouth.edu/visitor-code-conduct\)](https://hop.dartmouth.edu/visitor-code-conduct), [Hood Museum Rules \(https://hoodmuseum.dartmouth.edu/visit/museum-rules\)](https://hoodmuseum.dartmouth.edu/visit/museum-rules).

IV. BALANCING INSTITUTIONAL INTERESTS

To support its principal functions and activities, Dartmouth has to balance many interests of the institution and its residential community, among them the freedom of expression and dissent. Dartmouth puts parameters on events and activities, including expressive activities, to serve such substantial interests as the following guiding examples:

- To safeguard the academic mission of education, research, and creative work;
- To ensure the physical safety of individuals at Dartmouth and compliance with federal and state laws and local ordinances;
- To protect the right of Dartmouth's students and invited guests (e.g., speakers, artists, performers, honorees) to exercise freedom of expression and dissent;
- To protect the operations and necessities of Dartmouth's residential community and uphold the standards of conduct of Dartmouth's schools;
- To preserve campus facilities and grounds;
- To ensure free movement for individuals on campus and access to campus facilities and grounds;
- To accommodate Dartmouth's annual events (Homecoming Bonfire, Winter Carnival, Pow Wow, Commencement, etc.), athletics programs, and scheduled events;
- To maintain administrative functions that support Dartmouth's community and academic mission.

Parameters on events and activities include, but are not limited to, restrictions on time, place, and manner, and rules related to safety, permitting, reservations, and posting. (Some examples are given in the "[Guidelines and Considerations for Students and Student Organizations in Planning Expressive Activities \(https://sites.dartmouth.edu/free-expression/guidelines-and-considerations-for-students-and-student-organizations-in-planning-expressive-activitiesguidelines/\)](https://sites.dartmouth.edu/free-expression/guidelines-and-considerations-for-students-and-student-organizations-in-planning-expressive-activitiesguidelines/)".)

All such rules and restrictions, and their application, are to be content and viewpoint neutral, and their use to limit expressive activity should be employed only when necessary and always in accord with Dartmouth's general commitment to fostering a culture of open expression.

AMENDMENT

Amendments to this policy shall be made as follows:

- Amendments to update or correct information regarding resources, contacts, or other factual items may be made on an ongoing basis by the Provost's Office and shall become effective upon publication on the Provost's policy portal.
- Amendments to ensure legal compliance may be made by the Office of General Counsel and shall become effective upon publication on the Provost's policy portal.
- All other amendments to this policy will be made under the ordinary consultative policy review practices administered by the Provost's Office.

RELATED INFORMATION

- [Free Expression at Dartmouth \(https://sites.dartmouth.edu/free-expression/\)](https://sites.dartmouth.edu/free-expression/) site
- [Guidelines and Considerations for Students and Student Organizations in Planning Expressive Activities \(https://sites.dartmouth.edu/free-expression/guidelines-and-considerations-for-students-and-student-organizations-in-planning-expressive-activitiesguidelines/\)](https://sites.dartmouth.edu/free-expression/guidelines-and-considerations-for-students-and-student-organizations-in-planning-expressive-activitiesguidelines/)
- Athletics: [Spectator Policy \(https://student-affairs.dartmouth.edu/policy/spectator-policy/\)](https://student-affairs.dartmouth.edu/policy/spectator-policy/), [Dartmouth College Athletics Department Code of Conduct \(https://tickets.dartmouth.edu/Online/default.asp?BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::permalink=conduct&BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::context_id\)](https://tickets.dartmouth.edu/Online/default.asp?BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::permalink=conduct&BOparam::WScontent::loadArticle::context_id), and [Student-Athlete Handbook \(https://dartmouthsports.com/documents/2023/10/10/2023-2024_Dartmouth_Athletics_Handbook.pdf\)](https://dartmouthsports.com/documents/2023/10/10/2023-2024_Dartmouth_Athletics_Handbook.pdf).
- Arts: the [Hopkins Center Visitor Code of Conduct \(https://hop.dartmouth.edu/visitor-code-conduct\)](https://hop.dartmouth.edu/visitor-code-conduct), and [Hood Museum Rules \(https://hoodmuseum.dartmouth.edu/visit/museum-rules\)](https://hoodmuseum.dartmouth.edu/visit/museum-rules).
- Undergraduate Student Affairs: [Standards of Conduct \(https://student-affairs.dartmouth.edu/policy/standards-conduct\)](https://student-affairs.dartmouth.edu/policy/standards-conduct)
- Geisel School: [Medical Student Handbook \(https://geiselmed.dartmouth.edu/students/document/student-policy-handbook/\)](https://geiselmed.dartmouth.edu/students/document/student-policy-handbook/)
- Guarini School: [Student Handbook \(https://graduate.dartmouth.edu/policies\)](https://graduate.dartmouth.edu/policies)
- Thayer School: [Student Policies and Handbooks \(https://engineering.dartmouth.edu/about/policies#\)](https://engineering.dartmouth.edu/about/policies#)
- Tuck School: [Student Handbook \(https://login.microsoftonline.com/3fa424c0-f9be-4832-a30e-90772dfe29e1/oauth2/authorize?client%5Fid=00000003%2D0000%2D00ff1%2Dce00%2D000000000000&response%5Fmode=form%5Fpost&response%5Ftype=code%20id%5Ftoken&resource=0000\)](https://login.microsoftonline.com/3fa424c0-f9be-4832-a30e-90772dfe29e1/oauth2/authorize?client%5Fid=00000003%2D0000%2D00ff1%2Dce00%2D000000000000&response%5Fmode=form%5Fpost&response%5Ftype=code%20id%5Ftoken&resource=0000) (Sharepoint login required)
- [Report of the 2024 General Faculty Committee on Freedom of Expression and Dissent \(https://policies.dartmouth.edu/sites/policies.prod/files/policies/wysiwyg/report_of_the_gf_committee_on_freedom_of_expression_and_dissent_with_appendices_01.09.2/\)](https://policies.dartmouth.edu/sites/policies.prod/files/policies/wysiwyg/report_of_the_gf_committee_on_freedom_of_expression_and_dissent_with_appendices_01.09.2/)



MORE NEWS

Trustees Discuss Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Board bids farewell to Liz Lempres '83,
Thayer '84, as Gregg Lemkau '91 takes over
as chair.



(Photo by Robert Gill)



Growing Dartmouth's strength in research, its tie to entrepreneurship and impact, and a comprehensive update from the Tuck School of Business were among the topics the **Board of Trustees** took up during its Jan. 29-31 meeting in Hanover.

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Board members also celebrated **newly promoted and tenured faculty** and bid farewell to outgoing chair **Elizabeth Cahill Lempres '83, Thayer '84**.

"Liz leaves a remarkable legacy of leadership that helped to shape a transformational period for Dartmouth," said Trustees Chair **Gregg Lemkau '91**, who was **elected last March**. "It is an honor to follow her as chair and to work alongside my fellow trustees in ensuring our alma mater and its leaders are charting a bold course that serves our students, our community, and the nation."

During its executive session, the board signaled its continued support of Dartmouth's policies of **institutional restraint** and **freedom of expression** by voting to formally endorse both as foundational to Dartmouth's educational mission and to "fostering an environment where diverse ideas can be vigorously debated within a community of respect."

"Dartmouth's policy of institutional restraint has served us well in its first year of implementation."

SIAN LEAH BEILOCK, PRESIDENT



Board members also endorsed language from the Chicago Principles, specifically: “It is not the proper role of Dartmouth to attempt to shield individuals from ideas and opinions they find unwelcome, disagreeable, or even deeply offensive, and that although Dartmouth greatly values civility, and although all members of the Dartmouth community share in the responsibility for maintaining a climate of mutual respect, concerns about civility and mutual respect can never be used as a justification for closing off discussion of ideas, however offensive or disagreeable those ideas may be to some members of our community.”

They affirmed dialogue and debate as core principles and commended the faculty, staff, and students who participate in upholding this culture daily on Dartmouth’s campus.

“Dartmouth’s policy of institutional restraint has served us well in its first year of implementation,” said **President Sian Leah Beilock**. “It does not stop us from speaking up for Dartmouth or protecting our mission. At the same time, it empowers individuals within our community to exercise their right to free speech—including through protest and dissent—without fear that they won’t align with any one top-down institutional position.”

Extending Research Excellence

An institution-wide strategy for research excellence, rooted in faculty expertise and enhancing the opportunities available to graduate and undergraduate students, was a theme across multiple board discussions.



experiential learning for students, and increases Dartmouth’s impact and reputation nationally and globally.”

Schnell and Interim Dean of Arts and Sciences **Nina Pavcnik** provided an overview of six areas of strategic investment where there is potential to distinguish Dartmouth among other leading research institutions. Initially, more than a dozen programmatic areas of strength were identified using criteria including scholarly impact and visibility, faculty distinction, existing or emerging PhD programs, extramural funding, and exposure to volatility in the federal research funding model. After iterative review, six cross-campus foci were chosen for potential step-function increases in international visibility. They are:

- Biomolecular Design
- Cold Weather, Polar, and Ice Systems
- Cultivating Creativity and the Arts
- Economy, Democracy, and Security
- Neuroscience and Mental Health
- Rural Health and Society

“These are far from the only areas in which faculty are excelling in scholarship, creating knowledge, and forging solutions,” Schnell said. “But they are broad enough to encompass the work of many in our community while overlapping with areas of significant student interest. We will complement this framework with competitive faculty-driven initiatives, supported by a transparent process for resourcing ideas that show exceptional promise.”



that will guide future investments in faculty growth, research infrastructure, and space planning across these areas.

From Innovation to Impact

Later that day, Schnell and Vice Provost for Research **Dean Madden** led the board through a discussion of how innovation becomes societal impact through two Dartmouth units—the **Magnuson Center for Entrepreneurship** and the **Technology Transfer Office**—that could be unified.

The Magnuson Center manages an interlocking portfolio of initiatives focused on start-up support, experiential learning, and alumni engagement. Through this platform the Center supports 1,000 students, 100 faculty, and 1,500 alumni each year. When combined, those activities support accelerator programs in Cancer Innovation, Digital Health, and Engineering, as well as training programs for faculty and students and the Dartmouth Entrepreneurs Forum. In 2025, it also supported 18 student start-ups through its Magnuson Venture Studio, three of which garnered a total of over \$7 million in investment capital.

Technology Transfer oversees the business development and licensing of intellectual property owned by Dartmouth, grant compliance, and revenue distributions. It also supports and trains PhD students in entrepreneurship through the nationally recognized **PhD Innovation Program**. The Technology Transfer team has overseen the commercialization of the COVID “spike protein” and many other successful spin-offs including cancer



research and innovation at Dartmouth.

“Despite many successes, there are several limitations associated with the current siloed structure,” Madden told the board.

A campuswide review—led by **a committee** including Dartmouth faculty representing multiple schools—and extensive stakeholder conversations uncovered numerous benefits of drawing the two units together within a reimagined Magnuson Center.

Alumni networks can help accelerate research discoveries into real-world impact. Students will benefit from the chance to pursue entrepreneurship through the PhD Innovation Program and Magnuson start-up support. Faculty will benefit from enhanced impact and resources, including a campuswide accelerator. This concept will be underpinned by an investment of Dartmouth and philanthropic funds, fueling a virtuous cycle of discovery, translation, impact, and reinvestment.

Several board members were also involved in the assessment and the trustees supported President Beilock’s decision to merge the units into a single holistic structure this summer.

Tuck School Tracks Opportunities, AI

Matthew Slaughter, the Paul Danos Dean of the Tuck School of Business, told trustees that Tuck is in a strong position and looking ahead to opportunities in research, business courses for undergraduates, and AI education.



and Dartmouth strengths: the development of critical thinking, trust, teamwork, communication, and community.”

Tuck’s flagship two-year full-time MBA program continues to set records for the quality of each incoming class, the career outcomes students achieve, and the impact of Tuck’s alumni community. Among U.S. business schools, Tuck is ranked #6 by U.S. News & World Report, Bloomberg Businessweek, and LinkedIn, #12 by the Financial Times, and #4 by Poets & Quants.

“The Tuck of today is strong and innovative,” Slaughter said. “We believe future growth will come primarily from our non-MBA programs where demand for business education is strong across the learner lifecycle, from senior executives to undergraduates.”

Slaughter reported that the school is seeking approval from Arts and Sciences faculty on a fourth for-credit course to be available to Dartmouth undergraduates, as the aim is to continue expanding opportunities for those students to engage with business education.

“The vision is to enable students to fully embrace the richness of Dartmouth’s liberal arts by learning the language and operations of society’s foundational organizations: businesses, nonprofits, and governments,” Slaughter said.

Meanwhile, Tuck’s scholarship endowment for its MBA program is nearing its funding goal, and Slaughter asked the board for support in pursuing



Leaders Elevated to Expanded Roles in Operations and Strategy

Following announcements at the board meeting, Dartmouth has promoted two senior leaders to expanded roles, recognizing their outstanding contributions to institutional excellence.

Jomysha Delgado Stephen, executive vice president and secretary to the board, has been promoted to also serve as chief operating officer.

Josh Keniston has been promoted to senior vice president of operations and strategic initiatives, recognizing his expanded leadership of strategic university-wide initiatives.

“Jomysha is proactively driving improvements from one end of campus to the other—leading organizational transformation, coordinating our senior leadership, and navigating an increasingly complex regulatory and operational landscape,” Beilock said. “As chief operating officer, she serves as my partner in ensuring that Dartmouth operates as one integrated institution. This is exactly the leadership structure world-class institutions require.”

“Josh exemplifies the leadership excellence we cultivate at Dartmouth,” Beilock continued. “This promotion formalizes what he’s already delivering—bridging operational excellence with strategic execution.”

Delgado Stephen’s expanded role recognizes her critical leadership across every university function, while Keniston’s promotion reflects his successful expansion beyond campus operations and capital



The Board of Trustees next convenes in March.

The Office of Communications can be reached at office.of.communications@dartmouth.edu.

CATEGORIES

LIFELONG DARTMOUTH INNOVATION AND IMPACT

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BOARD OF TRUSTEES SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES TUCK SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

RESEARCH MAGNUSON CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER OFFICE OF THE PROVOST DARTMOUTH DIALOGUES

Quoted

“Public opinion is a core component of democratic accountability.”

SEAN WESTWOOD, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF GOVERNMENT | MOTHER JONES

4/2/2026

Quoted

“In the era of AI, answers have become cheap. It’s judgment that is expensive.”

SANTIAGO SCHNELL, PROVOST | QS



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[A-Z Index](#)

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