



Free Expression Policy

Category: General;

Jurisdiction: Provost and Vice President, Academic;

Approval Authority: Executive Team;

Established on: December 18, 2018;

Amendments: August 20, 2019 (Editorial)

Purpose:

The purpose of this Policy is to articulate Lakehead University's ("Lakehead") commitment to free expression which means the ability to examine, question, investigate, speculate, and comment on any issue without reference to prescribed doctrine, as well as the right to critique and contest views expressed on campus.

Application and Scope:

This Policy applies to all University Community Members. This includes students, employees, union and nonunion staff, faculty, administration, Senators, members of the Board of Governors, volunteers, contractors, suppliers, post-doctoral fellows, and visitors to Lakehead University and others who are on Campus.

All University Community Members share a collective responsibility to build, maintain, and continuously protect an inclusive and respectful institutional culture while allowing free expression in the pursuit of knowledge.

This Policy does not alter the varying legal or fiduciary obligations of any University Community Members. Where this Policy conflicts with the law, or legal or fiduciary duties of University Community Members, the law or legal/fiduciary duties shall prevail.

Policy:

Subject to the exceptions set out in this Policy and by law:

- Lakehead is a place for open discussion and free inquiry;
- Lakehead will not attempt to limit the access of University Community Members to ideas or opinions that they disagree with or find offensive; and
- While University Community Members are free to criticize and contest views expressed on campus, they may not obstruct or interfere with the freedoms and rights of others including the freedom to express their views.

This Policy does not restrict Academic Freedom entitlement derived from Collective Agreements or otherwise.

Lakehead considers official student groups' compliance with this Policy as condition for ongoing financial support or recognition, and encourages student unions to adopt policies that align with the Free Expression Policy.

Expression that violates the law is not allowed.

While all forms of expression should be undertaken in a manner that also recognizes the free expression rights of others, Lakehead may properly restrict expression, for example, that violates the law, is threatening, harassing, or defamatory; discriminatory or invades privacy or confidentiality interests; or compromises health and safety.

Moreover, Lakehead may reasonably regulate the time, place and manner of expression to ensure that it does not disrupt the functions of the University. Access to the University will not be unreasonably restricted.

Jurisdiction over violations of this Policy includes actions on University premises, at University sponsored events, or elsewhere (including on the internet or through social media) when an identifiable interest of a University member or the University is concerned.

Violations of this Policy by students may fall under the *Student Code of Conduct*, and by employees may fall under the *Employee Code of Conduct*.

Complaints regarding violations of this Policy will be handled using existing mechanisms set out in the aforementioned policies. University Community Members are reminded that complaints against Lakehead that remain unresolved after exhausting internal mechanisms may be referred to the Ontario Ombudsman.

Review Period: Every three years;

Date for Next Review: 2020-2021;

Related Policies and Procedures: Student Code of Conduct; Employee Code of Conduct;

Policy Superseded by this Policy: None.

The University Secretariat manages the development of policies through an impartial, fair governance process, and in accordance with the [Policy Governance Framework](#). Please contact the University Secretariat for additional information on University policies and procedures and/or if you require this information in another format:

Open: Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm;

Location: University Centre, Thunder Bay Campus, Room UC2002;

Phone: 807-346-7929 or Email: univsec@lakeheadu.ca