

RESOLUTION ON THE AFFIRMATION OF FREEDOM OF SPEECH AT APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY

WHEREAS, the University of North Carolina System, “dedicated to the transmission and advancement of knowledge and understanding”, has explicitly stated that “faculty and students of the University share the responsibility for maintaining an environment in which academic freedom flourishes and in which the rights of each member of the academic community are respected;” and

WHEREAS, Chapter VI of The Code of the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina reflects this commitment to support “freedom of inquiry for faculty... free from internal or external restraints that would unreasonably restrict their academic endeavors”; and

WHEREAS, Section [600\(3\) of the Code](#) in the UNC Policy Manual regarding academic freedom and tenure acknowledges that “The University and each constituent institution shall protect faculty and students in their responsible exercise of the freedom to teach, to learn, and otherwise to seek and speak the truth” and that faculty “share in the responsibility for maintaining an environment in which academic freedom flourishes”; and

WHEREAS, Appalachian State University is [committed to upholding](#) and protecting these freedoms and committed to academic freedom; and

WHEREAS, in particular, freedom of speech is often at conflict on a college campus; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of Appalachian State University acknowledges that a university’s role is to foster such engagement but not to engage itself; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of Appalachian State University recognizes that institutional neutrality is the guiding principle for institutions of higher education, but also recognizes the right of individual employees or students, in their respective personal capacities and not on behalf of the University, to choose to speak or take action on contemporary political and social issues; and

WHEREAS, Appalachian State University departments and organizations frequently engage in meaningful dialogue on freedom of speech throughout each academic year, which take the form of classroom discussions, programs and events such as Constitution Day, in which students, faculty, staff and visitors honor and often debate First Amendment topics; and

WHEREAS, Appalachian State University's identified Free Speech Responsible Officers work closely with units across campus to meet the needs of our faculty, staff and students;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The Board of Trustees reaffirms its commitment to institutional neutrality and academic freedom, and to freedom of expression as indicated in Appalachian State University’s [Free Speech and Expression statement](#).

ADOPTED AND APPROVED this 23rd day of June 2023.

**THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF
APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY**

 (signature)
Kimberly Shepherd, Chair

 (signature)
R. Thomas Sofield, Secretary