

***Freedom of Expression Policy***  
***Annual Report 2019***

In compliance with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities directive, the following is the annual report of the implementation of the University of Guelph's *Freedom of Expression* policy.

Questions about this report or the policy should be directed to the University Secretariat's office.

**Institutional Culture & Policies**

*In the wake of the government's requirement for institutional free speech policies, has there been ongoing debate or dialogue on campus with regard to freedom of speech?*

*Have institutional practices changed as a result of the free speech policy? For example. Has the new free speech policy led to a re-examination or amendment of other institutional policies? If yes, please describe.*

*Now that your free speech policy has been in effect for a period of time, have any issues emerged that would cause you to re-evaluate or amend your existing policy? If so, please describe.*

The University of Guelph's Policy Statement on Freedom of Expression was approved by the Board of Governors on December 20, 2018. The approved policy statement reflects a wide-range of stakeholder input and emphasizes the University of Guelph values articulated in previously existing institutional policy and framework documents.

Freedom of expression has been, and continues to be, vital to the academic mission of the University of Guelph. The policy statement reflects long-standing University of Guelph values and practices and as such there has been no need to review existing policies. In order to evaluate and address any related operational requirements, two working groups were struck to consider operationalization of the policy from both administrative and academic perspectives. The working groups represent stakeholders from across the University community.

Since the policy statement was approved in December 2018, no issues have arisen to prompt a re-evaluation or amendment of the policy statement. The policy statement is available online at [www.uoguelph.ca/freedom-of-expression/](http://www.uoguelph.ca/freedom-of-expression/) and is complementary to many long-standing University policies.

## **Events**

*Question: To the best of your ability, please provide an estimate of the number of non-curriculum events that have been held at the institution since January 1, 2019.*

The University estimates there have been close to 130 non-curriculum public events on campus between January 1, 2019 and July 31, 2019. These events include, but are not limited to, lectures, conferences, invited speakers, and seminars.

*Question: Is there a designated office at the institution where members of the institutional community (or guests) are directed when there is a free speech related question or complain about an event on campus?*

Yes, the University Secretariat's office houses the policy and handles all free speech related questions or complaints.

*Question: How did your institution navigate free speech related cost and/or safety concerns related to events on campus? To your knowledge, were there any instances where a non-curriculum event did not proceed due to these concerns?*

The University makes decisions regarding the time, place and manner of an event. Considerations may include the number of anticipated attendees, equipment required, set-up and tear down costs and security costs. Decisions regarding events with specific security concerns are made in a manner that balances the University's obligations regarding safety and security with the financial impact on University resources including U of G programs.

To the best of our knowledge, there have been no instances where a non-curriculum event did not proceed due to concerns.

## **Complaints**

*Question: Have any organized campus events or incidents on campus – curricular or non-curricular – caused members of the institutional community (or guests) to make an official complaint about free speech on campus?*

No, there have been no complaints received to date.