

## **Statement on Free Speech – Documents-Policies Framework**

Approval Authority: Vice President Administration and COO

Established On: 2023 02 16 [Presented to Senate]

Amendments: [new]

Parent Policy/Statement: Free Speech Statement

Category: Administration

| REQUIREMENT   | RELEVANT DOCUMENT /<br>POLICY              | RELEVANT LANGUAGE  |
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| a. A definition of freedom<br>of speech   | Statement on Free Speech                   | Freedom of thought, association, and expression<br>are fundamental principles of an open, fair, and<br>inclusive campus, and are core to the discovery,<br>critical assessment, and effective dissemination of<br>knowledge. As history clearly demonstrates, these<br>freedoms establish conditions necessary for<br>critical thought, and for diverse voices to be heard<br>without the fear of repression or reprisal. They are<br>vital to the creation of knowledge, and to<br>challenging the improper use of power. |
| b. Principles based on the<br>University of Chicago<br>Statement on Principles of<br>Free Expression. | See policies under b.i. to b.iv.<br>below. |  |
| b.i. Universities and colleges<br>should be places for open<br>discussion and free inquiry.           | NOSM University Act, 2022                  | to "provide undergraduate and post-graduate<br>medical health education and other programs and,<br>in doing so, advance the highest quality of<br>learning, teaching, research and professionalism"<br>(s.16).   |
|   | UME Code of Student Conduct                | "NOSM University unequivocally embraces the<br>principles of free expression required in an<br>academic environment. The university supports<br>the expression, testing, and challenging of a range  |

|  | CSSP Procedures Document<br>Statement on Free Speech  | of perspectives and ideas, including those that<br>may be deemed difficult, controversial, or<br>extreme. As an institution of higher learning,<br>NOSM University strives to instill throughout its<br>community the ability to think critically, express<br>ideas clearly and persuasively, and articulate<br>positions that are based on reason, evidence, and<br>frameworks of knowledge." (Statement)  |
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| b.ii the university/college<br>should not attempt to shield<br>students from ideas or<br>opinions that they disagree<br>with or find offensive.  | Statement on Free Speech  | "it is not the role of the university to censor<br>speech. To grant the institution such power would<br>set a dangerous precedent. Even if institutional<br>censorship were deemed acceptable in one<br>context, there is no guarantee that such restriction<br>would be applied fairly or wisely in other contexts,<br>or as power changes hands over time. Rather than<br>restricting speech, NOSM U is committed to<br>supporting an open and inclusive environment<br>that also protects free expression." (Statement)  |
| While members of the<br>university/college are free to<br>criticize and contest views<br>expressed on campus, they<br>may not interfere with the<br>freedom of others to express<br>their views. | Statement on Free Speech  | "Community members are free to reject and<br>vigorously content ideas while still recognizing the<br>right to express or hear those ideas." The<br>Statement further asserts that "When confronted<br>with ideas or viewpoints with which they disagree,<br>community members may choose to dissent<br>through, for example, participating in debate,<br>hosting alternative events, inviting speakers to<br>express opposing views, and/or engaging in non-<br>violent protests At the university, all forms of<br>expression should be undertaken in a manner that<br>also recognizes the free expression rights of<br>others." (Statement) |
| b.iv. Speech that violates the<br>law or constitutes<br>harassment or a threat is not<br>allowed.  | Statement on Free Speech<br>Human Rights, Anti-<br>Discrimination, and Harassment<br>Policy                   | "Canada's legal frameworks restrict illegal forms of<br>expression such as threats, defamation,<br>discrimination, harassment, unjustified and<br>substantial invasion of privacy and confidentiality,<br>and hate speech. These limits apply to speech on<br>campus in the same way as they apply elsewhere."<br>(Statement)   |
| <b>c.</b> That the college/university uses existing mechanisms to handle complaints and ensure compliance.   | NOSM Academic and<br>Professional Staff Collective<br>Agreement (Unit 1, OPSEU<br>NOSM University Local 677). | Any complaints relating to administrative actions<br>and decisions, including the application of<br>university policies, may be referred to the Ontario<br>Ombudsman. The university will continue to work  |

| Complaints that remain<br>unresolved may be referred<br>to the Ontario Ombudsman.   | Human Rights, Anti-<br>Discrimination, and Harassment<br>Policy | with the Ontario Ombudsman's office for any complaints that cannot be resolved through internal processes.  |
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| d. The institution shall<br>prepare an annual report on<br>implementation progress,<br>publish it online and submit<br>it to the Higher Education<br>Quality Council of Ontario<br>(HEQCO). | N/A   | Annual Reports will be posted on the web.<br><u>https://www.nosm.ca/about/administrative-</u><br><u>offices/vpadministration/statement-on-free-</u><br><u>speech/</u> |

See NOSM University Statement on Free Speech

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