



**COMMITTEE ON FREE EXPRESSION
ARIZONA BOARD OF REGENTS**

THIS IS A VIRTUAL MEETING

**Thursday, July 31, 2025
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

Members of the public may attend the public portion of the virtual meeting by viewing the livestream of the meeting.

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For technical assistance, click the link here [ABOR Tech Support](#) or email Tom.Merriam@azregents.edu.

Committee Members:

Chad Sampson, Chair	Kimberly Ott, NAU	Tessa Dysart, U of A
Anne Jones, ASU	Michelle Parker, NAU	Art Lee, U of A
Patrick Kenney, ASU	Margot Saltonstall, NAU	Steve Patterson, U of A
Lisa Loo, ASU	Marco Cabrera Geserick, NAU	Chrissy Lieberman, U of A
Joanne Vogel, ASU	Eesha Syeda, NAU	Armando Garcia, U of A
Nagham Mousa, ASU		Adriana Grijalva, U of A

**10:00 a.m. CALL TO ORDER, GREETINGS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM
THE COMMITTEE CHAIR**

10:05 a.m. 1. Approval of Minutes

The board office asks the committee to review and approve the minutes from the July 31, 2024 Committee on Free Expression meeting.

10:10 a.m. 2. Review of Open Meeting Law

The board office will provide the committee with an overview of the Open Meeting Law.

10:20 a.m. 3. Review the Statutory Charge to the Committee on Free Expression to Submit an Annual Report

The board office asks the committee to review statutory charge A.R.S. §15-1867, as described in the executive summary.

10:30 a.m. 4. Review of and Possible Action to Approve and Forward the Statutory Annual Report on Free Expression for FY 2025

The board office asks the committee to review, discuss and take possible action to approve and forward the proposed statutory Report on Free Expression to the board for its approval, as described in the executive summary.

11:00 a.m. ADJOURN

PLEASE NOTE: This agenda may be amended at any time prior to 24 hours before the committee meeting. Estimated starting times for the agenda items are indicated; however, discussions may commence, or action may be taken, before or after the suggested times. Any item on the agenda may be considered at any time out of order at the discretion of the committee chair. The committee may discuss, consider, or take action regarding any item on the agenda. During the meeting, the committee may convene in executive session pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3) for legal advice regarding any item on the agenda.

Approval of Minutes

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DRAFT
ARIZONA BOARD OF REGENTS
Minutes of the Committee on Free Expression
July 31, 2024

Committee Members present via video: Chad Sampson (Chair); from ASU: Anne Jones, Patrick Kenney, Lisa Loo, Joanne Vogel, and Andrew Kalthoff; from NAU: Michelle Parker, Kimberly Ott, Marco Cabrera Geserick, Karli Vander Meersch; from U of A: Tessa Dysart, Art Lee, Steve Patterson, Chrissy Lieberman and Adriana Grijalva (joined at 11:04 a.m.).

Committee Members absent: from NAU Margot Saltonstall

Also present via video from the ABOR office Jennifer Pollock, Samantha Blevins, Rachel Malefors, Suzanne Templin, and Tom Merriam; and from the University of Arizona: Kody Kelleher.

All lists, reports, summaries, background material and other documents referred to in the minutes can be found in the July 31, 2024, Document File and on the board's website.

CALL TO ORDER, GREETINGS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE COMMITTEE CHAIR

Chair Chad Sampson called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

Approval of Minutes (Item 1)

Upon motion by Chair Sampson, seconded by member Lee, the committee approved the public session minutes of the July 31, 2023 Committee on Free Expression meeting. Committee members Sampson, Jones, Kenney, Loo, Vogel, Kalthoff, Parker, Ott, Cabrera Geserick, Vander Meersch, Dysart, Lee, Patterson, and Lieberman voted in favor. None opposed. Member Grijalva was not present for the vote.

Review of Open Meeting Law (Item 2)

Samantha Blevins, ABOR Senior Associate General Counsel, provided an overview of the Open Meeting Law, she noted that the Committee on Free Expression is a statutorily required committee of the Arizona Board of Regents, which is a public body, therefore the committee is also a public body subject to the Open Meeting Law.

Ms. Blevins asked the committee if they had any questions, there were none.

Review the Statutory Charge to the Committee on Free Expression to Submit an Annual Report (Item 3)

Ms. Blevins provided an overview of the A.R.S §15-1867 statutory charge.

Review of and Possible Action to Approve and Forward the Statutory Annual Report on Free Expression for FY 2024 (Item 4)

Ms. Blevins presented the draft report on Free Expression for FY 2024 to the committee. All three of Arizona's public universities maintain the highest green light rating from the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) and have adopted the "Chicago Statement," the free speech policy statement produced by the Committee on Freedom of Expression at the University of Chicago. Each university has policies and procedures to encourage and protect all lawful speech. All expressive activities are subject to reasonable time, place and manner restrictions as permitted by law. The report contains links to all of those policies. The report then highlights how each university promptly responds to allegations of barriers to disruptions of protected speech in manners that comply with applicable law. The report emphasizes that implementing free speech in communities of thousands of students, faculty, and community members can sometimes produce strong and varied emotions. The universities did experience several of those interactions that the report goes through, but it highlights that even in moments of heightened conflict, the universities encouraged free expression of all viewpoints within established restrictions.

Upon motion by Chair Sampson, seconded by member Lieberman, the committee approved the proposed report, and authorized Samantha Blevins to make non-substantive changes in preparation for submission to the board for approval at the August 29, 2024, meeting. Committee members Sampson, Jones, Kenney, Loo, Vogel, Kalthoff, Parker, Ott, Cabrera Geserick, Vander Meersch, Dysart, Lee, Patterson, Lieberman and Grijalva voted in favor. None opposed.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 11:09 a.m.

Submitted by:

Rachel Malefors
Committee Secretary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Item Name: Review of Open Meeting Law

☐ Action Item

Requested Action: The board office will provide the committee with an overview of the Open Meeting Law.

Discussion

There are no written materials provided at this time for this item.

Contact Information:

Samantha Blevins, ABOR

samantha.blevins@azregents.edu

602-229-2535

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Item Name: Review the Statutory Charge to the Committee on Free Expression to Submit an Annual Report

☐ Action Item

Requested Action: The board office asks the committee to review statutory charge A.R.S. §15-1867, as described in this executive summary.

Statutory/Policy Requirements:

A.R.S. §15-1867

15-1867- Arizona board of regents; committee on free expression; annual report

A. The Arizona board of regents shall establish a committee on free expression consisting of at least fifteen members.

B. The committee on free expression shall submit an annual report on or before September 1 to the governor, the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate. The Arizona board of regents shall post a copy of the annual report on its website and shall submit a copy of the annual report to the secretary of state. The annual report shall include:

1. A description of any barriers to or disruptions of free expression within the universities in this state.
2. A description of the administrative handling and discipline relating to barriers to or disruptions of free expression within the universities in this state.
3. A description of substantial difficulties, controversies or successes in maintaining a posture of administrative and institutional neutrality.
4. Any assessments, criticisms, commendations or recommendations that the committee decides to include in the annual report.
5. An accounting of how student activity fees were allocated in the prior year. For the purposes of this paragraph, "student activity fees" means any fee that is charged to students by a university in this state and that is used to support and facilitate the expression and activities of students or student organizations.

Contact Information:

Samantha Blevins, ABOR

samantha.blevins@azregents.edu

602-229-2535

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Item Name: Review of and Possible Action to Approve and Forward the Statutory Annual Report on Free Expression for FY 2025

☒ Action Item

Requested Action: The board office asks the committee to review, discuss and take possible action to approve the proposed statutory Report on Free Expression and forward the proposed statutory report to the board for its approval, as described in this executive summary.

Background and Discussion

- The Committee on Free Expression will review a draft report to confirm that it complies with the requirements of A.R.S. §15-1867 and that it demonstrates the commitment of the board and the universities to protecting and promoting free expression.
- Following committee review and approval, the committee chair will submit the report to the Arizona Board of Regents for its approval.
- The board is anticipated to consider approval of the report at its August 28, 2025, meeting.
- By September 1, 2025, the committee chair will submit the approved report to the governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, the president of the senate, the secretary of state and the ABOR office will post the final report on the ABOR website.

Contact Information:

Samantha Blevins, ABOR

samantha.blevins@azregents.edu

602-229-2535

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FY 2025

FREE EXPRESSION ANNUAL REPORT



ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Arizona Board of Regents and its universities protect and support intellectual freedom and free expression at Arizona's public universities. Students, staff and faculty members may discuss any topic, as guaranteed by the First Amendment, within the limits of reasonable content and viewpoint-neutral restrictions on time, place and manner of expression consistent with applicable law.

The board established a Committee on Free Expression, which submits this report as required by A.R.S. § 15-1867. The membership of the Free Expression Committee is in Exhibit A.

A comprehensive list of current board and university policies that protect and promote free speech is provided in Exhibit B.

The ABOR Policy on Free Expression is included as Exhibit C.

ABOUT THE ARIZONA BOARD OF REGENTS

The Arizona Board of Regents is committed to ensuring access for qualified residents of Arizona to undergraduate and graduate institutions; promoting the discovery, application, and dissemination of new knowledge; extending the benefits of university activities to Arizona's citizens outside the university; and maximizing the benefits derived from the state's investment in education.

MEMBERS

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Gregg Brewster, Secretary
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Larry E. Penley
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Jadyn Fisher, Student Regent
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Gov. Katie Hobbs, Ex-Officio
Superintendent Tom Horne, Ex-Officio

ABOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chad Sampson



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THE BOARD AND THE UNIVERSITIES DO NOT TOLERATE BARRIERS TO OR DISRUPTIONS OF PROTECTED SPEECH

Protecting free speech and intellectual freedom is a bedrock principle at Arizona's public universities. However, implementing free speech protocols in a community made up of tens of thousands of individual students, faculty and community members can sometimes produce strong and varied emotions, as well as difficult social interactions. Expressing opposing viewpoints in a legally permissible manner is not a disruption of, or barrier to, protected speech as described in A.R.S. § 15-1867.

Arizona's public universities encourage the free expression of all viewpoints, within established time, place and manner restrictions. As such, all three of the universities maintain the highest green light rating from the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression ([FIRE](#)), recognizing the commitment of the board and the universities to free speech. "Arizona's green light schools are setting a standard for free expression that colleges across the country should aspire to follow," said [Laura Beltz](#), FIRE policy reform senior program officer. Furthermore, all three universities have adopted the "[Chicago Statement](#)," the free speech policy statement produced by the Committee on Freedom of Expression at the University of Chicago.

Each university has policies and procedures to encourage and protect all lawful speech. All expressive activities are subject to reasonable time, place and manner restrictions as permitted by law. Expressive activities are subject to applicable laws that address discrimination, harassment, safety, defamation, threats, privacy and confidentiality. The board and universities do not permit actions that unlawfully disrupt the functions of the institutions. As required by statute, [board policy 1-124](#) provides:

A student who is subject to the jurisdiction of a university and who engages in individual conduct that materially and substantially infringes on the rights of other persons to engage in or listen to expressive activity, as defined in A.R.S. § 15-1861, is subject to disciplinary sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct and other applicable university and board policies. This does not preclude students from engaging in counter speech as First Amendment principles may permit.

Although a more complete list of applicable policies is provided in Exhibit B, here are some examples of how the board and university policies promote and remove barriers to lawful free expression within all of Arizona's public universities.

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY (ASU)

ASU has a longstanding commitment to free speech consistent with the university's educational function. ASU [has adopted](#) the core principles of the "[Chicago Statement](#)" affirming the role of academic freedom and freedom of expression on college campuses.

In 2025, ASU was ranked 14th nationally by the [FIRE in its annual College Free Speech Rankings](#). The rankings reflect student perspectives on their ability to freely express opinions on campus and administration's support of that expression. This ranking also reflects the university's continuing "green light" rating from FIRE, which demonstrates the highest commitment to free speech protections.

As such, ASU welcomes both members of the university community and campus visitors to engage in expressive activities on campus. Both indoor and outdoor spaces are set aside for use on a reservation basis, while other areas are available without reservations and for spontaneous expression consistent with the board and university's content- and viewpoint-neutral time, place and manner restrictions. ASU staff actively assist in facilitating and supporting speech activities on campus, providing options for virtual as well as in-person speech, and arranging and managing space to permit speakers, listeners and protestors to engage in speech safely without disrupting university activities, while maintaining access to campus for pedestrians and emergency services and addressing threatening or violent conduct. A public-facing website provides comprehensive information to the ASU community and the general public regarding the use of campus spaces for expression.

NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY (NAU)

NAU remains steadfast in its commitment to lawful freedom of expression and ensuring the rights of individuals to engage in protected speech on a wide range of viewpoints, as guaranteed by the First Amendment and supported by ABOR and university policies.

NAU is guided by applicable laws and policies in supporting the free expression of all individuals on its campus. Simultaneously, NAU is responsible for ensuring that free expression does not disrupt campus operations, interfere with the university's educational mission, or otherwise jeopardize the health, safety and welfare of members of the university community.

NAU adopted the [Chicago Statement](#) in 2022, enhancing a campus environment that advances knowledge and broadens understanding by affirming the crucial role of free expression in allowing the university community to engage in informed and multifaceted conversations about a wide range of topics.

In 2025, in addition to maintaining its "green light" rating from FIRE, NAU was ranked 28th nationally by the organization in its annual [College Free Speech Rankings](#).

NAU works to safeguard the people, places and spaces in which free expression, academic freedom and the pursuit of knowledge can thrive. The university facilitates the freedom of expression of speakers, listeners, debaters, protestors and others by managing spaces and forums, and in championing free expression, NAU does not restrict non-disruptive, constitutionally protected speech merely because it may be controversial or objectionable to others.

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA (U OF A)

Protecting free expression continues to be a foundational priority at the U of A. In alignment with ABOR policy and First Amendment principles, the U of A is an environment where members of the university community — including students, faculty, staff and invited guests — can lawfully express their views without fear of institutional censorship or disruption.

In 2025, the U of A was ranked No. 25 nationally by FIRE in its annual [College Free Speech Rankings](#). The rankings, which reflect student perspectives on their ability to freely express opinions on campus, affirm that students at the U of A broadly feel empowered to exercise their First Amendment rights. This national recognition builds on the university's longstanding "green light" rating from FIRE, which denotes the highest commitment to free speech protections.

The U of A's free expression practices are governed in part by its [Campus Use Policy – Interim](#), which is currently being updated to clarify procedures and standards related to the use of university grounds and properties for expressive activity. The revised policy strengthens the university's ability to support expressive conduct while maintaining public safety, protecting university operations and upholding the rights of all campus community members. Notably, the policy continues to emphasize the university's dual commitments to safeguarding free speech and ensuring that campus spaces remain accessible for educational, research and operational purposes.

As in previous years, the U of A's policies continue to reflect its adoption of the [Chicago Statement](#) on freedom of expression and remain consistent with ABOR Policy 1-124. The university encourages a culture of open dialogue and debate while applying content- and viewpoint-neutral time, place and manner restrictions to ensure that expression does not unlawfully disrupt institutional functions or infringe upon the rights of others.

THE BOARD AND THE UNIVERSITIES PROMPTLY ADDRESS ALL ALLEGATIONS OF BARRIERS TO OR DISRUPTIONS OF PROTECTED SPEECH

Each university has an administrative process for responding to allegations of barriers to or disruptions of protected speech that complies with applicable law. All three universities provide active support for free speech activities on campus, including managing campus events to support meaningful opportunities for protest and to listen to invited speakers. The universities also engage in dialogue with and provide support for students and community members who feel negatively impacted by the speech of others. However, consistent with the provisions of ABOR's Policy on Free Expression and the board's Student Code of Conduct, the universities do not impose discipline for constitutionally protected speech solely because that speech is controversial or objectionable to others. As appropriate, the response may address the conduct immediately and may include additional review or sanctions under board or university policy. Campus police may be involved if allegations include criminal conduct or implicate safety concerns. The following reflect the universities' handling of allegations of barriers to or disruptions of free expression.

ASU

As a community of nearly 200,000 people from every state and more than 150 countries that is committed to free and open inquiry, ASU expects that differences of opinion will be a part of the university experience. ASU educates members of its community on the role of free speech, civil discourse and the expectation to refrain from interfering with the speech of others that are incorporated in its policies. Both members of the ASU community and visitors regularly engage in expressive activities on ASU's campuses, and even those that involve differences of opinion rarely involve interference with speech or other Code of Conduct violations. When allegations of barriers to or disruptions of speech are reported, ASU addresses them through available tools including educational interventions and proactive measures, as well as sanctions where appropriate and necessary.

ASU previously reported an allegation involving a prospective administrator, whose offer of employment was rescinded based on allegations of misconduct not disclosed during the hiring process, who has alleged the decision was actually in retaliation for protected speech on social media. The university is defending against this allegation in court.

ASU also previously reported a lawsuit brought by several students who were arrested after refusing to vacate an encampment that violated ASU's longstanding content- and viewpoint-neutral prohibition on camping on campus. The university is also defending against this allegation in court.

NAU

To respond to potential barriers to or disruptions of protected speech, NAU's Speech Expression Action Knowledge (SpEAK) Team — which includes 22 trained volunteers — and NAU's Campus Inclusion Team (CIT) actively work together to ensure that all expressions

of speech on campus, whether planned or spontaneous, are supported. This includes facilitating the free expression of on-campus speakers, events and protests, as well as the free expression of those who might be attending such events to observe and/or express a differing perspective. If members of the university community express concerns about speech or the activity of others, these teams listen to concerns, connect individuals who have experienced the free speech of others negatively with supportive resources (including counseling) and, as appropriate, educate individuals regarding the importance of First Amendment rights.

During the past academic year, NAU's SpEAK Team observed and/or provided support for many events, details of which are set forth further in Exhibit E.

U OF A

The U of A protects the right to lawful expression and provides clear, proactive guidance to the campus community about these rights and responsibilities. In line with ABOR's Policy on Free Expression and the board's Student Code of Conduct, students may face disciplinary sanctions, including suspension or expulsion, if they materially and substantially infringe upon the rights of others to engage in or listen to protected speech. The university also utilizes a range of educational interventions in accordance with the Code of Conduct to address concerns in a developmentally appropriate manner.

In FY 2025, the U of A continued its proactive approach to supporting First Amendment awareness and education across the institution. Over 700 campus community members received training focused on First Amendment rights, responsibilities and university policies governing expressive activity. The university developed and published a one-page, easy-to-read guide summarizing the Campus Use Policy and frequently asked questions related to expressive activities. Additionally, a recorded First Amendment training session is now publicly available on the Dean of Students Office website, offering accessible, on-demand education for all students, faculty and staff.

To strengthen decentralized support, First Amendment liaisons were identified and trained in each academic college, ensuring that every part of the university has point-person expertise on expressive activity and campus use standards. These liaisons serve as internal resources and help facilitate real-time guidance and education within their respective units.

Similar to peer institutions across the country, the U of A has continued to see demonstrations and student-led advocacy events in response to a shifting national and global climate. As the federal and cultural landscape places increasing pressure on higher education institutions, the university has prioritized its role as a facilitator of open discourse and civil engagement. In each instance, the U of A has worked to ensure that expressive activities are permitted in accordance with established policies, while also fostering educational environments that promote safety, mutual respect and the robust exchange of ideas.

Together, these efforts reflect a culture not only of compliance, but of active engagement with the principles of free speech and open inquiry.

THE BOARD AND THE UNIVERSITIES PROMOTE DIVERSITY OF THOUGHT AND ADMINISTRATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL NEUTRALITY

The board and the universities are committed to maintaining administrative and institutional neutrality regarding speech and to allowing all protected speech, even speech that some may find offensive. From time to time, the board and the universities hear concerns from members of campus and the broader community who may not appreciate the broad constitutional protections afforded to speech, especially to speech that many in the community may find deeply offensive.

Despite this, the universities are committed to protecting all lawful expression. The universities are also committed, as part of their educational missions, to providing information about protected speech to those who may seek to have the board or universities interfere with or suppress free expression. When protected but offensive speech occurs on campus, universities may use this as an opportunity to educate the broader community as to the nature of constitutional protections as well as to identify opportunities for the safe expression of divergent viewpoints – countering the offensive speech with more speech.¹

ARIZONA BOARD OF REGENTS

In support of its commitment to free speech, civil discourse, and administrative and institutional neutrality for all protected speech, the Regents' Cup is a tri-university speech and debate competition presented by ABOR. Student orators attending ASU, NAU and the U of A represent their university at this annual event in Oxford debate and storytelling categories. The Regents' Cup honors participants for articulating different points of view in an environment where competitors remain civil and respectful, while allowing diverse perspectives to flourish.

"The Regents' Cup competition is a showcase of our system's remarkable students. We had so many people here who got to see this beautiful NAU campus and see the quality of students at our universities," said Chair Doug Goodyear, the Cup's regent advisor. "It reinforces the faith in our universities and the job that the faculty and administration are doing educating the citizens of tomorrow. It was a great event for everybody."

Held on NAU's campus in Flagstaff, Ariz., the 2025 tournament featured multiple rounds of persuasive storytelling and Oxford-style debate where students demonstrated their critical thinking and public speaking skills. This year's prompts were inspired by the theme, "The Government and the People: The Social Contract."

¹At its August 23, 2018, meeting, the board adopted a Free Expression Policy in compliance with A.R.S. § 15-1866. A copy of the policy is attached as Exhibit C. State statute and board policy also address political speech. Board and university policies recognize the limitations imposed by A.R.S. § 15-1633, which limits the use of university resources or employees to influence elections.

The storytelling competition featured powerful narratives exploring topics like overcoming injustice, mental health, family sacrifice and societal roles. Students also engaged in robust debates on pressing topics such as the government's role in education, internet access for minors and the U.S. Constitution's framework for addressing modern challenges.

In the months leading up to the event, students dedicated themselves to honing their persuasive abilities, ultimately presenting their skills before an audience that included elected and appointed officials, business and community leaders, and their university peers. Students spend several months preparing for the event and earn course credit at their university.

"I wish that this was replicated in more states because it shows that we can come together for civil conversations, even competing universities. I've never seen anything like this," said Regents' Cup judge Michael McCarter, vice president and group opinion editor at Gannett and director of standards, ethics and belonging for the USA TODAY Network. "I think this puts (Arizona public universities and ABOR) above many because of how they are working to make sure civics and civil discourse is a part of their learning. I wish more universities would do that. I leave changed."

The U of A took home the coveted Regents' Cup trophy during the sixth annual event in April 2025. First place individual winners earn a \$15,000 one-time scholarship to finance their education, second place \$12,000 and third place \$5,000. Each remaining student competitor was awarded a \$500 one-time scholarship.

ASU

To foster administrative and institutional neutrality about speech and to allow all protected speech, ASU regularly communicates its values regarding campus speech. Materials used during new student orientation now include a series of videos on campus free speech prepared by FIRE as well as an additional video by ASU featuring student speakers. These videos have a permanent home on a "Free Speech at ASU" website that is available year-round for reference, and additional materials about freedom of expression and campus access have continued to be added to that resource and elsewhere in ASU's public communications.

As in prior years, ASU's faculty and its more than 1,000 student organizations host numerous events encouraging public discourse on a wide variety of topics and from multiple perspectives in both in-person and virtual settings. These events regularly include speakers focusing on the issue of freedom of expression in contemporary society directly. In the 2024-25 academic year, this included the launch of Dialogues for Democracy, a speaker series co-hosted by ASU's Center for Free Speech and its Institute for Politics that featured leaders from politics, business, journalism, education and professional sports engaged in open and intensive dialogue modeling and discussing free speech in higher education and a free society.

NAU

NAU is a public institution committed to the free exchange of ideas among all members of the university community. NAU communicates and promotes the value of and responsibility to freedom of expression throughout the year in many forms and forums.

NAU's Student Handbook affirms the value and right to free speech, all community assistants and professional Campus Living staff participate in annual training to ensure they appropriately address the expression of students' First Amendment rights, and all student organizations planning to host events on campus receive training on the importance of upholding the First Amendment and free expression. Further, the Student Organization Manual instructs non-political officially recognized student organizations that they are entrusted with serving all stakeholders and that endorsing or opposing political candidates or ballot measures may compromise the organization's neutrality, diminish trust and create a divide within the membership. Thus, non-political clubs and organizations are encouraged to maintain non-partisan stances on election and ballot issues.

The promotion of the diversity of thought and institutional neutrality at NAU can also be found in the form of organized events and forums, cultivating an environment in which a wide range of viewpoints can be expressed, perspectives broadened and civil discourse elevated. During fall 2024, NAU hosted two freedom of speech workshops to educate staff and students about free speech on a university campus. Both workshops were provided by two trained FIRE staff. Another example of NAU's promotion of diversity of thought is through a student-led initiative that brings former members of Congress from both sides of the aisle to NAU. The "Congress to Campus" event provides students and other members of the NAU community with unique insights, education, and open and honest dialogue on the benefits of healthy partisanship; it also exemplifies NAU's commitment to free expression.

NAU also participates in ABOR's annual Regents' Cup and actively promotes the event on campus. NAU hosted the event in spring 2025, showcasing free speech and the free exchange of ideas. And in 2022, NAU adopted a Freedom of Expression statement reflecting the core principles of the Chicago Statement, which further underscores the broad commitment to and affirmation of free expression as a fundamental part of the university's work.

U OF A

The U of A continues to demonstrate a strong institutional commitment to fostering diversity of thought, perspectives and ideas, and maintaining administrative and institutional neutrality in matters of free expression. This commitment is reflected in a wide range of initiatives designed to educate the campus community and support lawful expressive activity in a respectful, inclusive and safety-conscious environment.

Over the past year, the U of A has offered robust First Amendment programming, including targeted trainings for students, faculty and staff, and academic freedom sessions hosted by the Office of the Provost. These conversations have created space for faculty and academic leaders to explore how to approach challenging topics in the

classroom, navigate viewpoint diversity and uphold the university's educational mission. At the college level, First Amendment liaisons helped integrate these efforts within academic units, while Student Affairs expanded access to free expression resources through tailored engagement opportunities.

The U of A also played a leading role in cross-campus dialogue through its participation in the 2025 Campus Safety Summit, which convened representatives from all three ABOR institutions. The U of A shared strategies for upholding expressive rights while promoting a safe and inclusive campus environment. This work was further reinforced by ongoing engagement with student and community advocacy groups — including Keep Students Safe — and proactive outreach to protest organizers to ensure that campus safety and First Amendment rights were protected in tandem.

The U of A's leadership in this area was also highlighted in regional and national settings, including a formal presentation at the Western Public Deans meeting, where university representatives outlined best practices for balancing institutional neutrality with active support for expressive activity.

A major highlight this year was the U of A's first-place win at the 2025 Regents' Cup, a signature speech and debate competition hosted by ABOR. Now in its sixth year, the Regents' Cup promotes civil discourse through storytelling and Oxford-style debate, celebrating students who engage in complex topics with clarity, empathy and intellectual rigor. The U of A students excelled in both substance and style, underscoring the university's dedication to preparing students to participate in — and lead — democratic dialogue. Their victory represents not only individual achievement, but a broader institutional culture that prioritizes free expression, critical thinking and respect across differences.

Through these sustained and multidimensional efforts, the U of A reaffirms its position as a leader in cultivating a campus where diversity of thought is embraced and constitutionally protected expression is actively supported.

ALLOCATION OF STUDENT ACTIVITY FEES

Exhibit D provides the allocation of student activity fees, if any, that are used to support and facilitate the expression and activities of students or student organizations as required by A.R.S. § 15-1867 (B)(5).

DISTRIBUTION OF THIS REPORT

As required by A.R.S. § 15-1867, this report will be posted on the ABOR website and submitted to:

- The governor
- The speaker of the Arizona House of Representatives
- The president of the Arizona Senate
- The Arizona Secretary of State

EXHIBITS



DRAFT

EXHIBIT A

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FREE EXPRESSION AS OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2025

COMMITTEE CHAIR

Chad Sampson, Executive Director, Arizona Board of Regents

ASU REPRESENTATIVES

Lisa Loo, Senior Vice President and General Counsel

Patrick Kenney, Executive Vice Provost

Anne Jones, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education; Professor, School of Molecular Sciences, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Joanne Vogel, Vice President of Student Services

Naghm Mousa, Student Representative

****Kim Demarchi**, Vice President for Legal Affairs and Deputy General Counsel

NAU REPRESENTATIVES

Margot Saltonstall, Vice President of Student Affairs

Kimberly Ott, Associate Vice President, Communications

Marco Cabrera Geserick, Assistant Professor of Humanities,

Eesha Syeda, ASNAU Student Body President

***Michelle Parker**, Vice President of Legal Affairs and General Counsel

U OF A REPRESENTATIVES

Tessa Dysart, Assistant Director of Legal Writing & Clinical Professor of Law

Art Lee, Vice President and Deputy General Counsel

Steve Patterson, Vice President & Chief Safety Officer

Chrissy Lieberman, Dean of Students

Adriana Grijalva, ASUA Student Body President

***Armando Garcia**, Senior Project Director

* Point of contact and committee member

** Point of contact and non-committee member

EXHIBIT B

ABOR POLICIES

- [1-124 \(Free Expression\)](#)
- [1-119 \(B\)\(4\) \(Nondiscrimination and Anti-harassment\)](#)
- [5-301 \(B\)\(1\) \(Code of Conduct\)](#)
- [5-303 \(11\) \(Prohibited Conduct\)](#)
- [5-308 \(A\)\(1\) and \(B\)\(1\) \(Student Code of Conduct\)](#)
- [6-202 \(Academic Freedom\)](#)
- [6-905 \(Political Activity\)](#)

ASU POLICIES AND STATEMENTS

- [ACD 201 \(Academic Freedom\)](#)
- [ACD 202-01 \(Faculty Responsibilities\)](#)
- [ACD 204-01 \(Code of Ethics\)](#)
- [ACD 204-02 \(Standards of Professional Conduct for Faculty Members and Academic Professionals\)](#)
- [ACD 205-01 \(Political Activity\)](#)
- [Adoption of Chicago Statement of Freedom of Speech](#)
- [Policy Statement Supporting Diversity and Free Speech](#)
- [Free Speech at ASU](#)
- [Freedom of Speech at ASU](#)

NAU POLICIES AND STATEMENTS

- [Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#)
- [NAU HR Policy 5.10 Regarding Political Activity](#)
- [NAU HR Policy 5.14 Use of University Property](#)
- [NAU Faculty Handbook 1.7.1 \(Role of the Faculty\)](#)
- [NAU Faculty Handbook 4.1 \(Code of Ethics and Conduct\)](#)
- [NAU Conditions of Faculty Service](#)
- [NAU Student Handbook](#)
- [NAU Statement Regarding Planned Events](#)
- [NAU Club & Organization Event Approval](#)
- [NAU Information Distribution Policy](#)
- [First Amendment: Free Expression on Campus Handout](#)
- [Adoption of Chicago Statement of Freedom of Expression](#)

U OF A POLICIES AND STATEMENTS

- [Policy and Regulations Governing the Use of Campus, SA-200](#)
- [Political Activity Policy, HR-104](#)
- [Non-discrimination and Anti-harassment Policy, HR-200E](#)
- [Religious Accommodation Policy, HR-202](#)
- Academic Freedom
 - o [Statement on academic freedom from the Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure, approved by Faculty Senate 9/14/09](#)
 - o From [University Handbook for Appointed Personnel Definitions](#): “Professional and intellectual freedom means the right and responsibility to exercise judgment within the standards of the employee’s profession. Professional and intellectual freedom is defined as ‘academic freedom’ for employees involved in teaching or research.”
- [Faculty Responsibilities, UHAP 3.1, Duties and Responsibilities of Faculty](#)
- [Statement on Professional Conduct, UHAP 7.01.01](#)
- [Adoption of Chicago Statement of Freedom of Expression](#)

EXHIBIT C

ABOR FREE EXPRESSION POLICY

1-124 Free Expression

- A.** The primary function of Arizona's public universities is to promote the discovery, improvement, transmission and dissemination of knowledge through research, teaching, discussion and debate. The universities must strive to ensure the fullest degree of intellectual freedom and free expression. It is not the proper role of a university to shield individuals from speech protected by the First Amendment, including ideas and opinions that may be unwelcome, disagreeable or deeply offensive.
- B.** Students, staff and faculty members may discuss any topic, as the First Amendment allows and within the limits of reasonable content- and viewpoint-neutral restrictions on time, place and manner of expression that are consistent with applicable law and that are necessary to achieve a compelling institutional interest if these restrictions are clear, are published and provide ample alternative means of expression. The board's policy on political activity by employees or others acting on behalf of a university is set forth in Board Policy 6-905.
- C.** Students, staff and faculty members may assemble and engage in spontaneous expressive activities if those activities are not unlawful and do not materially and substantially disrupt the functioning of the university.
- D.** A student who is subject to the jurisdiction of a university and who engages in individual conduct that materially and substantially infringes on the rights of other persons to engage in or listen to expressive activity, as defined in A.R.S. § 15-1861, is subject to disciplinary sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct and other applicable university and board policies. This does not preclude students from engaging in counter speech as First Amendment principles may permit.
- E.** Universities may restrict expressive activity that is not protected by the First Amendment.
- F.** The board will establish a committee on free expression composed of representatives from the universities and the board office, which will submit an annual report as required by A.R.S. § 15-1867.

EXHIBIT D

ALLOCATION OF STUDENT ACTIVITY FEES BY UNIVERSITY

ASU

The Associated Students of Arizona State University is responsible for oversight of the student programming fee that provides funding to more than 950 student organizations annually. This includes funding for the Programming and Activities Board, sport club organizations, cultural coalitions, college councils and registered organizations that seek funding. Students and student organizations can also seek funding for traveling to professional and academic conferences. The Undergraduate Student Government spent approximately \$3,043,110.33 on appropriations for more than 455 undergraduate clubs and organizations (including general clubs, sport clubs, cultural coalitions, college councils, and Programming and Activities Board) in Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25. The Undergraduate Student Government also spent approximately \$120,743.93 on 324 individuals who traveled to academic and professional conferences. The Graduate Student Government spent approximately \$71,802.88 on appropriations for more than 127 graduate clubs and organizations requests. The Graduate Student Government also spent approximately \$329,418.27 on 207 individuals who traveled to academic and professional conferences. Undergraduates and graduate students pay \$35 per semester for the student programming fee. The remainder of the student programming fee budget supported events such as concerts, community gatherings, professional artists and speakers, rental fees and supplies. Pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-1626.01(C), each student may choose to select one or more student organizations or clubs to which the university may not allocate that student's pro rata share of fee monies.

NAU

All Flagstaff campus students pay a \$25 per semester student activity fee, which supports on-campus programs and activities that enhance campus life and involvement, such as concerts, speakers, movies, Welcome Week, Homecoming, Family Weekend, leadership programs and recreational activities. Also, the student activity fee provides funding for student organizations, colleges and departments to host events on the Flagstaff Mountain Campus that are open to all students. During academic year 2024-25, funding was provided to 19 student organizations, colleges and/or departments that hosted events, totaling approximately \$122,000.

Every NAU Flagstaff Mountain Campus undergraduate student pays the Associated Students of Northern Arizona University (ASNAU) 23 fee each semester. During academic year 2024-25, ASNAU distributed approximately \$700,000 to directly contribute to a variety of services and programs that benefit NAU's students, including providing support to more than 330 campus student organizations and clubs, individual students, and campus-wide programming and events, including facilitating outside speakers, and providing forums for discussion and debate, which enable students to express their perspectives. The ASNAU 23 fee was further distributed to support endeavors such as the Lumberjack Concert Series, Homecoming Carnival, the NAU Marching Band's fall 2025 participation in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, a range of community events, reimbursements to student clubs and organizations

for travel and operations, support of students' basic needs, and awards to recognize NAU students for exemplary service and achievements. The fee is further utilized to increase access to the university library by supporting extended hours for its operations and to fund NAU students in their pursuits to study abroad. Additionally, the ASNAU Student Wellness Committee met regularly to discuss any issues of importance to students. This committee's focus is to help NAU students more effectively make their voices heard and share their opinions throughout campus, thereby amplifying the voices and diverse opinions of all NAU undergraduate students.

Additionally, to comply with Arizona law, NAU created a process whereby, on a semesterly basis, students identify clubs they do not want to support with their activity and/or ASNAU 23 fee monies. If a student identifies a club(s) they do not want to support with their fee monies, their monies will not be available to that club(s) and instead will be allocated to concerts or other events that are open to all students.

U OF A

The Associated Students of the University of Arizona (ASUA) operate the Wildcat Events Board (WEB), a student-governed entity responsible for planning and implementing campus-wide social and educational programming. All events hosted by WEB are open and accessible to the entire student body. Funding for WEB was provided through a mandatory student fee of \$5 per semester, which generated \$311,221.44 in FY 2025.

The Wildcat Events Board is committed to fostering a spirit of unity and collaboration among students while providing opportunities for leadership development through active engagement in event planning and execution. Its programming portfolio encompasses a broad spectrum of events, including trivia and bingo nights, outdoor film screenings, cultural and national celebrations, live musical performances, and other educational and entertainment-based programs.

ASUA is also responsible for the oversight of Club Funding, which supports more than 450 recognized student organizations annually. This funding is available to all registered student groups, including those seeking support for travel to professional and academic conferences. In FY 2025, ASUA allocated approximately \$204,868.84 in appropriations to enhance student engagement, leadership development, campus programming, and academic enrichment through travel opportunities. Any remaining funds not allocated directly to student organizations, pursuant to A.R.S. § 15-1626.01(C), which allows students to designate one or more student organizations or clubs to which the university may not allocate that student's pro rata share of fee monies, were used to support large-scale student organization events, such as the annual Club Fair.

EXHIBIT E

NAU'S SpEAK TEAM-SUPPORTED FREE EXPRESSION EVENTS

Date	Organizing Group	Event Recap	Action Taken
9/24/24	Students for Life	Students for Life were approved to have an event with amplified sound.	Students for Life was contacted directly to inform about campus policies and required approvals.
10/7/24	Flagstaff-Students for Justice in Palestine	A local group gathered for a march around campus and then Flagstaff to bring awareness to the one-year anniversary of the Israel/Hamas War.	The SpEAK Team was present as the group marched through campus; no disruption occurred and the group later left NAU grounds to continue their march.
10/15/24	Turning Point at NAU	Turning Point at NAU hosted the Charlie Kirk-Prove Me Wrong Table, which invited students to engage with Mr. Kirk on different topics.	The SpEAK Team was present for the event. Counter protesters projected their message verbally and on written signs. The event allowed free expression and caused no disruption to campus.
10/15/24 & 10/21/24	Students for Life	Students for Life hosted tabling events to invite students to participate in a chalking board activity and to discuss Prop 139.	An individual engaged aggressively with the club and knocked their tabling materials to the ground, breaking another individual's property. A crime report was submitted to NAU PD for further investigation.
10/24/24	Students for Life	Students for Life hosted a tabling event focused on promoting the club's mission and discussing voting/abortion policies.	The individual who attended the 10/21/24 event returned and engaged in similar behaviors. SpEAK presence was there to educate the individual about freedom of speech. NAU PD was contacted, and a report was created. NAU PD later reported that the suspect was caught, and three legal charges were issued related to the two disruptions.
10/28/24	AZ Dems	AZ Dems, an outside organization, hosted an event where Congressman Maxwell Frost spoke to students about voting and supporting the Democratic presidential candidate.	The SpEAK Team was present, and there were no counter-protesters at the event.

Date	Organizing Group	Event Recap	Action Taken
11/5/24	Lumberjacks for Harris and AZ Dems	Lumberjacks for Harris and AZ Dems, an outside organization, hosted an unapproved tabling event focused on promoting the Democratic Party ticket for the presidency. This tabling event included passing out food and other promotional items.	SpEAK members communicated with the event coordinator about the need to refrain from distributing food and to remove the structures (tables) as those were not approved. The event coordinator acknowledged the information, shared it with the groups and agreed to comply. However, the group did not comply with the SpEAK Team's guidance; NAU therefore sanctioned Lumberjacks for Harris with a warning from the Office of Leadership and Engagement.
11/5/24	Associated Students of Northern Arizona (ASNAU)	ASNAU hosted a Parade to the Polls event to encourage students to vote.	The event did not have any counter-protestors, and ASNAU shared a non-partisan message on the importance of voting.
11/7/24	Committee on Global Diversity	The Committee on Global Diversity hosted a panel to discuss historic events related to the disagreement between Palestine and Israel and other post-election topics.	The SpEAK Team was present at the event, which was not disruptive.
11/12/24	Flaunt, Period at Flagstaff, and Planned Parenthood	These three registered organizations hosted a rally/protest advocating for human rights and protection of specific groups (LGBTQIA members, immigrants, etc.). The groups had a couple of policy violations including unauthorized chalking and using amplified sound.	SpEAK Team members informed the representatives of the policies and walked a representative of the event over to the Office of Unions and Activities to request proper approval for usage of amplified sound (which was approved). The groups also cleaned up the chalk. There were no counter-protestors.
11/19/24	Fossil Free at NAU	Fossil Free at NAU hosted a panel focused on the history and impact of divestment movements, particularly in fossil fuels and other controversial industries, and issues related to NAU's partnerships that enhance or promote the use of fossil fuels.	There was a SpEAK team presence at the event. One individual shared an opposing view that contradicted information shared by the panel, which did not lead to disruption, and the event went on smoothly with the support of the club advisor.

Date	Organizing Group	Event Recap	Action Taken
1/20/25	Black Student Union	The Black Student Union hosted their annual MLK Day march through campus.	SpEAK was present for the march. There were some dismissive words shared by a student passing by, and another student made a comment from their living community. There were no counter-protests or disruptions.
2/10/25	Turning Point USA at NAU	Turning Point USA at NAU hosted Ben Larabee on campus to discuss data points related to the 2024 presidential election and showcase voting history related to states' transitions from red states to blue states and vice versa.	The SpEAK Team was present at the event. Free Expression occurred without any disruption.
2/12/25	SOMOS at NAU	Somos at NAU held a march focused on the immigration and residency rights of Hispanic/Latino individuals. The march started on campus and ended at the City of Flagstaff City Hall. The group followed policy related to sound and avoided obstructing traffic.	SpEAK, NAU PD, and Flagstaff PD were present at the event. There were no counter-protestor interactions.
3/24/25	Turning Point at NAU	Turning Point at NAU hosted Olivia Krolczyk, who is also with the Riley Gaines Center. Olivia covered a variety of topics from DEI to trans athletes to Make America Healthy Again.	The SpEAK Team and NAU PD were present at the event. Counterpoints and differing opinions were shared by the audience. There were no counter-protests or disruptions.
4/19/25	Honeybees Beautyshop Quartet and FLAUNT	Honeybees and FLAUNT hosted a protest against executive orders affecting DEI programs, events, initiatives and the LGBTQIA+ community.	The SpEAK Team was present.
4/21/25-4/24/25	External Visiting Preacher	Two off-campus preachers visited campus for several days to share their views about pro-life, religion and other topics. Turning Point at NAU supported the event organizer during the week.	The SpEAK Team and NAU PD were present. SpEAK members educated the student/community group regarding policies related to amplified sound. SpEAK members also had to de-escalate a situation in which the preacher's position on racism and slavery upset some students.

Date	Organizing Group	Event Recap	Action Taken
4/22/25	Hillel at NAU	Hillel at NAU hosted the movie October H8te, which portrays the Israeli perspective of Oct 7 events, antisemitism and other topics related to the Israel/Palestine conflict.	The SpEAK Team was present. There were some faculty and students present who had pro-Palestinian sentiments, but there were no disruptions before, during or after the showing of the movie.
5/1/25	United Left Coalition Registered Club	The United Left Coalition hosted a Mayday March, a protest to advocate for worker rights and against inequities regarding labor exploitation. The group created posters, passed out handouts and gave speeches about their cause. The group marched from campus to Flagstaff City Hall.	The SpEAK Team was present on campus at the event. The club's advisor shared some dos and don'ts regarding free speech on and off campus with the crowd. No additional action was needed.

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