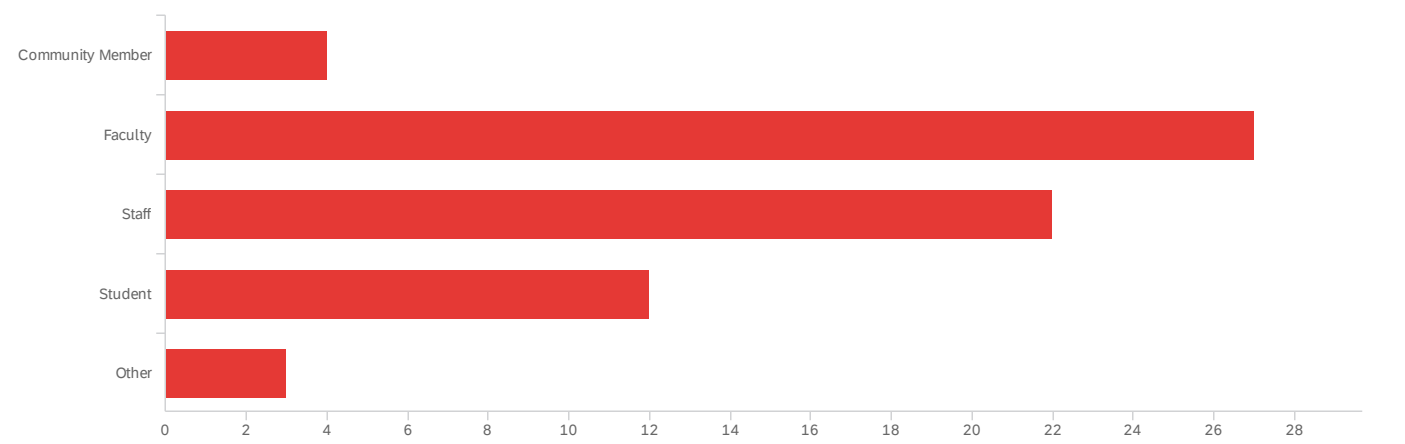


# Default Report

UW Freedom of Expression

September 13, 2023 8:23 AM MDT

## Q1 - What is your primary affiliation with the University of Wyoming?



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What is your primary affiliation with the University of Wyoming?	1.00	5.00	2.75	0.96	0.92	68

#	Field	Choice Count
1	Community Member	5.88% 4
2	Faculty	39.71% 27
3	Staff	32.35% 22
4	Student	17.65% 12
5	Other	4.41% 3
		68

Showing rows 1 - 6 of 6

## Q2 - What aspects of the draft recommendations (pages 9-18) do you find most constructive to UW's efforts to promote freedom of expression, intellectual freedom, and constructive dialogue?

What aspects of the draft recommendations (pages 9-18) do you find most con...

"To clearly delineate and define the University of Wyoming's foundational commitments to institutional neutrality, intellectual freedom, academic freedom, freedom of expression"

Generally, I am very happy that President Seidel has prioritized this initiative and I think the working group has done a great job articulating a very complicated issue. Great work everyone! Specifically providing a review of potential Title IX abuses and hiring practices was a great addition. Title IX seems to be creeping into everything and needs to be reeled in and I've personally witnessed discriminatory faculty hiring practices at UW that would likely be considered unconstitutional if challenged in court. The slogans at the end of section 3 are great, and the one at the very end is hilarious.

In the abstract, I find nearly everything included constructive. In particular, though, I think the training aspects mentioned as well as the chance to specifically engage in difficult dialogues, particularly with those who may not think like you, where modeling of civil discourse might happen quite useful. I also thought the language about people learning how to be comfortable with the uncomfortable was extremely important and constructive.

Targeted Skills Development: Bring internal and external experts to UW to provide workshops for administration, faculty, staff, and students to develop skills in civil discourse and difficult dialogue. Use these initial workshops to "train the trainers" at UW and build enduring institutional resources in these areas. Provide additional opportunities for the development of soft skills in the areas of conflict resolution, de-escalation, and mindfulness to prepare campus community members with real-world training in how to better handle disagreement and conflict in daily life and in the workplace

There is nothing constructive about giving a platform to Turning Point and other fascist organizations. I am very disappointed that our administration has voluntarily bought the MAGA narrative that all universities are bastions of liberalism.

" enshrine scholarly protections of academic freedom and intellectual freedom as central to the educational mission of the University and to support a continued climate of intellectual openness and free inquiry at UW" - That's a standard one for university. "The role of the university teacher is not to indoctrinate."- "Clarify language (e.g., about "collegiality," "safety") that could enable the substitution of academic criteria with expression-based criteria for dismissal."

The University should absolutely adopt a gifts acceptance policy to ensure faculty review of gifts with connections to the curriculum to reflect the University's commitments.

What aspects of the draft recommendations (pages 9-18) do you find most con...

For over 25 years, the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) has dedicated itself to promoting academic freedom, academic excellence, and accountability at our nation's colleges and universities. I was encouraged to see the recent report from the University of Wyoming's (UW) Freedom of Expression, Intellectual Freedom, and Constructive Dialogue Working Group. ACTA recently published our Gold Standard for Freedom of Expression™, a comprehensive blueprint for honoring free expression and intellectual diversity on college campuses, and I note many points of convergence between our recommendations and those of the working group. I am deeply impressed by the working group's report and urge the adoption of its recommendations. We are pleased that the working group proposes adoption of the excellent Statement of the University of Wyoming Principles, which cites the Chicago Principles on Freedom of Expression, the Kalven Report, and the American Association of University Professors' 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure. With respect to Initiative 2.8, Employee Hiring and Related Policies, which suggests "review[ing] guidance related to position descriptions and search procedures to ensure the integrity of the hiring process," I recommend another University of Chicago document, the Shils Report, which explains that hiring and promotion should be based on excellence in research, teaching, and service without regard to a candidate's political beliefs and activities. This would suggest, for example, discontinuing the use of diversity statements in hiring, since many faculty properly regard these as ideological litmus tests. The report also recommends scrutiny of speech policies. Specifically, Initiatives 2.2 and 2.5 call for revising the Student Code of Conduct to "avoid any overly broad language" and reviewing "the social media posting policy disclaimer and practices for filtering comments in the University's social media forums to ensure these are viewpoint-neutral." These are wise recommendations. As a state actor, the University of Wyoming must refrain from censoring speech based on the viewpoints that are expressed. Current UW social media restrictions prohibit material that is "profane" or "embarrassing to another person or entity." These descriptors lie well outside the historically unprotected categories of speech and could be used as pretext for removing speech of a viewpoint that public officials dislike. Similarly, it is important to protect students from Title IX violations without restricting student speech, but "sexual harassment" is currently defined on UW's website as "Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct, or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature." (Emphasis added.) A Title IX case based solely on "verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature" would be standardless and an act of censoring constitutionally protected speech. We also support the recommendation (Initiative 2.9) to review the Academic Personnel Dismissal Policy and "clarify language (e.g., about 'collegiality,' 'safety') that could enable the substitution of academic criteria with expression-based criteria for dismissal." Categories like "collegiality" and "safety" are often used to threaten or dismiss faculty because of their views, as appears to be happening in the case of Dr. Scott Gerber at Ohio Northern University right now. We are impressed by several of the communications initiatives outlined in Section 3 of the report. Including a free expression unit in new-student orientation and requiring free expression training for staff are both ACTA Gold Standard actions and will help to set the right expectations on campus. Similarly, operating a website with free expression resources and clarifying faculty free expression rights when speaking to the media will provide your community with important opportunities for understanding and exercising their rights. Finally, we are delighted to see the recommendations to create a "Center for Free Expression and Respectful Dialogue" and to "Direct Student Engagement." There is a growing tendency among both college students and Americans broadly to silo themselves away from those with whom they disagree. Giving all community members both the tools and the arena to practice their civil discourse skills will increase trust and encourage community members to hear diverse points of view. Our own College Debates and Discourse Alliance, operated in conjunction with Braver Angels and BridgeUSA, is one resource you might consider. The aforementioned ACTA Gold Standard for Freedom of Expression™ is linked in the final survey question answer box. We are encouraged that so many of the proposed initiatives in your working group's report either directly or closely reflect goals that are highly recommended in our campus climate reform efforts. We welcome the opportunity to discuss strategies for putting other initiatives discussed in this letter into practice.

An open commitment to open discussion of issues

The one day "Difficult Dialogues" training seems like it would be really fruitful, and useful for folks. I like the addition of a syllabus statement, but I find that many GA instructors already are told to include something about academic freedom + academic integrity during their syllabus day spiel. I guess some template language would be helpful. The general education curriculum seems like it would be most useful, since students are already reporting they get the most exposure to competing ideologies (and civil engagement with opposing ideas) in their classwork already. Integrated challenges should catch their attention more.

I appreciate the references to academic freedom, but they are underdeveloped

Incorporating some kind of training into student and faculty orientation; careful framing of speakers that invites discussion and dissent; developing and bolstering critical and creative thinking in the USP, especially by keeping the First Year Seminar

The summary statement in the final paragraph of page 11, comes closest to articulating the robust freedom of speech that UW owes to the Wyoming community. "UW encourages people with diverse backgrounds and values to speak, write, live, and learn together in a welcoming, inclusive, and intellectually stimulating environment that celebrates free expression and intellectual and academic freedom."

clarification of policies

These commitments obviously require investment in cultivating the liberal arts -- especially history, philosophy, religion, English, classics, etc. That's really exciting to me, and it's certainly what I and then my children looked for in college. I would love to see UW move in that direction again and recapture what I loved about it in years past. It was a special place. I really don't want it to become just a technical school. I see focusing on these values as a move in the right direction.

What aspects of the draft recommendations (pages 9-18) do you find most con...

The focus on what the U.S. Constitution and the Wyoming Constitution actually say. Also, emphasizing that this is non-partisan. Care must be taken to truly hear both sides.

Part 2, clearly articulating what is and is not acceptable, and providing the means to decide.

I found this report overall too general/broad to really find something insightful to comment on. I guess good job on thinking about having a positive place to be.

To recognize that while the free expression of ideas, beliefs, and criticism can be uncomfortable, legal free expression rights must be respected at a public university in accordance with the nation's First Amendment protections and the right to free speech enshrined in the Constitution of the State of Wyoming

The only portion that has specific items is the statement articulating the principles. All the other portions are recommendations or do not have enough detail to make a judgement. So, I will say the section "1. Articulating the Principles" is the most constructive.

10,11

none of it, because this campus culture is not a place where you can freely express yourself without judgement or retaliation

I liked all the marketing phrases proposed in 3.10 as an extension of "the world needs more cowboys." I liked 4.1, to articulate a set of principles that UW follows; I think those principles should be heavily guided by the state code of ethics. I liked the idea of a Free Speech statement on the syllabi from 3.4. In general, I like to have a code written down in a place where people see and read it often. Keep it fresh and relevant. I also am glad to see the overall goal of this working group. They kept politics out of the discussion and focused on something really important.

I like the mention of Wyoming as the Equality State from day one, and I think the document does a good job explaining the role of a University as a place for free exploration of ideas.

Institutional neutrality, freedom of expression, and constructive dialogue.

None

By reading through the document, I can tell that the working group put a great deal of work, research, and meaningful discussion into the creation of the draft. I do like that the Statement of Principles starts with the historical focus on equality and how that translates into the modern-era. It seems like a significant population of the non-University affiliated citizens can benefit from this reminder. I also like the reference to Wyoming's rugged individualism and the related marketing slogans. I also liked that piece that the University is not beholden to the whims of elected officials, donors, etc.

It's all constructive and well thought through (and no, I wasn't on the committee).

2.4 Donor Relations:

Create a cross-campus cohort of selected faculty, staff and students to serve as models and leaders around issues of civil discourse and constructive dialogue on campus. This cohort would receive additional training in facilitating and moderating civil discourse and dialogue around difficult issues and could be utilized to help facilitate campus programming in this area. - I think this is a great idea, and there are many existing non profits and Extension personnel around the state that could offer valuable guidance that are often left out of conversations regarding university proceedings and operations.

"In both teaching and scholarly endeavors, partisan interests ... should never supersede sound academic judgment, principles, and procedures."

The document mentioned is long and as such disengaging. I have no idea what the main points are as they seem to be buried in and amongst all the fluff.

What aspects of the draft recommendations (pages 9-18) do you find most con...

2.5 filtering social media is risky. UW generated content should have disclaimer 2.6 clarification of content neutral policies warranted 3.1 and 3.2 employee and student onboarding and training is appropriate 3.3 discussion of constitutional protections of free expression (and the constitution generally) should be part of NGGE 4.10 Malcolm Wallop model is good, should be used for both internal and external engagement

I like the idea of articulating our commitment to freedom of expression through multiple modalities.

2 - operationalizing the principles and 4 - practicing the principles

focused, clear intention to highlight this work

Page 11, first full paragraph - it is good to explicitly codify that all associated with the university are private individuals free under the 1st amendment, and that UW will not take part in censoring speech which may be uncomfortable or offensive.

Interestingly, I don't have many problems with the recommendations, other than how some things will be implemented and enforced.

2.10, 4.1, 4.2

I think this working group is a response to the new AI technology?

1. The restatement of UW's commitment to the AAUP Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure.

UW's efforts to operationalize and practice its principles are key. Many schools make empty commitments. UW's plans will ensure that its commitments will be carried out.

Very interested in encouraging dialogue through Cross-Campus Engagement on Civil Discourse and Constructive Dialogue such as the "People's Supper" or "Cowboy Conversations". By creating these designated spaces, it manages the expectations of those participating and allows for difficult conversations to occur with facilitation.

Honestly, all.

Generally, it's brilliant to focus on prioritizing the academic mission, with free expression and constructive dialogue being tools for the primary mission, not the mission itself. The distinction between academic values and civic values is critical. Specifically, it is great to see 'institutional neutrality', the 'removal of collegiality from personnel decisions', reminding us 'curriculum is the purview of the faculty', and the creation a 'gifts policy/review'. I also agree that it's important to communicate and educate the community on these fundamental principles. Students, faculty and most upper administration are uninformed of these issues. If everyone is on the same page, it will avoid many problems. For instance, everyone should know the mission is academic, which is not concerned with respecting a diversity of ideas. To the contrary, it is about vetting ideas and sorting the good and bad ideas. Constructive dialogue and freedom of expression are not academic values, though they play a role on a public university campus. Constructive dialogue in academia is not the same as respecting differences outside of academic (in Prexies Pasture). And free-expression doesn't apply in the classroom. This document conveys this well.

I appreciated the statement that "the university home of critics, not itself the critic" and the strong value of academic freedom, particularly for classroom instruction

This committee has done nothing other than affirm the fake narrative that university campuses are liberal havens that stifle conservative viewpoints. Its entire existence plays right into Turning Point/etc's effort to shift public perception away from what actually happens on college campuses: learning, critical engagement, and the celebration of diversity. Ed Seidel has had some bad ideas during his tenure at Wyoming. This one is by far the worst.

Articulation of principles as Wyoming being the equality state with conservative, yet progressive roots.

4.3 bringing multiple stakeholders together consistently to address these issues will lead to a much more effective response and increase the buy-in of campus stakeholders.

### Q3 - What aspects of the draft recommendations (pages 9-18) do you find least constructive to UW's efforts to promote freedom of expression, intellectual freedom, and constructive dialogue?

What aspects of the draft recommendations (pages 9-18) do you find least co...

I think that more needs to be done to address safety issues for people (esp. students on campus-- i.e. targeting, harassment). I think that "hate speech" needs to be explicitly defined and not tolerated. Hate speech is not just "offensive speech" it is damaging and harmful. I believe that the university should acknowledge that speech can cause harm and distress to individuals and impede on their sense of safety. I do not think that one's right to free speech usurps another's right to safety (both emotional and physical).

I appreciate the commitment (page 10, par. 2) to conduct research independent of "the undue influence of donors, elected officials, ownership interests, or other external parties" but I'm afraid it might be unrealistic for a state institution that receives around half its funding from the legislature. Like it or not, elected officials have a direct say in how funding is allocated to the University and this statement might come off as dismissive of that role. A rephrase could be "UW advances the frontiers of teaching, research, and creative activity through open inquiry inspired by the Code of the West and Wyoming's unique spirit of rugged individualism. Section 4 is weighted pretty heavily toward administrative and training solutions for implementation. Speaking as someone with a low tolerance for bureaucracy and training, I just don't know how well these will work. I would much rather see practices catered toward events like high profile speakers or debates that embody these ideals and edgy marketing/sloganeering that does the same. "The World Needs More Cowboys" was actually a good example of the latter because it both set some people on edge, but also made people critically think about what it means to be a cowboy. Leaning into that brand of marketing would be a good way to put these ideas into practice.

I was glad to see the section that covered the fact that the first amendment does not give a person the right to say anything they want all the time (i.e. like all rights, there are some limits), but I also found that section less constructive because it is hard to give people useful guidance on where that line is. I also saw little about the fact that the first amendment/free expression is one of several laws that may come into play in a given situation. I think this adds to the view I've seen of many that free expression/first amendment is the only right or the supreme right that matters in a given situation, when that isn't always the case. While there was some mention about free expression outside of the Title IX context or that such expression might be limited when it becomes harassing, those references were rather minimal and so I found them to be less constructive. That said, I don't know that this document was the place to expound on those areas, but it may be something to consider as you seek to articulate and train people on the guiding principles and as you set up procedures and guidelines for the campus community.

There is limited action in the draft recommendations on areas that staff can participate or learn.

The entire program is unconstructive. I also take great offense that the administration weighs the political opinions of outside organizations over the educational/learned background of faculty. I should not have to be fearful of an organization (i.e. Turning Point) targeting me/department for rightly teaching about the legacies of slavery or the dangers of fascism/Nazism in the world today.

"Ensure consistency across the institution on these issues"- How would this be achieved? "One-Day "Difficult Dialogues" Cross-Campus Event:" This needs more elaboration.

While the draft recommendations include the review/establishment of various protocols, it doesn't detail what the outcome or process for that would be. Regardless, students should not only be allowed at the table for that conversation, but they should be invited and encouraged to participate. Students in the status quo are unaware of the University's potential changes in policy, existing policy or controversies.

The devil is in the details: I have had some faculty, non- social scientists, tell me that I have to teach my students both sides of an issue. I tell it's not possible because there aren't just two sides, but multiple sides, and they look confused. This is a common heuristic: black and white; right and left, etc. However, life is a fractal with millions of facets rather than a two dimensional line dividing the world into two sides. While the US may only have two political parties, most democracies have 5-10. Do I explain every perspective every time? How much time do I give to conspiracy theories? Do I have to teach anti-semitism if I teach tolerance? I worry that students will use the freedom of expression to attack faculty saying we didn't give enough attention to every perspective— and that's impossible. The university must give guidance here and this document does not.

What aspects of the draft recommendations (pages 9-18) do you find least co...

Onboarding/orientation in civil discourses for first-year students would 100% be a waste of time. Straight out of high school freshmen are already on guard for overtly liberal ideology, and sadly "freedom of expression" guidance is like a code for "freedom for liberal politics, restraint for conservative."

To much space is given to an imaginary problem (conservatives alleging that their free speech is being discriminated against) and not enough space is given to a real problem (attacks on university professors by the extreme right).

There is both a glaring deletion and a glaring insertion in the new proposed statement on pages 10-11 of the report. It deletes the current assurance that "The entire campus is a "free speech zone." Later, it adds "discriminatory harassment" under a list of legal limitations to speech. But "discriminatory harassment" is neither defined in statute, nor case law. Insertion of this ill-defined and unconstitutional restriction has a chilling effect on free speech wherever it is inserted in policy.

Speaker Series and new center/coordinator -- waste of money and time, no one would go

I doubt adding a statement to a syllabus makes any difference. It's probably the one document I should have read as a student and never did. Also, I'm not sure of the wisdom in an external speaker series. Maybe that could come later? At this point, controversy heaped with grievance is the point for a lot of people. They will just keep score on how many speakers are on the right or the left -- whether or not that's the case at all. I'd rather see UW invest money in education instead of ginning up controversy that will probably hurt the school around the state and in the legislature. People are out of the habit of thinking for themselves around here these days.

The overall wordiness. Also, given events in the past (letters to the campus at large from the President clearly indicating what his opinions and thus politics are, banning a person with strong views considered offensive to some from having a table in the Union, announcing distaste/offense by what a U.S. Senator said during graduation speech and sending an unsolicited article around refuting such claim, etc.), truly establishing a non-partisan and neutral stance will be difficult for this administration. Right now, in all honesty this campus climate leans to the left, which is at odds with the majority of people in the State of Wyoming.

Most of the recommendation s in Part 3 seem clumsy and burdensome. A statement in every syllabus? There are too many of those already; there should just be a link to the boilerplate that every syllabus needs to have. (If they all need to say exactly the same things, why do they all need to say those things?) The slogan "The UW Cowboys Are Curious, FairMinded, Complexity-Embracing, No-Bull-Accepting Independent Thinkers" is good for a laugh, at least.

We need to do more about responding harder to offending views that go against campus. Could we get more police involvement at hotspots on campus? For example, student in Union with demoralizing signs, chats on Zoom that go wrong, etc. Seems like little is done to actually punish offensive students.

UW may reasonably place content-neutral limitations on the time, place, and manner of expression to ensure the University's ordinary educational, scholarly, and administrative functioning.

I find sections 2 through 4 do not have enough detail to decide if they are helpful or not. But all are headed in the right direction. All the ideas are good; I'm just not sure how they would be implemented (or if it's realistic to implement these items).

15

11

all of it.

4.2, a Center for Free Expression, is a bad idea. Having centers for something like that isn't helpful, because it implies that other places on campus don't allow free expression, which is of course not true. I think 4.4, Targeted Skill Development, could be a good thing, but that's as far as trainings and such should go. In other words, it should be expected, not necessarily promoted. The faculty should be able to implement this training without having to lecture or say much about free speech. Free speech should be a given.

I think the Code of the West is in some cases useful, but in others reinforces toxic masculine traits, so it should be used carefully.

What aspects of the draft recommendations (pages 9-18) do you find least co...

Reviewing Title IX policies. These should be well established and understood. These policies should require little, if any, additional effort.

All- None of the recommendations have any substance.

Perhaps more emphasis on that line between free speech, when speech is no longer considered free speech, and the consequences of free speech. I think there are pockets of citizens who believe that they can say anything and that 1) there are no limits to free speech and 2) there are no consequences to free speech. Within this report there is a justifiably heavy emphasis on freedoms, but the "when it goes too far" could have more discussion. In today's society, there are so many people who have beliefs that are the antithesis of the values espoused by the University or are meritless. If we have a speaker who wants to come to share his beliefs that the 'world is flat' are we going to say, 'great--come share your thoughts.' While I appreciate the thoughts behind institutional neutrality, it seems there are times when this just isn't acceptable. Are we then complicit in advocating for a perspective that is harmful, meritless, etc?

2.6: Content neutral guidelines for poster distribution:

UW does not shield individuals from the free expression of ideas and criticism, including that which community members may find uncomfortable, disagreeable, or even deeply offensive. The expression of criticism must respect the legal right of others to express themselves without serving to obstruct, censor, or otherwise interfere with the rights of others to hear those ideas. - The legal right to individual expression should not come at the cost of terrorizing others. Freedom of expression is not a "catch" all term to bully. Even with the subsequent paragraph I feel this may be taken out of context.

There is no Wyoming Way that can or should be promoted. Decency is not owned by some states, it is achieved by acceptable behavior. There is no risk to be assessed with Art. There is a risk associated with censoring Art. State politics should not be a reason to intervene.

I don't know I couldn't find the important points of the document.

2.1 Protocol for student complaints – what about complaints from students reg other students or faulty staff complaints about students. 2.2 overly broad language in and of itself will suppress free expression of ideas. 2.3 vetting process will suppress speech. what is a credentialed faculty expert? it seems that this provision will suppress speech of those who are not considered by the decision makers to be valued enough in their role at the university to be considered 'expert' at least to the extent that a credentialed faculty expert is considered to be. Risk of creating a privileged cohort of thought police across campus 2.4 donor relations, why is faculty review required and who will do this review? At department level or by the (biased) credentialed faculty experts 2.8 reviewing position descriptions is appropriate. Using some sort of university produced guidance related to employee political activity is risky. 2.9 freedom of expression should not be grounds for dismissal 3.4 adding additional syllabus statement is not effective. Current mandated syllabus language has limited effectiveness. 4.2 we don't need another center, what is this going to cost besides director? If this is mandated, it should be housed the Libraries with a focus on knowledge and different opinions and approaches on issues tied to free expression. There should not be unit centric implementation of nebulous guidelines (this won't work and will create hostility in those with marginalized views) 4.3 campus cohort - role could turn these individuals into our campus wide thought police. However, targeted skill development (4.4 that incorporates 4.5, 4.8) has some merit if these are voluntary 4.6 Agree that speakers series would have limited impact 4.9 would have limited impact and has likelihood of becoming polarizing

I understand that you got a slap on the wrist to promote "freedom of speech" when barring the pastor from campus, but there should be more said to address and differentiate hate speech. You were very close to using language close to "respect" and "kindness", but only used the word "respect" in regards to somebody's freedom of speech.

I do not think we need a "Free Expression Center," but I like the idea of developing a campus cohort.

It's so much info and written so complexly that I don't think many will take the time to read it.

3 - communicating the principles although still important

too-cute phrases and catch words like "no bull" and variants on "the world needs more cowboys" slogans. These discussions are too important to be tied to the frivolous branding slogans that should be done away with anyway.

Page 11, second full paragraph - freedom of speech being limited in the case of "discriminatory harassment". Discriminatory harassment needs to be more explicitly codified.



What aspects of the draft recommendations (pages 9-18) do you find least co...

The issue with limiting speech with respect to "interferes with the free expression rights of others", how does my speech or another's speech interfere with someone else's rights to free speech? Shouting down/interfering with a group/speaker has happened on other campus/areas in the country? How will this be implemented on UW campus?

2.4 - In theory, this is good, however, the curriculum offered at UW has always reflected what large donors want to see the university offer. Money talks, I'd prefer to see full transparency of donors, donations, and how the money is appropriated.

I don't understand this working group or what it's trying to convey.

Students need to understand that, while they may hold contrary opinions, when they disagree with well-established facts or strongly supported theories, it is not infringing on their freedom of speech to marginalize their perspective in a classroom. A course on evolutionary biology should not be an endless rehashing of a non-existent "debate" between so-called "creation science" and evolution, nor should a climate science course have to spend time rebutting the idea that the idea of climate change is a "Chinese hoax." Faculty need to feel empowered to proceed with well-established facts and theories. While it is said clearly in one place, that seems inadequate in an 18 page document.

N/A

N/A

Honestly, none.

A seminar series would be a show but have little impact. An institute would be more administrative bloat and have little impact, and any office/center should focus on the academic mission, such as an office for open inquiry and academic integrity. That would do more to build the public's trust in UW. Centers for constructive dialogue are popping up everywhere, so UW should not just be sheep that follows the trends. Do something bold and different by staking our priority on academics and pursuing truth where ever it takes us. The principles document is a good start but follow it with an equally academic focused center (if one at all).

Trying to adopt "Institutional Neutrality" is just pandering to right-wing authoritarians that are attempting to dismantle Higher Education. A lot of this language is an open invitation for bigots and extremists to test the boundaries of free speech in an attempt to make the campus inhospitable for minority groups and LGBTQIA+ people. They will skirt the line of what is considered protected speech, just barely outside the defined list of unprotected speech. This also seems like a mechanism to punish staff and faculty that are supportive of our LGBTQIA+ students, as supporting basic human rights is explicitly against right-wing ideology. UW has an obligation to protect its marginalized students against hate and abuse, but this proposal is giving carte blanche for explicitly anti-LGBTQIA+ and anti-minority groups to do and say whatever they want.

I have deep concerns around the concept "Institutional Neutrality" No provision or mention of hate speech in the document

The information on exhibits, displays, and events was not quite robust enough. It needs to be more clear and protect units that sponsor events and displays, and outline a process for protest or request to remove items.

It is not constructive to create a committee that normalizes fascist narratives. I am deeply offended that our institution is seeking to force LGBTQ+ communities and other minority groups to accept the violent rhetoric of those who call for their expulsion.

Operationalization. Such as the Student Code of Conduct outlines what conduct students are allowed/disallowed. There needs to be the same standards set in place for alumni, staff, faculty, committees, and visitors. ALL visitors.

The first sentence of the Statement of the University of Wyoming Principles, "From their very founding, both the State of Wyoming and the University of Wyoming (UW) have regarded equity as a source of strength and pride," ignores the role that race (and other immutable characteristics) has played in the creation of the State of Wyoming and the founding of the institution. See Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) Towards Critical Race Theory of Education. Also, the dispossession of property was a form of white supremacy regarding Land Grant Institutions. Annamma et al. (2016) asserted that at historically white institutions, administrative responses are often color-evasive and attempt to downplay the role race or other biases may have played in an incident (Annamma et al., 2016). Further, as a result, college and university campuses continue to serve as a location where free speech purists, those in favor of hate speech regulations, and those in the middle heatedly debate the issue (Stokes & Davis, 2022). Free speech purists), who are also proponents of harmful expression on HE campuses, could be considered advocates of intolerance, choosing to be provocateurs despite being aware of the harm caused by their displays (Welshon, 2019). Concerning the second statement regarding the Wyoming Constitution and access to UW, please see: Liz Byrd, First Black Woman in Wyoming's Legislature | WyoHistory.org, Story | The Black 14. In regards to the "nonpartisan and nonsectarian" commitment, please see the UW BOT individual member information pages and listed political affiliations: Members of the Board of Trustees (uwyo.edu) Regarding the "Code of the West," please revise and see public statements from some stakeholders to determine if these public statements show respect for open, civil, and constructive exchange. Also, it should be noted that promoting rugged individualism as opposed to cooperation is promoting the exact opposite of an open and collaborative learning environment. Concerning institutional neutrality, there seems to be a failure to recognize the harm caused by racist and other forms of hate speech causes to those targeted. Welshon (2019) noted that the harm caused by hate speech is still apparent regardless of the protections offered by the First Amendment. "This adherence to impartiality reaffirms the intellectual freedom of all at UW to seek and receive information without restriction and enjoy unfettered access to all expression of ideas through which any side of a question, cause, or movement may be explored." "In both teaching and scholarly endeavors, partisan interests—whether those of University personnel or those of government, religious, corporate, or political groups—should never supersede sound academic judgment, principles, and procedures." Again, see the UW BOT pages and listed party affiliation, furthermore, look at the political interests that "assisted" in these recommendations and explain to me how this statement is logical. "UW does not shield individuals from the free expression of ideas and criticism, including that which community members may find uncomfortable, disagreeable, or even deeply offensive. The expression of criticism must respect the legal right of others to express themselves without serving to obstruct, censor, or otherwise interfere with the rights of others to hear those ideas." In the way universities appear to tolerate intolerance, they must also recognize the harm caused and limit abuses to campus community members, and threaten institutional standards (Welshon, 2019).

4.1. It should fall under the articulating principles portion of the section, not to mention that free speech should not be constricted by an institutional view of social values. Values are important, but more important to an individual than to an institution.

## Q4 - Please use the space below to provide additional feedback on the report provided by the Freedom of Expression, Intellectual Freedom, and Constructive Dialogue Working Group.

Please use the space below to provide additional feedback on the report pro...

I approached the report with some skepticism, concerned that there would be ways in which censorship and political preferences would be inserted in a sneaky way while at the same time trying to appear to promote freedom of expression. Overall I was rather pleased with the document and would be proud to see the University of Wyoming promoting these principles. The only way a University can work and hold the public trust is to provide a venue for all ideas to be heard, considered, and evaluated. I am happy with the committee's work and hope that in coming years people can point to the University of Wyoming as an exemplar of the freedom of expression that can be emulated.

Although people can legally say what they want, our campus does not have to tolerate all forms of speech. People in this community have been the target of racist, homophobic, and transphobic speech and slurs. Saying that certain people, such as our trans community, should not exist is not a part of civil discourse. It is an intolerant rant and UW does not need to protect the speech of these individuals-- it needs to protect the people whose existence and right to live is being threatened-- not simply their opinion or political affinations. This draft does not define hate speech. I believe that is needed to create better protections for vulnerable communities at UW and in Laramie. I was disappointed by this draft and hope that the final will do more to address hate on our campus. Here is a definition for hate speech if you need it: "abusive or threatening speech or writing that expresses prejudice on the basis of ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or similar grounds..."

This issue is not new to UW. Thirteen years ago the UW administration wrestled with a far more difficult crisis. The Academic Affairs website has resources that address the matter. See the following link: [https://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/\\_files/docs/Freedom\\_of\\_expression\\_thoughts.pdf](https://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/_files/docs/Freedom_of_expression_thoughts.pdf). UW's American Heritage Center has a more complete record of the 2010 events.

A simple addition to section 2 might be to include a rating of faculty's commitment to free speech, open inquiry, and viewpoint diversity on their end of semester course evaluations. It might not do much, but at least it would incentivize faculty to consider their actions in this regard. You might include some direct engagement with the Branding Iron in section 4. They are theoretically the voice of free speech on campus, but don't really seem to embrace that opportunity the best they could. The editorial section looks pretty sparse last I checked.

To be honest, the committee did a better job than I thought they would and so should be commended for their efforts. While I do support institutional neutrality and the robust expression of all ideas, I think it is important to keep in mind that often that robust expression, and a "neutral" stance taken by the university, results in excessive harm to often marginalized communities. Yes, someone may have the right to say something racist, or homophobic, or misogynistic, and in the abstract it may make sense and even be desirable for the university to try to remain neutral, but in the reality of one's actual life those things can be extremely harmful and devastating and can even result in the lessening of speech by those who are targeted. (See eg. Charles R. Lawrence III, "If He Hollers Let Him Go: Regulating Racist Speech on Campus, 1990 Duke L.J. 431) Which doesn't mean that the approach taken in the committee's document isn't a good one. But I do hope as we travel along this path that the university will provide sufficient support (in ways quite frankly it has largely failed to do thus far) to those in vulnerable communities who are often the targets of free speech. And I do hope that the statements in this document that purport to try to build an inclusive community will actually be more than just words and platitudes and result in concrete, effective, actions that the university will actually take to make it so and to make such inclusivity and support are a part of the culture and the way the university does business. Again, I thought the committee did a good job on the report, but I'll reserve judgment to see if this becomes anything more than just words as we move forward. I sincerely hope that this will be the first step in implementing policies and taking actions that will actually effectuate the many good things articulated in the committee's document.

Perhaps there should be recommendations on how members of the public should learn about the recommendations? Many members of the public come to the campus as a spot to vacation, and it would be beneficial to encourage them to see it as an area of learning where they should respect those who are working and learning here.

I am deeply disappointed.

Please use the space below to provide additional feedback on the report pro...

While part of the draft recommendations include creating an "Oral History Documentary" of the Working Group, in order to "provide an inside look at the process and discussions" of the group— these conversations should have been made public from the beginning. Allowing students, in particular, to see the development of principles that impact them most is key to transparency. Further, there needs to be a more thorough rationale for the selection of the group's student members. While a representative from ASUW was a member, there's no explanation for how other students were selected. Or, rather, why only ONE student was requested to be a member. Or why that student, despite running a conservative political group on campus (whose national members have advocated for the harassment of another UW student) was somehow an adequate characterization of our student body as a whole.

Dear Constructive Dialogue Working Group, please find the American Council of Trustees and Alumni's Gold Standard for Freedom of Expression available here: <https://www.goacta.org/2022/09/actas-gold-standard-for-freedom-of-expression/>

I feel like this draft does not yet include a strong enough definition of what qualifies as discrimination, harassment, and inflammatory dialogue. In my time at UW, I've seen all three of these things happen, but no one in upper admin seems willing to name them as such, which leaves the folks affected still in need of justice. Will this draft address (under the header of "practicing") how it will try to get everyone involved in incidents where intellectual freedom causes harm back to a place of mutual thriving?

As a professor at this university I live in fear that the state will attack my discipline for its own political gain; that students in my classes will stir up online hate mobs against me by publishing information about me online; and that the university will offer only token protection if this happens. I am not interested in any discussion of free speech on campus that does not foreground these issues.

Administration and the university need to provide statements, support, and not enable speech that runs counter to safety and support of our members.

In 2010, the University of Wyoming restricted the free speech of Bill Ayers. Judge William Downes of the U.S. District Court for the District of Wyoming ruled that the university acted unconstitutionally. In that ruling he prescribed the free speech policy that UW is constitutionally required to hold as an agency of the government. "Mr. Ayers is a citizen of the United States who wishes to speak, and he need not offer any more justification than that." After this ruling, the University adopted its current free expression (free speech) policy that is as expansive as possible. It states: "all members of the University community are afforded the broadest possible latitude to speak, write, challenge, and learn in a civil and respectful manner." It elaborated by saying, "we must support an academic and workplace climate where ideas and opinions can be expressed, debated, and protested openly. The entire campus is a 'free speech zone'". ([https://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/\\_files/docs/tp\\_statement\\_on\\_free\\_speech.pdf](https://www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs/_files/docs/tp_statement_on_free_speech.pdf)) This language seems to be adapted from the University of Chicago's 2014 Principles on Freedom of Expression. <https://provost.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/documents/reports/FOECommitteeReport.pdf> This has been the standard of free speech formally adopted by more than 100 universities and colleges in America. Nowhere in the Working Group's study is there a critique of UW's current statement that would warrant any changes to it. Any significant change to policy ought, as a minimum, demonstrate that the current statement is inadequate. It should further demonstrate that the proposed change is an actual improvement on the current state of affairs. This study does neither. Nevertheless, the new proposed statement (Study, pp 10-11) makes significant changes. It deletes current strong language and substitutes far weaker protections. Currently, "all members of the University community are afforded the broadest possible latitude to speak, write, challenge, and learn in a civil and respectful manner." and, "we must support an academic and workplace climate where ideas and opinions can be expressed, debated, and protested openly. The entire campus is a 'free speech zone'" This language is deleted in the proposed statement. In its place we find: - "This adherence to impartiality reaffirms the intellectual freedom of all at UW to seek and receive information without restriction and enjoy unfettered access to all expression of ideas. . ." This statement only reaffirms "seeking," "receiving," and "access," but does not explicitly affirm the rights of "speaking" or "expressing" such information. - The proposed statement speaks of "the protection of faculty members' freedom in teaching, research, and deliberation" but omits similar protections for ALL members of the UW community—including students and campus visitors. - The proposed statement adds that, "In both teaching and scholarly endeavors, partisan interests—whether those of University personnel or those of government, religious, corporate, or political groups—should never supersede sound academic judgment, principles, and procedures." The use of the words "should never" implies the restricting the speech of those who purportedly violate this principle. But it does not say who defines or adjudicates what specific statements might be judged to violate these "judgement[s], principles, and procedures." - "UW recognizes and respects the liberty of students, faculty, and staff as private citizens to express their opinions and identities" and "does not shield individuals from the free expression of ideas and criticism. . ." Here, again, protections for off-campus visitors and presenters are not included. Moreover, the language of "shield[ing]. . ." from . . . expression" does not correspond to the language of expression. If UW recognizes and respects certain rights of expression, it should correspondingly disavow its responsibility to shield individuals from encountering those expressions. The proposed statement does not do this. Since it explicitly recognizes the right to express "opinions and identities," it should also clearly state that it has no right to shield individuals from hearing challenges to these "opinions and identities." - When citing the "University of Chicago's 2014 Principles on Freedom of Expression," only its restrictions are cited: "the freedom to debate and discuss the merits of competing ideas does not, of course, mean that individuals may say whatever they wish, whenever they wish." The proposed statement does not cite and affirm the strong protections of the Chicago principles. Why not? Just before acknowledging specific legal restrictions on free speech, the Chicago statement said: "It is not the proper role of the University to attempt to shield individuals from ideas and opinions they find unwelcome, disagreeable, or even deeply offensive." (UC 2014 Principles) This is considerably stronger than the new proposed statement (above). - Furthermore, the proposed statement significantly adds restrictions to the list currently governing UW. The proposal says: "Free expression has legal limitations, some examples of which include expression that is obscene or defamatory; constitutes a genuine threat or discriminatory harassment; incites imminent violence or other lawless action; unjustifiably invades privacy; interferes with the free expression rights of others; or otherwise stands in violation of the law." Compare this to the list of legal limitations offered in UW's current statement: "Expression that (a) defames a specific individual, (b) truly threatens and/or incites violence, (c) infringes on the privacy rights of employees or students, or (d) interferes with the free speech rights of others does not pursue either of these goals." The proposed statement adds "obscene" and "discriminatory harassment," while downgrading "infringe[ment] of privacy rights" to "unjustifiably invad[ing] privacy." All three of these changes significantly weaken free expression protections. Judge Downes' clear and simple rule of free speech that he gave the university in 2010 should be stated clearly in any subsequent policy statements: If any citizen of the united states wishes to speak, we need not offer any more justification than that. GENERAL OBSERVATION AND CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM: Because the proposed statement attempts to deal with free expression and civil discourse simultaneously, it achieves neither. Freedom of speech is a constitutional right, while civil discourse is a learned skill. The university's mandate is to protect the constitutional right of free speech while teaching the skill of civil discourse through its academic program. If the skill is not known by the students, the university should not restrict free speech to compensate. A better strategy would be to improve UW's teaching of logic and rhetorical skills through the study of those who model the civil discourse (rhetoric and logic) that the university wishes to inculcate. Curriculum and study materials that model poor logic and use uncivil rhetoric should be removed from the classroom. This can be done without infringing the right to free speech. For these reasons, section 4 of the study, "Practicing the Principles," is also concerning. This section proposes a number of ways to circumvent the university institution in order to bring about the desired speech. But it is already the university's mandate to teach civil discourse. Bringing in outside teachers by-passes the institutional work of hiring sound teachers. Pressuring student groups and extra-curricular clubs to do the university's job veers into the danger of coerced speech, prohibited by the First Amendment. Pressuring university professors to participate in ECTL seminars and the like infringes on the very academic freedom espoused in the current free expression guidelines. Without individually evaluating all ten proposals under section 4, suffice it to say that a clearer statement on free speech, and a clearer vision of the university's mandate to teach civil discourse would make section 4 look substantially different.

Please use the space below to provide additional feedback on the report pro...

This whole thing seems to be a large waste of time and resources that could have been focused on our core mission: educating students. It is a good thing to have clear policies, but couldn't we just have signed onto the Chicago principles and called it a day? The idea to have a speaker series (expensive and no students will go) is a waste of time and money. The notion of yet another Center, which will inevitably be abandoned and languish in bureaucratic obscurity, and will be potentially staffed by a coordinator who will add to administrative bloat, is such a lazy cop-out. I fear that the kind of both-sides-ism that fuels the university free speech debate will just lead to further polarization. We should focus our resources on the classroom. Both students and faculty should know their rights, but my sense (supported by the poll) is that the classroom experience is going pretty well. Every dollar we waste on pointless speaker series, centers, and coordinators is a dollar we're not using to provide an education. And every hour of faculty time wasted on semester long committees is an hour we're not using to fulfill our central mission.

I think I'd take care to stress that this effort isn't just something new at UW. Some people have the idea that a college education is dangerous, and maybe it is a threat to them. Except for the Black 14 situation, I don't think UW was ever the kind of place where people have been punished or censored for voicing their opinions -- at least not any more so than the general culture. If it were me, I'd just be sure not to give the impression that there was something wrong on campus that has to be fixed now.

Section 3.3 is a great idea about civics courses to educate students about their Constitutional Rights. What about adding this education to Constitution Day?

It's well crafted, following a logical and defensible development of what they recommend and why it's needed. The Working Group did a good job.

It mentions that perhaps more training can be done with staff, so who are you talking about? Only full time staff? What about part time staff? How much training would we get? How often would training be reviewed? Just a lot left unsaid.

If people are emotionally compromised or insulted by hearing someone else's opinions/viewpoints, that is on them, and they have the right to refute or walk away and choose not to listen. There are already laws in place and police to protect people from harm and harassment.

The document is well-written and a very good start.

I am very impressed and pleased the UW leadership is actively engaged in stating what free expression is and why it is so important not only in academics but in citizenship too. I recommend reading *The Coddling of The American Mind: How good intentions but bad Ideas are setting up a generation for failure*. It is written by a first amendment lawyer and a social psychologist. I read it in undergrad in 2017 and it really encouraged me to listen and seek out opposing view points as well as understand that feelings are not always accurate to the facts of the situation. It's a pretty balanced and engaging book!

We don't need to have our hands held and treated like kids. Seems like a way to control the population to me.

Overall, I liked the work done in the report. As long as the statements remain apolitical when they are eventually implemented, I think they will go a long way to protecting the rights of all students. When it is finally implemented, I think the wording should follow the patterns set by the Wyoming Code of Ethics -- brief, but meaningful, and in a way that cannot (reasonably) be misinterpreted.

I think the working group did a great job on this important task, and the fact that this work was undertaken to begin with reinforces that intellectual freedom is a priority at the University of Wyoming.

The report appears to be well thought out and reflects a comprehensive effort on the part of the working group.

This entire list of recommendations is a myriad of buzzwords and performative virtue signaling that fails to actually address any issue. I will believe any substantive change when I see it, not when it gets "recommended" in the form of a string of weasel words in a politically performative "working group."

Thank you for your hard work

I think an emphasis on intellectual rigor, and the obligation of faculty to present the results of rigorous work, as part of the university's institutional neutrality, is essential. In other words, our work is academic and dispassionate. It MUST be rigorously produced, and when produced through rigorous and peer evaluated process it must be shared.

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On campus Posters should not be restricted based on subjective notions of what constitutes "content neutrality."

Consider adopting a gifts acceptance policy to ensure faculty review of gifts with connections to the curriculum to reflect the University's commitments to institutional neutrality, academic freedom, and intellectual freedom. -There needs to be clarification on gifts for retirement purposes or rewards. Why does an item that is given as a gift then have to be taken as taxes later on employees, when the party responsible for the gift should be paying any taxes? It's a GIFT. It shouldn't be a burden on employees later to deal with.

We need a statement that everyone. including Trustees, has to accept Free Speech.

It would be helpful to be able to identify as BOTH a student and staff. Again, as I expressed above it would take HOURS and many notes to tease out the important points in this document

Overbearing with many provisions/recommendations that could make situation worse rather than better.

Hate speech limits the freedom of expression of the silent minority voices, because hate speech often comes from the "in-group" majority in a societally-given position of power.

We should advertise or broadcast our commitment to free expression principle statewide and nationally. Perhaps visitors can access UW's commitment on our homepage.

"The devil is in the details" -- integration of these principles into culture and activities of UW will be key for success.

Very detailed and thoughtful and worth the tons of work that you have put into it.

Overall good, but I think many of the basic arguments are arbitrary and can be distorted semantically to shut down speech on certain topics. For example, gender politics, given the ongoing lawsuit with Chi Omega involving the transgender student; clearly many people in the community and University oppose the integration of trans women into female only spaces. Discrimination and harassment are often used to remove the right to free speech in discussions about gender politics and trans inclusion, using the rationale that denying a trans person's self identity constitutes discrimination. At its core, progressive gender politics is not entirely scientifically validated, and trans rights will inevitably be incommensurate with the rights of other people, such as the right to maintain female only spaces such as sororities and athletic teams. My point is not that trans voices should not be heard or that trans individuals should not be given respect and rights afforded to anyone else, my point is that this is an ongoing cultural conversation which is not as simple as bigotry v. acceptance. I fear that calls to discrimination may be used to silence people with genuine concerns about the calculated erosion of sex and gender categories (not necessarily an overall negative) in our society. In addition, the redefining of words like 'violence', which once meant to enact or imply physical harm, to now being used to describe simply questioning the validity of a person's self expression. I believe that terms such as "harassment", "discrimination", "violence", and others need to be explicitly defined in order for the University policy on freedom of expression to not be captured for use by only some political views based on semantics.

I'm a bit concerned about enforcement of these topics/recommendations, and implementation of them. I definitely agree there should be constructive dialogue/meeting/discussion, but the obvious clash between left/right seems to escalate immediately. Facts need to be presented, discussed, and considered. Feelings are not facts, but I see a whole lot of "feelings" represented in certain areas, without much discussion using facts.

Anyone wishing to speak on the UW campus that is not a currently enrolled member of the student body should require approval and permitting of intentions and rhetoric before hand.

The report was too much to read through. It almost seemed as though it were purposefully not written for a layman to get through.

Overall, this is a very good document. Kudos to those who led this effort.

Please use the space below to provide additional feedback on the report pro...

On behalf of the James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal, I applaud the recommendations put forth by the University of Wyoming's Freedom of Expression, Intellectual Freedom, and Constructive Dialogue Working Group. These recommendations reflect a profound understanding of the foundational principles that underpin successful universities and thriving democratic societies. By championing institutional neutrality, intellectual freedom, academic freedom, freedom of expression, civil discourse, and constructive dialogue, this initiative underscores the critical importance of fostering an environment where diverse voices can be heard, ideas can be explored, and knowledge can flourish. These recommendations will restore the pursuit of truth as the guiding principle in all of the university's actions. I encourage everyone at UW to embrace these recommendations and help build a university where freedom of expression, intellectual freedom, academic freedom, and constructive dialogue are not only cherished ideals but practical realities.

THANK YOU!! I appreciate this report, and the clear support/emphasis of the Wyoming Way for independent thinking, but also the added consideration for context, respect, safety, and legality. I like that the first acknowledgement is for the right for differing opinions to exist with the understanding that HOW we go about that does have expected guidelines for behavior. I am deeply pleased and relieved to see the language regarding the expectations for the UW community and specifically students to understand that free speech, ideas and discussion are allowed, supported, encouraged and expected REGARDLESS of whether or not we like or agree with them, as long as it's done respectfully and in the correct format / process / behavior. I would suggest that part of the student and UW community training could also focus on the idea that we should expect to be exposed to differing ideas, especially in a classroom or working on a team or in an office with any group of people as we're all diverse and unique, as long as it's valid info and the presentation / discourse is conducted correctly. We have a wide and diverse community, and there can be cultural, religious, or even age differences that cause differing groups to be surprised at seeing/hearing such differences in ideas, and often they either don't know/understand to expect it, or don't know/understand how to cope with the experience or participate in it, or may not understand the references. For example, one culture's slang/common talk not being clear to another culture/language so the discussion is not understood or is miss-understood.

We are so incredibly lucky to have Martha McCaughey. I don't know her well, but in a few conversations, it's clear she knows more about this area than everyone else combined. I learned that she is a national expert on these topics with a long history of publishing on these issues and advising administrations on related policies. Her expertise is all over the principles and recommendations in this report. And to hear her explain the complexities is truly educational. We are fortunate that she was at UW to lead this effort.

Freedom of speech is a double-edged sword and requires a population that is capable of telling fact from fiction to ensure that volatile ideas do not spread. Unfortunately, in the US a good portion of the population cannot tell fact from fiction, and in fact believe insane conspiracy theories that are tearing at the fabric of our democracy. Media literacy needs to be taught to everyone, our students need to be able to identify bad sources of information and arguments based on bad information. Allowing ideas from both sides of the aisle to be discussed is, in theory, a noble pursuit, but when all of the ideas from the right-wing are based on their opposition to human rights there really is nothing to discuss, and giving them a platform to spread their hate in the name of "free speech" does not benefit anyone and, again, will just be people/groups abusing free speech to make the campus unwelcoming to minority groups and members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Wyoming already is not a safe place for these vulnerable groups, bigots are already moving here in droves, this language is obviously pandering to hateful people on the right, signaling that they can come here and spread their volatile ideas. "Institutional Neutrality" is a right-wing idea, and thus is very much not neutral, and this proposal is specifically geared towards placating the right-wing members of our Legislature and Board of Trustees that seem to think hate speech is an acceptable form of speech, and whose ultimate goal is to dismantle Higher Education. Education is inherently left leaning, as critical thinking, knowledge, and the truth are antithetical to right-wing ideology. Do not give in to the erosion of education, and by extension, our democracy.

I fear this is a move to placate politicians who view the university as "too woke". When you put "Institutional Neutrality" into Google, the first results are from heavily biased sources arguing why it should be the rule of every university. I could easily see how this will become a slippery slope to the outright harassment of students with marginalized identities in the name of "Free Expression". We already have an image problem, both as a state and a university, this will continue to do nothing but drive the best and brightest from our state to other places where they do feel welcome like CSU and UC Boulder. The university has a responsibility to keep the students who attend safe from actual harm caused by intolerance, not protecting hurt feelings caused by someone telling you that your ideas are bad.

As a long-time librarian at UW, I felt that protections for library collections were not present in this document. The ability of librarians to provide access to a wide variety of resources and materials was directly challenged by the WY legislature this year. While that bill did not pass, I think a robust statement of the value of diverse and varied research collections is warranted in this document. National guidance can be found at <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/intellectual>

Dissolve the committee and dismiss the report.

Wyomingites are a "live and let live" type of people. We mind our own business, we do what is fair and for the betterment of our communities. Students coming in from other states/nations may not have the same core ideals, but many adapt quickly through immersion. The general rule is "harm none" when it comes to expression, intellectual freedom, and constructive dialog.



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I find it interesting how powerless this plan will be in protecting targeted populations from the evidenced harm caused by unregulated freedom of expression causes historically oppressed communities. The opening statements are loaded and filled with false information I believe was designed to, from the very start, derail any real effort to tackle the issue. Instead, I see a stereotypical and white-washed plan that does not specifically include any mitigation and response policy. I suspect, based on the governing board's political affiliations and the political and stated ideologies of many on this committee, that this was only an attempt to subvert the will of those who strive for true equity in the face of such violence in favor of a small, vocal, and powerful few. Based on a short observation, I have more to say, but as most of the campus was left out of this "free speech" debate, I must respond via research.

The report was incredibly non-specific. I don't see much serious opportunity for practical implementation of the report.

**End of Report**