

FREE SPEECH POLICY ANNUAL REPORT 2023/2024

Carleton University cares deeply about freedom of speech as an essential part of a dynamic university community. Our university is enriched by the voicing of many perspectives that reflect the diverse body of people who are welcomed here and who form our community. Freedom of speech is vital because debates, unconstrained by preordained conclusions or threats of exclusion, are fundamental to the pursuit of truth, knowledge, and understanding that are the hallmarks of excellence in academia. As such freedom of speech is a deeply held Carleton value.

Carleton has a long history of hosting vigorous debates on a wide variety of issues while maintaining a respectful atmosphere for the voicing of contending perspectives. To that end, the University's Free Speech Policy ("the Policy") is a framework that regroups in one document what was already in place prior to the Policy's adoption and practiced through various policies at Carleton. The Policy summarizes the framework for existing policies while confirming the University's longstanding commitment to freedom of speech at Carleton with the boundaries set by law which dates back to the institution's creation.

Events on Campus and No Complaints

According to the official university calendar, an estimated 292 official, advertised non-curriculum events have been held on campus or online as at July 31, 2024. Not all events are listed in the official calendar. Faculties, Departments, staff, faculty, students, student associations and the public do not list all their events in the calendar. Since events are organized and promoted by Faculties, Departments, student associations, individuals and other groups across the campus, there is no accurate way of estimating the total number of events that have taken place since August 1, 2023.

Echoing the University and its community's commitment to free speech, there have been no reported incidents on campus and, to date, the University has not received any complaints under the Policy.

Enclosed with this report at Appendix A below are the University's answers to the specific questions posed by HEQCO.

Appendix A: Freedom of Speech Annual Report Template (2024)

As indicated in the December 14, 2018 and September 12, 2018 memos from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, each of Ontario's publicly-assisted colleges and universities is to prepare an annual report on the implementation of a free speech policy. Please use this template; you may append additional documents or institution-specific information as you see fit.

The institutional Freedom of Speech Annual Report will be a public document and should respect privacy obligations. Please report on events or incidents that took place between **August 1, 2023** and **July 31, 2024**.

The reports are to be posted on the institution's website and submitted to the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) by **September 3, 2024**.

Please submit your institution's annual report and the link to its location on your website to submissions@heqco.ca. Please reach out to HEQCO at the same address with any questions.

Section A: Institutional Policy

You may append additional documentation or institution-specific information as you see fit.

Has your institution amended its free speech policy (or policy framework) since the time of your 2023 report? If so, please explain the reason for the change and provide the link to its location on your institutional website.

Response: No amendments have been made to Policy since its adoption on November 30, 2018.

Where are members of the institutional community (or guests) directed when there is a free-speech-related question or complaint about an institutional event? Please provide contact information.

Response: Questions regarding the interpretation and application of the Policy, including the appropriate complaint process, are the responsibility of the Provost and Vice- President (Academic). The Provost and Vice-President (Academic) can be reached at provost@carleton.ca or +1-613-520-2600 x 3806

What is your institution’s policy on holding events where there are security concerns? To your knowledge, were there any instances where a non-curricular event did not proceed due to security concerns or their related costs?

Response: The security and safety of Carleton’s community is a priority. University community members may engage in peaceful assemblies and demonstrations as well as make reasonable use of University facilities in accordance with its policies. As was in place before the implementation of the Policy, costs relating to safety and security activities are borne by the host. When the University hosts events or speakers which require security, it assumes such costs; when an external party uses University space for an event that requires security, that party is responsible for those costs. The implementation of the Policy did not change these activities. As set out in our Policy, of necessity, in order to achieve its essential purpose, the University must be able to operate free from unreasonable interference from any person or group. Therefore, the University reserves the right to reasonably regulate the use of facilities and the time, place and manner of speech. The University is not aware of any events that did not proceed due to security concerns or cost issues.

Section B: Complaints

You may append additional documentation or institution-specific information as you see fit.

Between **August 1, 2023** and **July 31, 2024**, did any member of the institutional community (or guests) make an official complaint about free speech? If yes, please provide a general description that protects the privacy of complainants.

Response: The University has not received any official free speech complaints.

If there has been an official complaint (or more than one):

What were the issues under consideration? Please identify any points of contention (e.g., security costs, safety, student unions and/or groups, operational requirements, etc.).

Response: The University has not received any official free speech complaints.

How did the institution manage the free speech complaint(s)? Was the complaint addressed using the procedures set out in the policy? How were issues resolved?

Response: There were no complaints. Please see above.

Section C: Summary Data

Please provide the following summary data for free-speech-related official complaints received by the institution:

Number of official complaints received under the free speech policy relating to curricular and non-curricular events.	None
Number of official complaints reviewed that did not proceed.	None
Number of official complaints where the institution determined that the free speech policy was not followed appropriately.	None
Number of official complaints under the free speech policy that resulted in the institution applying disciplinary or other institutional measures.	None
To your knowledge, were any free speech complaints forwarded to the Ontario Ombudsman?	Not aware of any complaints

To the best of your ability, please provide an estimate of the number of **non-curricular events** held at the institution either online or in person between **August 1, 2023 and July 31, 2024**. Non-curricular events include, for example, invited speakers, sporting events, rallies, student life/student affairs events, conferences, etc., as opposed to regular events held as part of an academic program or course.

Response: The University has an official calendar maintained by the Department of Communications that allows events to be publicly posted for purposes of bringing events to the attention of community members. Between August 1, 2023 and July 31, 2024, there have been an estimated 292 official, advertised non-curricular events listed that the University is aware of taking place on campus or online. Note: not all events are listed in the Calendar. Faculties, departments, staff, faculty, students, student associations and the public do not list all their events in the calendar. Therefore, it is likely that the number of events was much higher than the estimate.

Institutional Comments (if any).

Response: Carleton University is enriched by the voicing of many perspectives that reflect the diverse body of people who form our community. Freedom of speech is vital because debates, unconstrained by preordained conclusions or threats of exclusion, are fundamental to the pursuit of truth, knowledge, and understanding that are the hallmarks of excellence in academia. As such freedom of speech is a deeply held Carleton value that is considered essential to our academic mission