



Board of Trustees

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Resolution on the Affirmation of Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech

WHEREAS, Chapter VI, Section 600(1) of the Code of the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina (*the Code*) establishes that the University of North Carolina System is “dedicated to the transmission and advancement of knowledge and understanding” and that “Academic Freedom is essential to the achievement of these purposes”; and

WHEREAS, Section 600(1) of *the Code* further establishes that the University of North Carolina “supports and encourages freedom of inquiry for faculty members and students, to the end that they may responsibly pursue these goals through teaching, learning, research, discussion, and publication, free from internal or external restraints that would unreasonably restrict their academic endeavor”; and

WHEREAS, Section 600(2) of *the Code* requires the University of North Carolina and its constituent institutions to “protect faculty and students in their responsible exercise of the freedom to teach, to learn, and otherwise to seek and speak the truth”; and

WHEREAS, Section 600(3) of *the Code* acknowledges that faculty and students “share in the responsibility for maintaining an environment in which academic freedom flourishes and in which the rights of each member of the academic community are respected”;

WHEREAS, Sections 300.5.1 and 1300.8 of *The UNC Policy Manual*, as well as N.C.G.S. § 116-300 and 126-14.6, mandate that universities do not require employees, applicants, or students to affirmatively ascribe or adhere to beliefs or principles regarding matters of contemporary political debate or social action;

WHEREAS, the University of Chicago’s July 2014 Report of the Committee on Freedom of Expression (the Chicago Principles) acknowledges a commitment to free and open inquiry on all matters, and acknowledges guarantees to all members of the University community the broadest possible latitude to speak, write, listen, challenge, and learn except insofar as limitations on that freedom are necessary to the functioning of the University; and

WHEREAS, the University of Chicago’s Kalven Committee Report on the University’s Role in Political and Social Action (the “Report”) recognizes that the neutrality of the University as an Institution on social and political issues “arises out of respect for free inquiry and the obligation to cherish a diversity of viewpoints” and further acknowledges “a heavy presumption against the university taking collective action or expressing opinions on the political and social issues of the day,” while, at the same time, acknowledging that in extraordinary circumstances the University has a duty to speak to defend the very mission of the University;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The Elizabeth City State University Board of Trustees reaffirms its commitment to academic freedom and freedom of expression as embodied in *the Code, The UNC Policy Manual*, N.C. General Statutes, the Kalven Committee Report on the University's Role in Political and Social Action, which is attached hereto as Attachment A, and the Chicago Principles, which is attached hereto as Attachment B.

Approved by the Elizabeth City State University Board of Trustees on October 16, 2023

Dr. Stephanie D. B. Johnson

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Chairman, ECSU Board of Trustees