

# DIALOGUE MATTERS

BRIDGING VOICES AT UWL



NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION 2025









## UWL MISSION

The mission of the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse is to provide “a challenging, dynamic, and diverse learning environment in which the entire university community is fully engaged in supporting student success.” In pursuit of this mission, UWL encourages and protects diverse perspectives, the free flow of ideas, and open discussion among students, faculty, staff, and other members of the campus community. Constructive engagement with differing perspectives in a climate of free inquiry is essential to the pursuit of knowledge. UWL is committed to providing all members of the university community the broadest possible latitude to speak, write, listen, challenge and learn.

**For more information visit [uwla.edu/go/mission](http://uwla.edu/go/mission)**

## UWL VALUES

***Mens Corpusque*** fosters student growth in both mind and body.

***The Wisconsin Idea*** asserts that education should impact individuals *beyond* the classroom.

***Diversity, equity, inclusion, and engagement*** incorporates *global* viewpoints.

A sense of ***work and life balance*** to promote *quality of life*.

## PURPOSE OF THIS ZINE

To foster a resilient campus community where students engage in civil discourse that deepens learning and reflects the Universities of Wisconsin’s commitment to academic freedom, free expression, and inclusive dialogue. Students will reflect on their path to UWL while learning about their rights to speak and learn on an array of matters.

# DEDICATION TO FREE SPEECH AND CIVIL DIALOGUE

At the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse (UWL), we are steadfast in our commitment to academic freedom and freedom of expression. We understand that encountering new, different, or opposing perspectives can be challenging and uncomfortable; this is an essential aspect of the educational experience. We encourage all members of our campus community to engage with diverse viewpoints, affirming our commitment to intellectual exploration, and to take responsibility for their expression's impact on others.

To support this commitment, we take a multifaceted approach to foster a culture of open dialogue and engagement, including but not limited to:



## **MURPHY LIBRARY GUIDES**

Offers a range of resource guides on topics such as free speech, voting, the Constitution, and anti-racism to support our educational mission.



## **FREE SPEECH WEEK**

The Joint Committee for Civil Discourse coordinates Free Speech Week to emphasize the importance of free expression and critical thinking. The committee plans additional events throughout the academic year.



## **SOCIAL JUSTICE WEEK**

Organizers coordinate events for faculty, staff, and students to share research and stories, discuss social justice, and explore how identities shape community experiences, aiming to inspire actionable social change.



## **THE DISCUSSION PROJECT**

Provides professional development for faculty and staff to enhance facilitation skills, ensuring diverse voices are heard and students are actively engaged.



### **BIAS SUPPORT AND EDUCATION TEAM (BSET)**

Addresses forms of bias through campus assessment, impactful programming and comprehensive support to develop a community of belonging.



### **CENTER FOR ADVANCING TEACHING AND LEARNING (CATL)**

Offers guidance for managing challenging classroom conversations, helping educators foster productive and respectful discussions.



### **LEADERSHIP AND INVOLVEMENT CENTER**

Engages students in leadership, involvement, and service opportunities such as volunteering, UWL Votes, and the Civil Discourse Program



**WICCD FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION MODULE**

# ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

## **AGREEMENTS FOR DISCUSSION**

Stay engaged, be curious and present

Be aware of intent and impact

Check your contributions

Care for yourself and others

## **WHAT IS YOUR STORY?**

What is your hometown, state, country?

Who are the key people in your life?

What are you planning to major in?

What is something that makes you unique? **Or** What are you passionate about?

What connects you with others?

**YOUR UWL STORY'S TITLE**

# WORKSPACE



# THE FIRST AMENDMENT

*"CONGRESS SHALL MAKE NO LAW RESPECTING AN ESTABLISHMENT OF **RELIGION**, OR PROHIBITING THE FREE EXERCISE THEREOF; OR ABRIDGING THE FREEDOM OF **SPEECH**, OR OF THE **PRESS**; OR THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE PEACEABLY TO **ASSEMBLE**, AND TO PETITION THE GOVERNMENT FOR A REDRESS OF GRIEVANCES."*

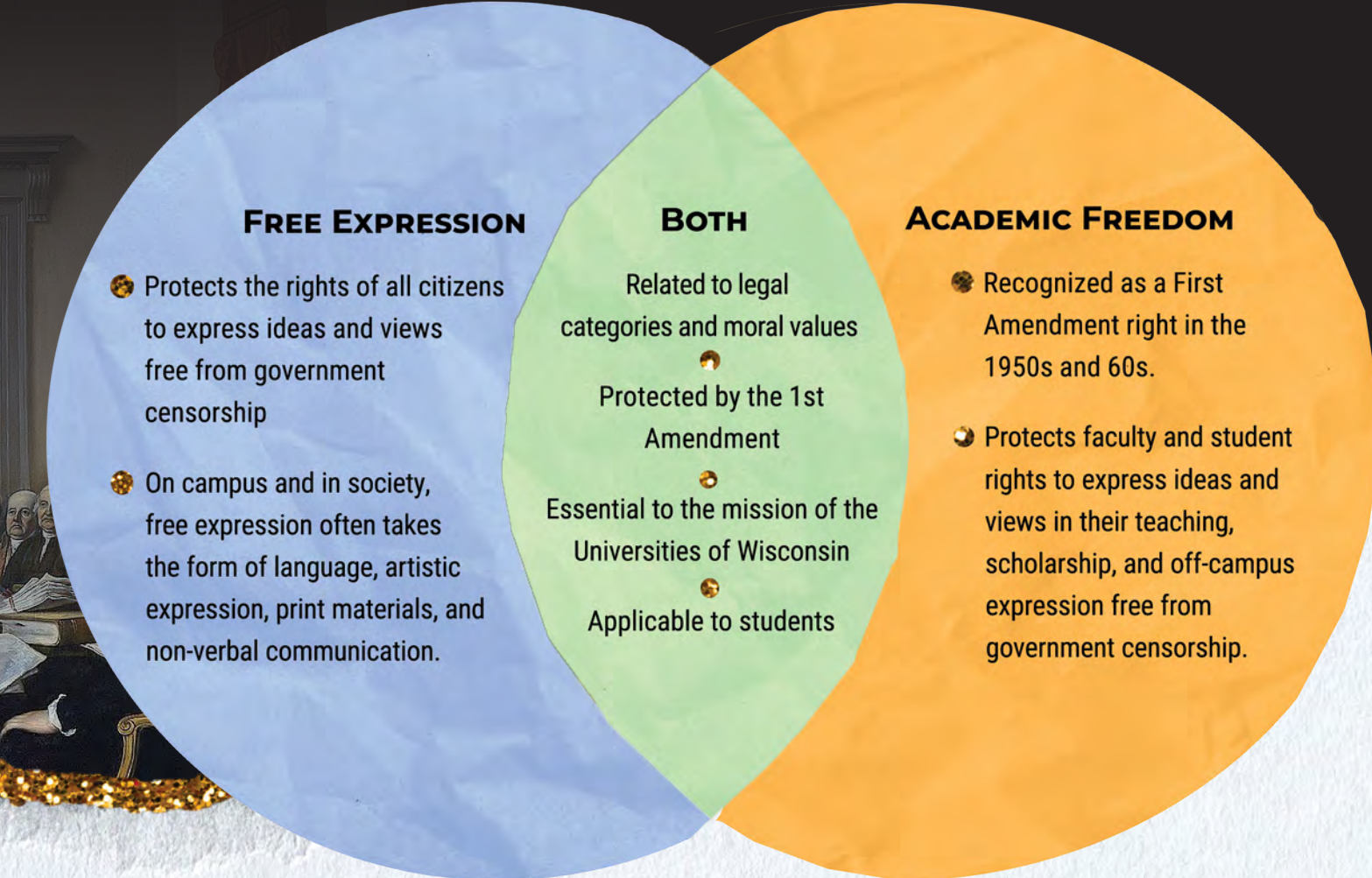


**THE FIRST AMENDMENT TO THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION WAS RATIFIED IN 1791 TO PROTECT FUNDAMENTAL EXPRESSIVE RIGHTS. IN THE 1950s, THE US SUPREME COURT EXPANDED FIRST AMENDMENT PROTECTIONS TO INCLUDE ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND EXPRESSIVE RIGHTS.**

- *Sweezy v. New Hampshire* (1957): Recognized faculty academic freedom
- *NAACP v. Alabama* (1958): Recognized freedom of expressive association

Because these rights apply to all levels of government, the UW Board of Regents and the Universities of Wisconsin uphold them in their policies.





### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

You can express your views and support others' rights to do the same. It does not mean all speech is protected. See pages 10-11 for an overview of what is protected and what is unlawful.

THINK: FREE SPEECH FOR **WE**.



**THE U.S. SUPREME COURT HAS AFFIRMED THAT, IN PUBLIC FORUMS, THE GOVERNMENT GENERALLY CANNOT RESTRICT SPEECH BASED ON ITS CONTENT OR VIEWPOINT, WHETHER TARGETING A SPECIFIC TOPIC (CONTENT DISCRIMINATION) OR A PARTICULAR OPINION (VIEWPOINT DISCRIMINATION).**

***TIME, PLACE, AND MANNER* REGULATIONS THAT ARE NEUTRAL TOWARD CONTENT AND VIEWPOINT ARE SUBJECT TO LESS LEGAL SCRUTINY AND ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE UPHELD.**

## OFTEN PROTECTED SPEECH

**VARIOUS FORMS OF SPEECH ARE LEGALLY PROTECTED, INCLUDING:**

- Controversial political topics
- Provocative artistic expression
- Hate or offensive speech

Some protected speech, including hate speech, can still cause harm to a community and should be addressed. See page 17 for information on how to report incidents that occur on campus.

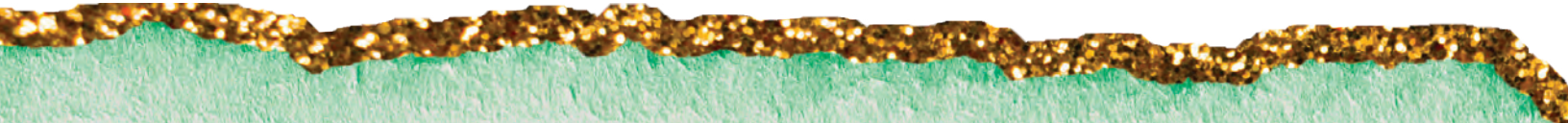
## UNLAWFUL SPEECH AND ACTIONS

TRUE THREATS

INCITEMENT OF ILLEGAL ACTIVITY

DEFAMATION

OBSCENITY



*“Expressive rights enable us to expose falsehoods, produce new knowledge, understand how competing viewpoints each can have some truth to them, and help keep truth from becoming an empty dogma whose meaning and justification has withered away.”*

- John Stuart Mill



# HATE CRIMES

**CRIMINAL ACT OR ATTEMPTED CRIMINAL ACT, MOTIVATED, IN WHOLE OR PART, BY AN INDIVIDUAL'S OR GROUP'S ACTUAL OR PERCEIVED RACE, ETHNICITY, RELIGION, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, GENDER IDENTITY, GENDER, OR ANOTHER PROTECTED CLASS.**

## **FOR AN ACT TO QUALIFY AS A HATE CRIME:**

1. A crime must take place
2. That crime must be motivated by bias against one or more protected characteristics identified in federal, state and/or local statutes.

## **IF A HATE CRIME OCCURS, ALERT THE UNIVERSITY POLICE IMMEDIATELY**

- **Non-Emergency:** 608.789.9000
- **Emergency:** 608.789.9999 or 911
- **Address:** 605 17<sup>th</sup> St. N., La Crosse, WI



**FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION FROM THE  
UNIVERSITIES OF WISCONSIN**



# POP QUIZ

1. What year was the Constitution written? When was it ratified?
2. What is an amendment?
3. The first ten amendments to the constitution are known as the...
4. True or False, only one amendment to the Constitution has been repealed.

Answers on page 18

***"To suppress free speech is a double wrong. It violates the rights of the hearer as well as the speaker."***

**- Frederick Douglass**







**BIAS** \ bī·əs \ *n* 1: inclination or preference either for or against an individual or group that interferes with impartial judgment. Bias can be conscious or unconscious and is a product of socialization and life experiences that shape our perceptions and judgments.



**WHEN AN ACT OF BIAS OR INJUSTICE OCCURS,  
REMEMBER THAT YOU HAVE AGENCY. YOU CAN CHOOSE  
HOW TO RESPOND AND TAKE MEANINGFUL ACTION.**



# HERE ARE SOME OPTIONS, DEPENDING ON THE SEVERITY AND WHAT FEELS RIGHT TO YOU:



## **IGNORE IT**

Walking away can be the best option. If possible, plan ahead to create an exit strategy.



## **LET SOMEONE KNOW**

Connect with a trusted staff or faculty member such as an RA, reliable instructor, and/or a department you have made a relationship with.



## **SUBMIT A BIAS REPORT**

Letting UWL administration know about incidents that occur on campus. This ensures documentation for tracking purposes.



## **SELF-ADVOCATE**

Asserting your own interests and needs.



## **CALL IN**

Addressing with care, not shame, to understand and educate.



## **USE COUNTER-SPEECH**

Addressing harmful speech with alternative viewpoints.



## **BE AN ADVOCATE**

Learning thrives when diverse perspectives are welcomed, not silenced. Welcoming views is not the same as demanding ideological balance; rather, it reflects a commitment to a truth-seeking process and to fostering a space where robust discourse can occur.



## **BE AN UPSTANDER**

Speaking against injustice or wrongdoing.



### **WRITE TO A LEGISLATOR**

Explaining your viewpoints to local representatives.



### **PLAN OR PARTICIPATE IN A DEMONSTRATION**

Organizing or joining a campus demonstration is a powerful way to express your views. You are encouraged to seek guidance on the dos and don'ts.



### **PLAN OR PARTICIPATE IN A COUNTER DEMONSTRATION**

Coordinating an event or demonstration to oppose a cause or draw attention to another viewpoint.



### **ENGAGE IN CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE**

Engaging in a nonviolent way to protest laws or policies while understanding that it may come with consequences.

### **REPORT AN INCIDENT OR CONCERN**

Active communication about incidents on campus, student concerns, and misconduct supports student success and ensures a safe educational environment.

Scan the QR code or go to [uwlax.edu/go/report-incident](http://uwlax.edu/go/report-incident)



### **LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS**

We prioritize our institutional responsibility to ensure a safe and secure campus environment. We coordinate the adherence to applicable laws and regulations.

Scan the QR code or go to [uwlax.edu/go/compliance](http://uwlax.edu/go/compliance)



# REPORTING AN INCIDENT OR CONCERN

**Act of hate or bias**

**HATE AND BIAS REPORT**

**Concerning behavior from a student**

**STUDENT OF CONCERN REPORT**

**Academic dishonesty**

**ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT REPORT**

**Facilities misuse, pollution, noise, etc.**

**NON-ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT  
REPORT**

**Learned of or witnessed sexual violence**

**SEXUAL MISCONDUCT REPORT**

**NOT SURE WHICH REPORT TO USE? CALL STUDENT LIFE AT 608.785.8026**





Pop Quiz answers: Q1: 1787, 1789; Q2: A change to the Constitution;  
Q3: Bill of Rights; Q4: True, the 18th (Prohibition)



M O O Z E O A X A F J X V G B N D Z Y A L Y N N D T C J F S  
 X B F X C O U N T E R S P E E C H J Z G T X J M B M C B Y S  
 B P G B P B F Z G O K B Z T X M T A F F C L A L O V Z I I F  
 U I Z W F U G G P Z M C L R A U C O N S T I T U T I O N A Q  
 X Z Z T J P D K G C R O Z Z N H J K L L G D N X T R H S F Q  
 F G X X L O P M C N V E P O P Z Z I B W L N V K G C W V Z E  
 H C I I R U J X C Z A O A C K U S N A I B S N C N P S V Q Z  
 I F I L E V V Y O G Y N K S A R I C C E L A M E N D M E N T  
 X R O B M P W K D O P K P D N O L L A H B L T T P R G E W B  
 G S V F J R G Y P V W T A G H R O U D I T Y O K O F E L X H  
 H N X S Q W S Z R U G J Q J M G M S E D S A M F D C U I J X  
 H B C F L B E Y O M W C N V T Z B I M A D Y A O R R V L T Y  
 I O L E Y E M H T Z K A U S B Q W O I Q F U V F C I C E D R  
 P G X T E L J F E D U O N X U W I N C G R C N Y K U G G K Z  
 I Y Z D Z O H P C W W L G H V H U K F S N I C S F N N H S B  
 V K A S C N C S T V J Y G A A W D F R Y L V G Y E V H J T R  
 K J S C Q G V U E Q A T B M M P N D E N C I V G K N D V F S  
 S H I R P I Z C D E M B C F B V R V E Y M L L A M D L I A M  
 X U S J R N T Y C I I H K G J F W Y D G O D H Z I P D F C V  
 M I D I E G Y X L X G X Y Q B B C U O I R I B U O U J T W R  
 B Y I U M B Q O A M I M P V S G Y A M F B S M O U A V X Y Y  
 C J V Z M V U W S N A S Y G B N Y Y V O Z C C B S S O V O F  
 U V A G J B H N S R Z H Q O K P X T W G S O V Q P J E Y A L  
 T Z D Z I R H I G E E P F Y D K L F L P I U Q C U E X X Y U  
 G B A H E C K L E R S V E T O H T I A C L R N Q O M K N L Z  
 M H C P Q I Y S E J X J S W P G C V O X H S Q G G Z X I R E  
 D V U E I W A H V L N A M T J V S U D N B E G X A I H F I U  
 T C T X G Q U X Q E S N M J I I D D F X S Q A P O N S A C Q  
 A P I Z M L H A Z N Z Z Q F I C G Z L H Y I I B Z R C V Q R  
 G B U B C Q V E D I X J C P K D Y D C A U K T S B E N F Y D

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

COUNTER SPEECH

HECKLER'S VETO

PROTECTED CLASS

CONSTITUTION

BILL OF RIGHTS

BELONGING

CIVIL DISCOURSE

AMENDMENT

INCLUSION





**CENTER FOR CIVIL DIALOGUE & CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**  
**CENTER FOR ADVANCING TEACHING & LEARNING**  
**ACCESS, BELONGING & COMPLIANCE**  
**STUDENT AFFAIRS**