

**Joint Committee on Free Speech Promotion**  
**Fall 2021-Fall 2022**  
**Outgoing Activity Report**  
**Prepared by Terry Glenn Lilley, outgoing Chair**  
**10 January 2023**

*History and background:*

The general purpose of the Joint Committee on Free Speech Promotion (JCFSP) is to plan an event for, or recognition of, Free Speech Week ([www.freespeechweek.org](http://www.freespeechweek.org)). Free Speech Week falls during the third full week of October and is a national, non-partisan event recognizing the importance of, and celebrating, free speech and a free press. The idea first originated in 2003, with the first inaugural celebration in 2005 in partnership with The Media Institute, American Association of Advertising Agencies, American Bar Association, Americans for the Arts, the National Constitution Center in Philly, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The JCFSP was created at UWL in 2019 and is given an annual budget of \$5000 from the Chancellor's office for FSW events. Since its inception, the JCFSP has hosted discussions on media bias and political polarization, activism and agency in the era of Me Too, as well as hosting debates for La Crosse mayoral candidates La Crosse.

*Outgoing committee FSW and programmatic activities:*

In the fall of 2021, the JCFSP produced a poster campaign across campus in recognition of FSW (see Appendix A). The following semester (spring of 2022), our committee hosted Dr. Gloria Ladson Billings, who discussed to the importance of universities staying on mission as it relates to race, equity and justice (Appendix B). In the fall of 2022, in partnership with Center for Transformative Justice, we helped make available the following trainings on Free speech from the Anti-Defamation League (ADL).

- For Faculty/Staff: *Free Speech in Policy and Practice* – 40-minute, self-paced, online workshop provides participants with knowledge on free speech, counter speech, and academic freedom to build an inclusive campus climate that promotes the free exchange of ideas.
- For Students: *Free Speech in Campus Discourse* – 40-minute, self-paced online workshop focused on the importance of free speech and academic freedom on a college campus; dispel myths concerning what is protected speech (and what is not); and tips for managing prominent speakers, political protests, and hate speech.

In 2022, the committee joined in a sustained and system-wide effort with representatives from across all campuses on a UW System Civil Dialogue Project that focuses on the following deliverables.

- Video on free speech and civil dialogue for students
- A UW System Civil Dialogue resource web page
- Free speech and civil dialogue resources in the context of academic courses and learning
- A collection of resources and events from across campuses on these issues

*Outgoing committee business and other activities:*

The membership of the outgoing committee was not finalized until the end of September of 2021, leaving us very little time to plan anything for Free Speech Week of that year. As a result, and after consulting with Chancellor Joe Gow, the committee membership voted to change the bylaws to help for better planning for Free Speech Week (see Appendix C). The main change to the bylaws is the term of membership. Instead of committee membership running through an academic or fiscal year (fall to spring), membership now runs from spring through fall, giving the committee the spring semester to plan for the fall event as opposed to just a few weeks.

Other changes to the bylaws include:

- The completion of an outgoing committee activity report such as this one to be submitted to the Chancellor and the incoming committee.
- The two members appointed by the Chancellor are now ad hoc members.

The final business decision was that the outgoing committee voted unanimously to roll its budget for Free Speech Week 2022 to the incoming committee. While \$5000 is generous support, it is not always enough to host an event, especially an outside speaker after accounting for an honorarium and travel expenses. In fact, the outgoing committee was required to raise additional funds in order to bring in Dr. Ladson Billings, even though she was not spending the night and was only travelling from Madison, WI. Additionally, The Center for Transformative Justice had been planning for the ADL trainings and had already budgeted for them. As a result, the partnership with the JCFSP was one of name and promotion as opposed to a financial, budgetary one. As a result, the committee felt that the Fall 2022 budget could best be used by the incoming committee whether that be to help support ongoing ADL licenses, bring in a speaker, or other event.

Respectfully submitted this 10<sup>th</sup> day of January 2023,

Terry Glenn Lilley

# What does Freedom of Speech really mean?

*It just means I can say what I want, when I want, and wherever I want, right?*

**You have the right NOT to speak**



*For example, you have the right NOT to salute the flag (West Virginia Board of Education V. Barnette)*

**You do NOT have the right to incite actions that would harm others**



*(Schenck V. United States)*

**You can engage in SYMBOLIC speech**



*For example, wearing a black armband to protest a war (Tinker V. Des Moines) or to burn the flag (Texas V. Johnson).*

**You do NOT have the right to say anything you want without consequence on Facebook or other private platforms**




**You can use certain offensive words or phrases to convey political messages**



*(Cohen V. California)*

**The First Amendment pertains to Government restrictions on speech**



Private individuals or corporations can restrict speech unless they are acting on behalf of the government.

## Freedom of Speech: A UWL Value



**Free speech is:**

**a feminist issue  
a social justice issue  
a racial justice issue**

**a UWL value**



**“Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers”.**

ARTICLE 19, UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS



**Appendix B: Poster for Dr. Gloria Ladson Billings Event**

**STAYING ON MISSION:  
RACE, EQUITY, AND  
JUSTICE IN THE MIDST OF  
POLARIZING POLITICS**

**DR. GLORIA LADSON-BILLINGS**

Friday 15 April  
3:00 pm, Q&A to follow  
Skogen Auditorium  
1400 Centennial Hall

Sponsored by:  
The Joint Committee on Free Speech Promotion, College Feminists, and Diversity and Inclusion

  For questions about this event or to request disability accommodations,  
please contact Terry Lilley at 608-785-8737 or [tlilley@uwlax.edu](mailto:tlilley@uwlax.edu)



## Appendix C: Updated Bylaws

### University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Joint

### Committee on Free Speech Promotion

Approved and Adopted 2/10/2022

#### 1. Purpose

The purpose of the Joint Committee on Free Speech Promotion is to further the mission of the university by promoting greater awareness of the values of free speech, freedom of expression, and academic freedom.

In doing so, the committee advances the aims of the Board of Regents' Policy Document 4-21, "*Commitment to Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression*," and related UW System and UWL policies.

#### 2. Duties and Responsibilities

The primary duties and responsibilities of the committee are to plan and carry out educational programs and activities that advance either or both of the following goals:

- (a) To provide students, faculty, and staff opportunities to enhance their understanding of the educational, social, cultural, political, and legal aspects of free speech, freedom of expression, academic freedom, and related concepts.
- (b) To illustrate the importance of free speech, freedom of expression, and academic freedom by providing opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to engage constructively with controversial or challenging ideas.

The committee will strive to plan at least one event that coincides with Free Speech Week (the third week of October annually) and/or other relevant occasions. The committee may solicit public input from the campus community with respect to the choice of potential outside speakers or any other aspect of its work. After the event is completed, the committee will complete a summary report on the year's activities for the Chancellor and the incoming committee.

The duties and responsibilities of the committee do not include receiving complaints or grievances or adjudicating disputes related to free speech, freedom of expression, academic freedom, or any other issues.

#### 3. Membership

The committee shall consist of the following members:

- 2 members appointed by the Academic Staff Council
- 2 members appointed by the Faculty Senate
- 2 members appointed by the Student Senate
- 2 members appointed by the University Staff Council

- 2 ad hoc members appointed by the Chancellor

All appointments will be for the term of two semesters. Terms will begin in the spring and continue through the fall when new appointments will be made. Should there be a vacancy, the chair of the committee will contact the appropriate governance group to request the appointment of a replacement.

#### **4. Officers**

The committee will elect a chair and a recorder by simple majority vote. All members shall be eligible to serve as chair or recorder.

The duties of the chair are: to convene and preside over meetings of the committee; to post notices of each meeting in accordance with the Wisconsin Open Meetings Law; to prepare and distribute an agenda in advance of each meeting; and to report on the activities of the committee to the Chancellor.

The duties of the recorder are: to record minutes of each meeting; to distribute draft minutes for review by the members of the committee; and to ensure that approved minutes are posted on the university's website.

The chair and the recorder may delegate their duties to another member of the committee as needed.

If the committee has no elected chair, the Chancellor shall identify one of the two Chancellor's appointees to serve as convener. The duties of the convener are to convene and preside over a meeting of the committee for the purpose of electing a chair. The convener will preside over the meeting until a chair has been elected.

#### **5. Procedures**

Meetings will be conducted pursuant to Wisconsin Open Meetings Law and Robert's Rules of Order. A quorum is necessary for the committee to conduct business. A quorum is defined as a simple majority of the members of the committee.

A simple majority of those voting is necessary to pass a motion. Abstentions are not votes. Voting occurs with a voice vote or a hand vote, but a roll-call vote will be conducted if any member requests it. Proxy voting is not allowed. Members attending a meeting in person or by telephone or videoconference, and who have heard the deliberations are eligible to vote. Minutes will reflect the actions taken at a meeting.

#### **6. Funding**

Each year, the Chancellor will communicate to the committee the amount of funding the committee will receive from the Chancellor's office for that year.

The committee may seek additional funding from other university departments and offices, governance groups, or outside funding sources, to support programming costs.

#### **7. Amendments**

Proposed amendments to these bylaws shall be submitted to the chair. The chair will distribute the proposed amendments to the members and the Chancellor. Reasonable time will be



allocated at the next meeting for discussion and voting on the proposed amendments.

The proposed amendments become effective upon approval by a two-thirds vote of all committee members, and subsequent approval by the Chancellor.

