



University of Colorado

Boulder | Colorado Springs | Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus

BOARD OF REGENTS

LAWS OF THE REGENTS

ARTICLE 1: UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO LEGAL ORIGIN, MISSION, POLICY FRAMEWORK AND ETHICAL CONDUCT

Part E: Freedom of Expression

1.E.1 Governing Principles

The University of Colorado is committed to the principle of freedom of expression embodied in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article II, Section 10 of Colorado's State Constitution. The University of Colorado has an obligation to uphold the principle of freedom of expression. All members of the university community, defined as the Regents of the University of Colorado, the officers of the university and the administration, and the university's faculty, staff, and students, have a responsibility to protect the university as a forum for the free expression of ideas.

The University of Colorado is an institution of higher education and its campuses are devoted to the pursuit of learning and the advancement of knowledge through the free exchange of ideas. The free exchange of ideas includes not only the right to speak, but the right to listen.

The university community must strictly adhere to the principle of viewpoint neutrality, meaning that the university shall not prohibit or restrict speech based upon either the substantive content of the speech or the message it conveys or because of the reaction or opposition of others to such expression.

Speech related to political, academic, artistic, and social concern serve vital purposes, both in society and within the university itself. Speech related to these topics is within the boundaries of free expression, even when others construe that speech as wrong or insensitive. The proper response to ideas that members of the university community find offensive or unwarranted is to challenge those ideas through the exercise of reason and debate, rather than attempt to interfere with or suppress them.

1.E.2 Scope of Regent Law

This article of the Laws of the Regents addresses speech that occurs on University of Colorado campuses, but not speech occurring in the course of research or in the classroom instructional environment. Speech in research and teaching is governed by Article 5, Part B and Article 7, Part C of the Laws of the Regents.

1.E.3 Definition of Free Expression

Free expression encompasses verbal and written means by which individuals may communicate ideas to others, including all forms of peaceful assembly, protests, speaking verbally, holding signs, circulating petitions, and distributing written materials. Free expression includes voter registration activities but does not include speech that is primarily for a commercial purpose, including the promotion, sale, or distribution of any product or service.

Free expression does not include speech or conduct that is not within the First Amendment's protections, including speech or conduct that is a true threat, fraudulent, harassing, obscene, defamatory, or otherwise unlawful.

1.E.4 Authority to Enact Lawful Regulations

As described in Regent Policy 2 , the Board of Regents authorizes the president and the chancellors to enact regulations in accordance with university policy and applicable law to promote free expression on the University of Colorado campuses and property, while simultaneously protecting the university environment, establishing lawful standards of conduct, and preventing disruption of university activities.

History:

- Adopted: TBD
- Revised: January 22, 1998; February 11, 2010; TBD
- Last Reviewed: TBD