



Policy	Institutional Neutrality
Policy Number	I.010
Approving Body	Board of Governors
Approval Date	April 25, 2024

1. Purpose:

1.1. Acadia University is committed to creating an environment that encourages open discourse, celebrates diversity, and respects the independent viewpoints of its community members.

2. Scope:

2.1. This policy applies to University Officers, defined here as the President, Vice-Presidents, Provost, Chancellor, the Chair of the Board of Governors, as well as any individual authorized to speak on an officer's behalf.

2.2. This policy does not apply to students, deans, academic units and their heads or directors, faculty, employee groups, staff, outside speakers and guests, members of the broader community, or any individual or group engaged in the educational or scholarly enterprise. It also does not apply to University Officers speaking in their personal capacity or, for those who are faculty, in the course of their scholarly activities. University Officers, when speaking personally, will clearly state that they do not speak on behalf of Acadia University.

2.3. In all instances where this policy conflicts with the principles of academic freedom as articulated in the Collective Agreement between the Board of Governors and the Acadia University Faculty Association, the latter shall prevail.

3. Policy Statement:

3.1. Part of the mission of Acadia University is to “promote a robust and respectful scholarly community” and to “inspire a diversity of thinkers.” In order to fulfill this mission, the university is committed to a principle of institutional neutrality. Were it to take sides on important matters of public concern, it would threaten the conditions of free and open inquiry necessary for a diversity of thought and the robust exchange of ideas.

4. Principles:

4.1. University Officers shall encourage respectful discourse and the expression of diverse viewpoints.

4.2. University Officers shall remain impartial on matters of a political, social, or ideological nature and shall not engage in advocacy for specific political parties, candidates, or causes, excepting in instances that are directly relevant to the university's mission, mandate, or policies.

4.3. University Officers, when speaking in their capacity as leaders of the institution, shall not be influenced by their personal beliefs and opinions. The institution must stand as a collective entity that transcends the diverse perspectives of its individual members, including its leaders.

4.4. These principles shall not be interpreted in a way that constrains the ability of University Officers to host, fund, or otherwise facilitate the speech of others.

5. Conclusion:

5.1. The neutrality of the university and the impartiality of its officers should not be construed as a lack of courage or indifference toward matters of public concern. On the contrary, it is precisely because the university values so highly its duty toward the public that it commits itself to these principles.