



AR 56802

July 4, 2019

Mr. Michael Phair
Chair, Board of Governors
University of Alberta
3-04 South Academic Building (SAB)
Edmonton AB T6G 2G7

Dear Mr. Phair:

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the frank and open discussion around free speech policies that took place at our recent meeting in Calgary. Conversations like this one are laying the foundation of a fruitful relationship as we work together to renew Alberta's post-secondary system.

At our recent meeting, there were a few concerns regarding the short timeline for implementation. I am more than happy to change the deadline to give all our institutions the time they need.

With that in mind, I am moving the submission deadline to November 15, 2019 and the posting deadline to December 15, 2019.

I would also like to clarify what our government is looking for. We are asking our institutions to demonstrate their commitment to the principles of the Chicago Statement on Free Speech. This can be done in a number of different ways, including:

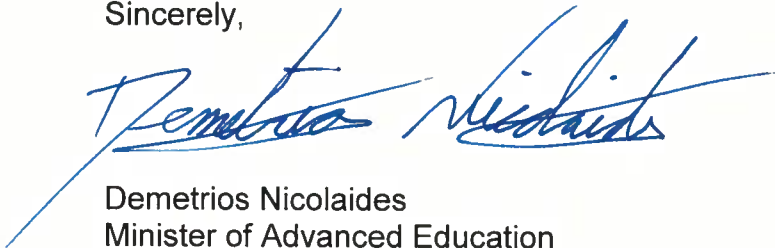
1. The Board of Governors passing a resolution formally adopting the Chicago Statement.
2. The Board of Governors passing a resolution adopting the eight key principles of the Chicago Statement as outlined below:
 - a. Free speech may not violate Canadian law.
 - b. Institutions are places of free and open inquiry in all matters, and all members of each institution's community are guaranteed the broadest possible latitude to speak, write, listen, challenge, and learn.

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- c. Community members have the right to criticize and question other views expressed on campus, but cannot obstruct or interfere with others' freedom of speech.
 - d. Institutions should not attempt to shield students from ideas or opinions they disagree with or find offensive. Mutual respect and civility are valued, but do not constitute sufficient justification to limit free speech.
 - e. The institution may reasonably regulate the time, place, and manner of expression to ensure that it does not disrupt the ordinary activities of the institution.
 - f. The institution may restrict expression that violates the law, falsely defames an individual, or constitutes a genuine threat or harassment that unjustifiably invades substantial privacy or confidentiality of interests.
 - g. Debate or deliberation may not be suppressed because the ideas put forward are thought by some, or even most, to be offensive, unwise, immoral, or wrong-headed.
 - h. It is for individuals, not the institution, to make those judgments for themselves and to act not by seeking to suppress speech, but by openly and vigorously contesting the ideas they oppose.
3. The Board of Governors adopting its own policy that conforms with the key elements of the Chicago Statement as described above.

I have every confidence that, as stewards of your institutions accountable to the Minister, your board will take appropriate action to fulfil these requirements. If your institution elects to write its own policy, it will be vetted by the department to ensure compliance with the spirit of the Chicago principles. It is your responsibility to ensure that whatever action is taken by your board demonstrates clear commitment to the key principles of free speech as found within the Chicago Statement.

Sincerely,



Demetrios Nicolaidis
Minister of Advanced Education