From Conflict to Conversation: Promoting Higher Education Values in Response to Campus Incidents

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THE NETWORK

Over 500 institutions in 39 countries, including ‘sections’ in the United States, Canada, Ireland, Netherlands & Belgium (with UAF), Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom (with CARA), Germany, and Finland.

Scholars at Risk is a global movement to protect everyone's freedom to think, question, and share ideas.
Goal: Recognize interdependence and interrelatedness.
(Avoid privileging one value over all others.)
A professor of semiotics invites students to step on a piece of paper printed with the word “Jesus.”

Is this an academic freedom issue?

Yes or No
CONTROVERSIAL CAMPUS SPEAKER

Organizer of the Charlottesville marches is invited by a student group to give a public talk at their university.

Is this an academic freedom issue?

Yes or No
SOCIAL MEDIA POST / MEDIA INTERVIEW

Professor’s social media posts about a public policy in their area of expertise offends community members who demand firing.

Is this an academic freedom issue?

Yes or No
VISA / TRAVEL DENIAL

A faculty member of your institution is denied a visa to do research in Country X.

Is there institutional responsibility to respond?

Yes or No
DEMOnstration that turns violent

Peaceful student protestors are confronted by a violent counter-group; police use pepper spray.

Is there institutional responsibility to respond?

Yes or No
ALUMNI / TRUSTEE / DONOR THREAT (PRIVATE INSTITUTION)

Alumni are outraged by a course offering at their private institution and threaten to withhold gifts unless the course is canceled.

Is there institutional responsibility to respond?

Yes or No
STATE / GOVERNMENT THREAT

A legislator threatens hearings/budget cuts for any institution that teaches subject X.

Is there institutional responsibility to respond?

Yes or No
# PROMOTING CORE HIGHER EDUCATION VALUES

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<tr>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
<th>CONSIDERATION</th>
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<td>Professor of semiotics invites students in class to step on the word “Jesus”</td>
<td>Five interrelated values, not one</td>
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<td>Organizer of Charlottesville marches invited by student group to give public talk</td>
<td>Distinction between protection (AF vs. FEx)</td>
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<td>Professor’s social media posts about a public policy issue offend members of the community who demand firing</td>
<td>Two understandings of academic freedom</td>
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<td>Faculty member of your institution is denied a visa to do research in <em>Country X</em></td>
<td>Values benefit quality of higher education and society</td>
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<td>Peaceful student protestors are confronted by violent counter-group; police use pepper spray</td>
<td>Proactive implementation builds trust / vocabulary</td>
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<td>Alumni outraged by course offering threaten to withhold gifts unless course is canceled</td>
<td>Move from determination of AF protection to considering consequences if it is not</td>
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<td>State / government threat</td>
<td>Three traps in responding (neglect, oversimplification, binary)</td>
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PROMOTING HIGHER EDUCATION VALUES

- **Build understanding** and respect for higher education values & their contributions to society
- **Support quality** higher education & partnerships
- **Avoid “pitfalls”** of neglect & oversimplification
- **Provide a framework** for constructive dialogue and analyzing values-related incidents
- **Develop expanded menu** of pro-values practices and responses to incidents
Scholars at Risk is a global movement to protect everyone's freedom to think, question, and share ideas.

www.futurelearn.com/courses/academic-freedom
AN INVITATION...

Encourage your university to:

• Join the SAR network
• Consider inviting a speaker to campus through the SAR Speaker Series
• Organize events to promote academic freedom and related values
• Host a SAR workshop or webinar on “Promoting Higher Education Values”
• Engage students through SAR’s Student Advocacy Seminars

Stay in touch – sign up for SAR emails at scholarsatrisk.org
Thank you!

get connected:

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- facebook.com/scholarsatrisk
- twitter.com/scholarsatrisk