

Special Meeting of the
Oklahoma Free Speech Committee

MINUTES

Tuesday, November 29, 2022, 1:00 p.m.

Notice. The meeting notice was posted with the Secretary of State on Friday, November 12 at 11:02 a.m. The meeting agenda was posted on the State Regents' website on Tuesday, November 22 at 1:07 p.m.

- 1. Call to order and announcement of meeting participants.** Special Meeting called to order at 1:02 p.m. The following members were in attendance: Andy Lester (Chair), Rep. Caldwell, Valerie Couch, Sen. Floyd, Dr. Raúl Font, Dr. Rick Hall, Mariana Pitts, Tesia Zientek, and Regent Jeff Hickman.

Chancellor Allison Garrett welcomed the committee and thanked them for their service to the State. Committee members introduced themselves and discussed their background and interest in serving on the committee.
- 2. Organization.** Chairman Lester discussed the duties of the Committee and the Committee Preamble. He also announced that State Regents' staff has already begun assembling the free speech policies from the State System institutions. The Committee then discussed student input regarding institutional policies and the work of the Committee generally. A preference for considering the presence of student input when institutional policies were crafted was expressed. The advisory nature of the committee was discussed when considering free speech complaints made to the committee. Whether complainants should exhaust their complaint remedies with the institution prior to submitting a complaint to the Committee was discussed along with the idea that if complainants submit a complaint to the Committee without first exhausting institutional remedies, perhaps they should state a reason to the Committee for not exhausting such remedies. A preference for complaints being filed confidentially and heard by the Committee as a whole was expressed and that public Committee recommendations should consider redactions to maintain confidentiality when appropriate. The Committee's findings or recommendations could be public and be a helpful resource. The potential import of the Committee's free speech training duties was discussed. A preference was expressed for the application of policies to particular facts in the form of case studies to be included in training provided by the Committee or, potentially, a vendor.
- 3. Task forces.** Dr. Raúl Font moved to establish an Institutional Policies task force, a Complaints task force and a Training task force to carry out the work of the Committee. Valerie Couch seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Senator Floyd moved to grant the Chair the power to assign members of the Committee to the newly created task forces. Valerie Couch seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Valerie Couch moved to appoint the Chair and the Regent members as non-voting, *ex-officio* members of task forces to which neither the Chair nor the Regent members are assigned. Dr. Rick Hall seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- 4. Meeting Schedule.** Dr. Rick Hall moved to adopt the following as 2023 meeting dates: February 14, June 13, September 12, and December 12. Tesia Zientek seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

5. **Other Business or Discussion.** Protocols related to communication with institutions were discussed. There are a variety of potential personnel through which communication channels might be opened. In closing discussion, Chairman Lester emphasized the importance of free speech to American higher education.
6. **Meeting Adjourned: 2:34pm.**