

Regular Meeting of the
Oklahoma Free Speech Committee

MINUTES

Tuesday, February 14, 2023, 12:00 p.m.

Notice. The meeting notice was posted with the Secretary of State on Tuesday, December 6, 2022 at 11:43 a.m. The meeting agenda was posted on the State Regents' website on Friday, February 10, 2023 at 9:20 a.m.

1. **Call to order.** Regular Meeting called to order at 12:04 p.m. The following members were in attendance: Andy Lester (Chair), Rep. Caldwell, Valerie Couch, Dr. Raúl Font, Dr. Rick Hall, Mariana Pitts and Tesia Zientek.
2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting.** Dr. Font moved to approve the November meeting minutes. Rep. Caldwell seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
3. **Comments from the Chair.** Chairman Lester stated that several free speech related incidents were in the headlines recently. Fault lies on both sides of the political aisle. He also reiterated the policies that the Regents passed when creating the Committee pursuant to legislation and the duties of the Committee.
4. **Task Force Reports.**
 - a. Institutional Policies Task Force Report (Valerie Couch). Policies from the State System institutions were compiled in a notebook and distributed to the task force members. The task force is initiating its review of the materials. The Chancellor solicited contact persons from each institution who could facilitate further communication and policy document exchanges.
 - Discussion. In the future, with the State Regents' approval, institutional acknowledgement of the free speech principles passed by the Regents might be requested. But the autonomy of each institution should be respected.
 - b. Complaints Task Force Report (Tesia Zientek). The task force began conceptualizing a complaint process and decided that the Iowa Board of Regents' complaint policies didn't match the scope of the Committee. The scope of the task force is to collect complaints, review them and advise complainants.
 - Discussion. An exhaustion requirement for complainants to first seek remedy at their respective institution might be considered. A complainant advisory process is still being researched and considered.
 - c. Training Task Force Report (Mariana Pitts). Primary tasks are to review already existing training and develop additional training as needed. Committee-provided training would include 1) initial training for certain employees, 2) follow-up training every 2 years and 3) interim training provided as individuals are hired, promoted, etc. The contact person could be utilized to reach out to deans and department heads regarding training. In-person training could be hosted at our two research universities and be recorded and

distributed. The Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE) might be consulted with to develop the content of the training or speak at training events.

5. **Communications.** After the Chancellor's letter soliciting contacts was emailed, responses have been received from 18 institutions so far. Angela Caddell, Vice Chancellor for Communications, can assist with Committee communications.
6. **Other Business or Discussion.** None.
7. **Meeting Adjourned: 1:23pm.**