

1 AN ACT relating to freedom of speech at public postsecondary education
2 institutions.

3 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

4 ➔Section 1. KRS 164.348 is amended to read as follows:

5 (1) For purposes of this section:

6 (a) "Faculty" means any person tasked by a public postsecondary education
7 institution with providing scholarship, academic research, or teaching,
8 regardless of whether the person is compensated by the public
9 postsecondary education institution; and

10 (b) "Student" means an individual currently enrolled in at least one (1) credit
11 hour at a public postsecondary education institution or a student
12 organization registered pursuant to the policies of a public postsecondary
13 education institution.

14 (2) Consistent with its obligations to respect the rights secured by the Constitutions of
15 the United States and the Commonwealth of Kentucky, a governing board of a
16 public postsecondary education institution shall adopt policies to ensure that:

17 (a)~~(1)~~ The institution protects the fundamental and constitutional right of all
18 students and faculty to freedom of expression;

19 (b) The institution grants students and faculty the broadest possible latitude to
20 speak, write, listen, challenge, learn, and discuss any issue;

21 (c) The institution commits to maintaining a marketplace of ideas where the
22 free exchange of ideas is not suppressed because an idea put forth is
23 considered by some or even most of the members of the institution's
24 community to be offensive, unwise, disagreeable, conservative, liberal,
25 traditional, or radical;

26 (d) Students and faculty do not substantially obstruct or otherwise substantially
27 interfere with the freedom of others to express views they reject so that a

1 *lively and fearless freedom of debate and deliberation is promoted and*
2 *protected;*

3 (e) The expression of a student's religious or political viewpoints in classroom,
4 homework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments is free from
5 discrimination or penalty based on the religious or political content of the
6 submissions;

7 (f) ~~1.(2)(a)~~ The selection of students to speak at official events is made in a
8 viewpoint-neutral manner;

9 ~~2.(b)~~ The prepared remarks of the student are not altered before
10 delivery, except in a viewpoint-neutral manner, unless requested by the
11 student. However, student speakers shall not engage in speech that is
12 obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, or indecent; and

13 ~~3.(c)~~ If the content of the student's speech is such that a reasonable
14 observer may perceive affirmative institutional sponsorship or
15 endorsement of the student speaker's religious or political viewpoint, the
16 institution shall communicate, in writing, orally, or both, that the
17 student's speech does not reflect the endorsement, sponsorship, position,
18 or expression of the institution;

19 (g)~~(3)~~ ***Student*** religious and political organizations are allowed equal access to
20 public forums on the same basis as nonreligious and nonpolitical
21 organizations;

22 (h)~~(4)~~ No recognized religious or political student organization is hindered or
23 discriminated against in the ordering of its internal affairs, selection of leaders
24 and members, defining of doctrines and principles, and resolving of
25 organizational disputes in the furtherance of its mission, or in its
26 determination that only persons committed to its mission should conduct such
27 activities;~~and~~

1 (i) Student activity fee funding to a student organization is not denied based on
2 the viewpoints that the student organization advocates;

3 (j) The generally accessible, open, outdoor areas of the campus be maintained
4 as traditional public forums for students and faculty to express their views,
5 so that the free expression of students and faculty is not limited to particular
6 areas of the campus often described as "free speech zones";

7 ~~(k)(5)}~~ There shall be no restrictions on the time, place, and manner of student
8 speech that occurs in the outdoor areas of campus or is protected by the First
9 Amendment of the United States Constitution, except for restrictions that are:

10 ~~1.(a)}~~ Reasonable;

11 ~~2.(b)}~~ Justified without reference to the content of the regulated speech;

12 ~~3.(c)}~~ Narrowly tailored to serve a significant~~[compelling]~~ governmental
13 interest; and

14 ~~4.(d)}~~ Limited to provide ample alternative options for the
15 communication of the information;~~[-]~~

16 (l) Permit requirements do not prohibit spontaneous student outdoor
17 assemblies or outdoor distribution of literature, although an institution may
18 adopt a policy that grants members of the university community the right to
19 reserve certain outdoor spaces in advance;

20 (m) All students and faculty are allowed to invite guest speakers to campus to
21 engage in free speech regardless of the views of the guest speakers;

22 (n) Students are not charged fees based on the content of their speech, the
23 content of the speech of guest speakers invited by students, or the
24 anticipated reaction or opposition of listeners to the speech;

25 (o) The institution does not disinvite a speaker invited by a student, student
26 organization, or faculty member because the speaker's anticipated speech
27 may be considered offensive, unwise, disagreeable, conservative, liberal,

1 traditional, or radical by students, faculty, administrators, government
2 officials, or members of the public; and

3 (p) The institution defines student-on-student harassment to mean unwelcome
4 conduct directed toward a student that is discriminatory on a basis
5 prohibited by federal, state, or local law, and that is so severe, pervasive, and
6 objectively offensive that it effectively denies equal access to an educational
7 opportunity or benefit.

8 (3) (a) Any person aggrieved by a violation of any policy adopted or required to
9 have been adopted pursuant to subsection (2) of this section shall have a
10 cause of action against the institution, or any of its agents acting in their
11 official capacities, for damages arising from the violation, including
12 reasonable attorney's fees and litigation costs.

13 (b) A claim brought pursuant to this subsection may be asserted in any court of
14 competent jurisdiction within one (1) year of the date the cause of action
15 accrued. The cause of action shall be deemed to have accrued at the point in
16 time the violation ceases or is cured by the institution.

17 (c) Excluding reasonable attorney's fees and litigation costs, any prevailing
18 claimant shall be awarded no less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) but
19 no more than one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) cumulatively per
20 action. If multiple claimants prevail and the damages awarded would
21 exceed one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), the court shall divide one
22 hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) amongst all prevailing claimants
23 equally.

24 (4) (a) The policies adopted pursuant to subsection (2) of this section shall be made
25 available to students and faculty using the following methods:

26 1. Publishing in the institution's student handbook and faculty
27 handbook, whether paper or electronic; and

- 1 2. Posting to a prominent location on the institution's Web site.
- 2 (b) The policies adopted pursuant to subsection (2) of this section may also be
- 3 made available to students and faculty using the following methods:
- 4 1. Mailing electronically to students and faculty annually using their
- 5 institutionally provided e-mail addresses; or
- 6 2. Including in orientation programs for new students and new faculty.
- 7 (5) Nothing in this section shall be construed to grant students the right to
- 8 intentionally and substantially disrupt previously scheduled or reserved activities
- 9 occurring on the campus of a public postsecondary education institution.

10 ➔Section 2. This Act may be cited as the Campus Free Speech Protection Act.