

APPROVED BY SENATE
04/03/2017

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE
Senate Executive Committee
(Final; Action)

SC.17.12 University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Senate Statement on Inclusion, Tolerance, and the Free Pursuit of Knowledge

Preamble: We live and work in a time when the vitality and independence of institutions devoted to democratic values, diversity of backgrounds and viewpoints, tolerance, free expression, critical inquiry, and fact-based thought can no longer be taken for granted. Universities have long stood for these values, and members of university communities – faculty, students, and university leaders – have often taken a leading role in protesting their neglect. Today, again, we see a need for reaffirming and defending these values.

As members of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign community:

We condemn the rising discourse of hatred against people of color, Muslims, Jews, refugees and other immigrants, LGBTQ communities, and Native peoples. So-called “white nationalism” is a rhetorical cover for bigotry and prejudice, and we view its resurgence in this country, and around the world, with alarm.

We reject every form of discrimination, hateful rhetoric, and hateful action, whether directed toward a person’s race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability, citizenship, political views, socioeconomic status, veteran status, or immigration status.

We endorse the University of Illinois’ values of open, respectful discourse and exchange of ideas from the widest range of intellectual, religious, class, cultural, and political perspectives. While we seek to create a welcoming and inclusive learning environment, we want that environment to include difficult, challenging, and controversial ideas.

We condemn attacks against fact-based institutions, including the free press, scientific researchers, and the university itself, when they disclose facts and evidence that go against preferred policies. Across the political spectrum, public policies and the debates over them must be informed by the best available knowledge, not by propaganda or “alternative facts.”

We uphold the principles of scientific method and factual, reason-based inquiry. We affirm the value of critical questioning and debate as well as of creativity and artistic expression. We recognize the fundamental role that all of these methods of investigation, critique, and creative thought play in how we understand and address the difficult challenges we face, personally and as a society.

Finally, we express a shared commitment to support any member of our community who may feel fear or oppression. We pledge to work with all members of the community – students, faculty, staff, postdoctoral researchers, and administrators – to defend these values in our policies and practices, and not only in our words.

SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Gay Miller, Chair	George Francis	Lisa Monda-Amaya
Kim Graber, Vice Chair	David Hanley	Kathryn Oberdeck
Sara Benson	Harley Johnson	Rahul Raju
Nicholas Burbules	Sam LeRoy	Jeff Stein
Bettina Francis	William Maher	Mark Steinberg