

Standard 208 Statement

University of Illinois College of Law Commitment to Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression

Academic freedom and freedom of expression are foundational to the College of Law's institutional mission to create knowledge and foster meaningful engagement with the world around us. Academic freedom protects the right of all College of Law full and part-time faculty, as well as others teaching law school courses, to conduct research, publish scholarship, engage in law school governance, participate in law related service activities, curate library collections and provide information services, and exercise teaching responsibilities (including those related to client representation and clinical programs). Freedom of expression protects the rights of faculty, students, and staff to communicate ideas that may be controversial or unpopular, including through robust debate, demonstrations, or protests.

At the College, we respect and advance these freedoms by listening to alternative and opposing viewpoints, engaging in rigorous yet respectful debate, and constructively critiquing arguments submitted for our consideration. By doing so, we create space for enriching and vibrant exchange of ideas in our law school community.

However, the manner in which we pursue these activities must comply with applicable University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and College of Law policies. These policies proscribe disruptive conduct that hinders free expression by preventing or substantially interfering with the carrying out of law school functions or approved activities, such as classes, meetings, library services, interviews, ceremonies, and public events. Accordingly, the College or university may restrict expression that violates the law, that falsely defames a specific individual, that constitutes a genuine threat or harassment, or that unjustifiably invades substantial privacy or confidentiality interests. Moreover, the College and University provide due process—notice, an opportunity to be heard, neutral decision-makers, and appeal rights—to assess any claimed violation of applicable academic freedom policies.

Listed below are policies and resources relating to academic freedom and free expression at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and the College of Law:

- [University of Illinois System Statutes](#): Rules governing the University of Illinois System, including the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and the College of Law. The Statutes contain several provisions on academic freedom, most notably Article X, Section 2.
- [Free Speech and Expression Website](#): Compiles the university's policies around speech and expression, external resources related to free expression, and a web portal for reporting rights violations, acts of bias, threatening behavior, discrimination or harassment.
- [Faculty Policy Guide](#): Provides information on selected areas of faculty rights and responsibilities, including academic freedom and academic integrity.
- [Faculty Senate Bylaws](#): Section D.2 establishes the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Committee on Academic Freedom and Tenure, which the University Statutes tasks with investigating alleged infringements of academic freedom.
- [University Student Code](#): A collection of rules, regulations, policies, and procedures that apply to, or otherwise directly impact, students at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

- [College of Law Policies and Handbooks](#): Links to the College of Law's Academic Policy Handbook, Honor Code, Student Complaint Policy, and University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Student Code. These documents incorporate policies presented in the resources listed above.

Nothing in this statement shall be construed to conflict with any applicable laws or University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign policies.