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Free Speech

The right to freedom of speech, guaranteed by First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, allows individuals to express themselves without government interference. As a public university, K-State is a government agency and is not allowed to interfere with individual expression, except for certain very narrow exceptions.

Fundamental to the First Amendment is that **free speech is for everyone**. It is nonpartisan in nature, ensuring that whoever is in power does not get to decide what is or is not allowed — that is censorship. At times, there is an understandable instinct to protect University community members from words that hurt, insult or offend. But history has taught us that censorship is used almost always to restrict and harm the most vulnerable, most powerless and the most marginalized in our society. With this in mind, K-State is committed to fostering an environment of free expression for all viewpoints.

That said, free speech does not mean that all expressions are allowed at all times. K-State may, and does, restrict speech that is threatening, incites violence or other illegal activity, or that seriously disrupts campus operations. The University also has several [policies](https://www.k-state.edu/access-opportunity/resources/free-expression/policies-guidance/index.html) (<https://www.k-state.edu/access-opportunity/resources/free-expression/policies-guidance/index.html>), regulating the time, place and manner of speech so as not to disrupt normal campus activities, like the academic classrooms.

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Frequently Asked Questions

What is the First Amendment? 

What is "speech", as contemplated by the First Amendment? 

What speech is prohibited? 

What is "hate speech"? Is it prohibited? 

What CAN we do about hate speech? 

What about academic freedom? Is that related to free speech? 

I am a faculty member or university employee. Do I have free speech rights at K-State? 

What about the K-State Principles of Community. How do those apply? 

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 [KS Degree Stats.org \(https://ksdegreestats.org\)](https://ksdegreestats.org)

[KBOR Free Expression Statement \(https://www.k-state.edu/disclosures/kbor-free-expression.html\)](https://www.k-state.edu/disclosures/kbor-free-expression.html)

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