

REPORT

TO: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO)
FROM: Dr. Lori Livingston, Provost and Vice President, Academic
DATE: August 28, 2024
SUBJECT: Ontario Tech University Freedom of Expression Policy Annual Report 2024

History

All publicly assisted colleges and universities must develop an annual report on Campus Free Speech Policy implementation, post it online, and submit it to the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) by September 1 each year. This report has been written in response to this annual reporting requirement.

Please find the University's responses below related to questions found on the Freedom of Speech Annual Report Template:

Section A: Institutional Policy

- Has your institution amended its free speech policy (or policy framework) since the time of your 2023 report? If so, please explain the reason for the change and provide the link to its location on your institutional website.

The [Freedom of Expression Policy](#) was last approved in November, 2018 and has not been updated or amended since.

- Where are members of the institutional community (or guests) directed when there is a free-speech-related question or complaint about an institutional event? Please provide contact information.

As outlined in the [Freedom of Expression Policy](#), the following direction is provided:

- **General complaints related to Freedom of Expression in University Space or the Online University Environment under this policy can be submitted to the Office of the Provost for resolution.**
- **Complaints related to decisions made by the University under this Policy are covered by the University's [Safe Disclosure Policy](#). In other words, a complaint that the Freedom of Expression Policy has been improperly administered would be processed under the University's [Safe Disclosure Policy](#) and would be considered by the University's General Counsel.**
- **Complaints related to the activities of recognized student organizations are covered by the University's [Policy on Recognition of Student Organizations](#).**
- **Complaints regarding conduct by Employees in contravention of the Freedom of Expression Policy are covered under the following applicable policy instruments:**

- Harassment, violence, or discrimination complaints are investigated under the [Policy Against Harassment, Violence and Discrimination in the Workplace](#), and in accordance with any applicable collective agreements.
 - Other violations can be addressed by the procedures for receiving and resolving complaints in section 9.1, in accordance with any applicable collective agreements.
- What is your institution's policy on holding events where there are security concerns? To your knowledge, were there any instances where a non-curricular event did not proceed due to security concerns or their related costs?

All events on campus are approved through a risk management framework, which includes discussions with the Office of Campus Security and Emergency Management as necessary. To our knowledge, there were no instances where a non-curricular event did not proceed due to these concerns.

Section B: Complaints

- Between **August 1, 2023** and **July 31, 2024**, did any member of the institutional community (or guests) make an official complaint about free speech? If yes, please provide a general description that protects the privacy of complainants.

No

- If there has been an official complaint (or more than one):
 - What were the issues under consideration? Please identify any points of contention (e.g., security costs, safety, student unions and/or groups, operational requirements, etc.).

NA

- How did the institution manage the free speech complaint(s)? Was the complaint addressed using the procedures set out in the policy? How were issues resolved?
- **NA**

Section C: Summary Data

Please provide the following summary data for free-speech-related official complaints received by the institution:

- Number of official complaints received under the free speech policy relating to curricular and non-curricular events.
0
- Number of official complaints reviewed that did not proceed.
0
- Number of official complaints where the institution determined that the free speech policy was not followed appropriately.
0
- Number of official complaints under the free speech policy that resulted in the institution applying disciplinary or other institutional measures.
0

- To your knowledge, were any free speech complaints forwarded to the Ontario Ombudsman?
Not to our knowledge.
- To the best of your ability, please provide an estimate of the number of **non-curricular events** held at the institution either online or in person between **August 1, 2023 and July 31, 2024**. Non-curricular events include, for example, invited speakers, sporting events, rallies, student life/student affairs events, conferences, etc., as opposed to regular events held as part of an academic program or course.
Between August 1, 2023, and July 31, 2024, there were approximately 261 non-curricular events held on campus.

Should there be additional questions, please feel free to contact the Provost's office via email at provost@ontariotechu.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'L. Livingston'.

Lori A. Livingston, PhD
Provost and Vice-President, Academic