



The Council of
Independent Colleges

Building Places
of Promise:
**Unlocking
Student
Success**

2025 Institute for Chief Academics Officers with
Chief Student Affairs Officers and Chief Student Success Officers
November 1–4, 2025 🗝️ JW Marriott, Indianapolis, IN

Fostering a Culture of Free Expression and Civil Discourse

Presented by

Megan Halteman Zwart and Jacqueline Pfeffer Merrill



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Presenters

- Megan Halteman Zwart
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Saint Mary's College (IN)
- Jacqueline Pfeffer Merrill
Senior Director of Civic Learning and Free Expression Projects
Council of Independent Colleges
- *Moderator:* Amy Clark
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Nebraska Methodist University



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Conversation with Megan Halteman Zwart: St. Mary's College (IN)



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Tabletop Exercises

By yourself, take five minutes to read your group's tabletop exercise and jot down your answers to the questions.

Discuss at your table.

We will bring the room back together to hear from others!



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Breakout Conversation:

Policies, Procedures, Curricula, Programs

Cultural Norms and Personal Practices

- What formal policies and procedures at your college or university bolster free expression and civil discourse?
- Does your college or university incorporate lessons about these values in classroom curricula and campus programs?
- What campus cultural norms bolster free expression and civil discourse?
- What do you as a practice or habit to support free expression and civil discourse?



Q&A



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