The Council of Independent Colleges

Building Places of Promise: Unlocking Student Success

Freedom of Expression: Reflecting Your Mission, Engaging Your People

The Council of Independent Colleges

Building Places of Promise: Unlocking Student Success

Team: Focused on Mission and People

Gerald D. Griffin, Ph.D, Provost

Becky Starkenburg, Vice-President for Student Formation and Dean of Students

Sonja Trent-Brown, Ph.D., Vice-President for Culture and Inclusive Excellence

Hope COLLEGE

Session Outcomes

1. Provide an overview of Hope College's collaborative and institution-wide process to develop a Freedom of Expression Statement

2. Participate in a short case-scenario workshop taken from our launch efforts

3. Discuss shared campus challenges and opportunities related to developing and implementing freedom of expression guidelines

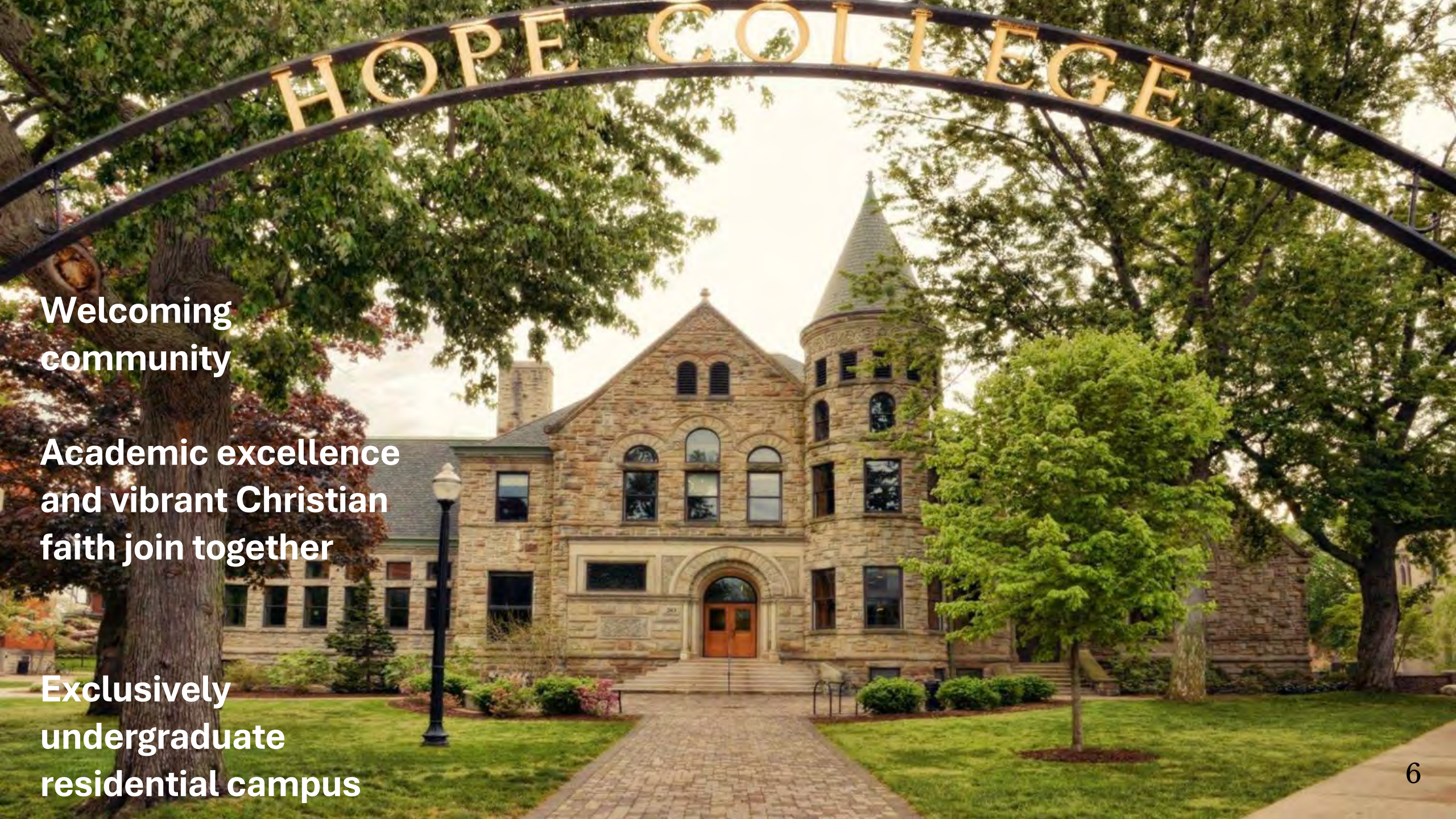
Hope COLLEGE

Exit

Go to **wooclap.com** and use the code **LRUUPQ**

Does your institution have a Freedom of Expression or similar statement?

1. Yes
2. No
3. It's Complicated . . .



Welcoming community

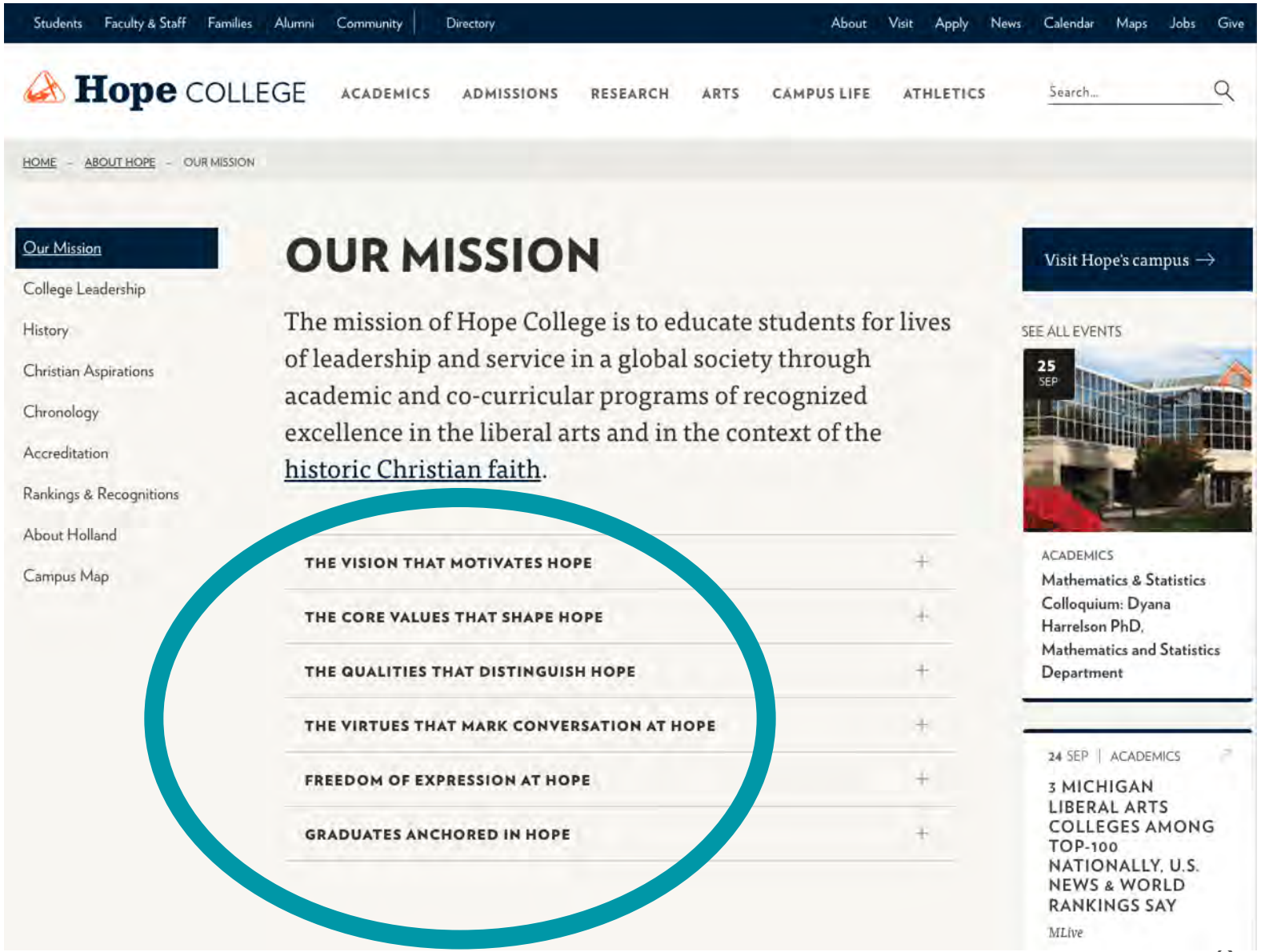
Academic excellence and vibrant Christian faith join together

Exclusively undergraduate residential campus

Our Mission

The mission of Hope College is to educate students for lives of leadership and service in a global society through academic and co-curricular programs of recognized excellence in the liberal arts and in the context of the historic Christian faith.

Statement would derive from our key commitments



Hope COLLEGE

Timeline Highlights

Cabinet Workshop

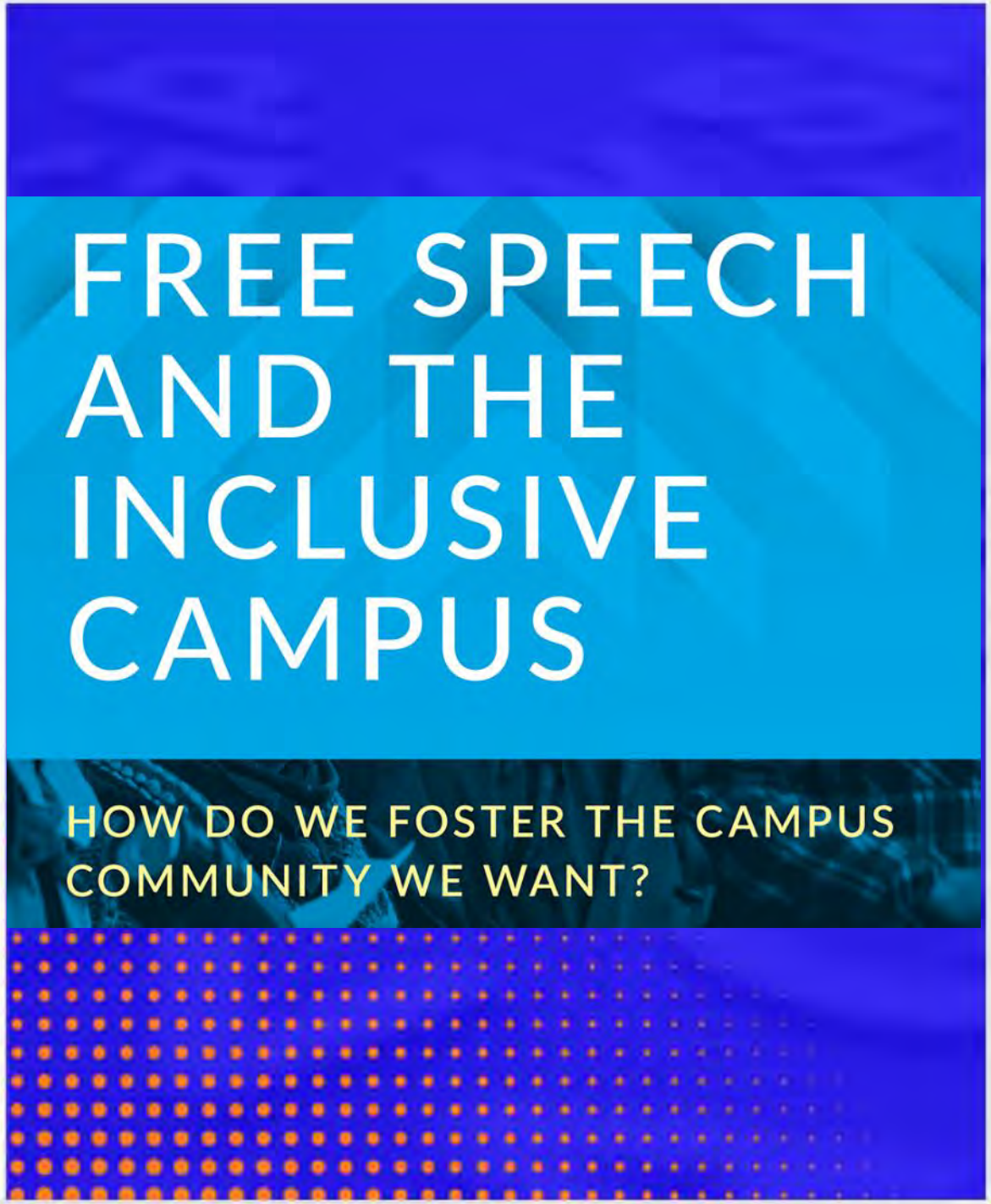
Framing questions for campus leaders

Are free speech and an inclusive campus in opposition to each other?

Do we have to give up one to have the other?

What is the nature of the campus community we want at Hope College?

What is the role of institutional leaders versus individuals in creating or changing campus culture?



Choosing a priority

Safety & Wellbeing

This position asserts campuses are responsible first and foremost for protecting student safety and well-being.

Intellectual Curiosity

This position asserts the primary role of higher education is to stimulate intellectual curiosity and build students' capacity and skills to engage meaningfully in conversations across difference.

Free speech

This position asserts institutions should welcome free speech in all its forms, as the university was created to be the marketplace of ideas.

Safety & Wellbeing

Intellectual Curiosity

Free speech

Group Work

25 minutes

1. Consider each approach or priority (3 options)
2. How does our Christian mission support and/or challenge each option?
3. Which option is attractive to your group? Does that option fit well with our mission?
4. Name organization structures (or edits to existing ones) that are needed to ensure the named priority

Concurrent Policy Initiatives

Campus Events with Visiting Speakers Policy: Developed

HOPE COLLEGE - *Policy/Procedure - Campus Events with Visiting Speakers*

Hope College welcomes educational events that promote the understanding of ideas, positions and issues embedded in our political and social culture. Visiting speakers present the campus community with unique opportunities to welcome and engage guests. The procedures that follow establish consistent college-wide expectations for student groups' who seek to host events and provide this type of learning opportunity for the Hope College community.

Any event hosted by the college with an outside speaker, and particularly those that focus on elected officials and political candidates and/or contested/controversial ideas that challenge the College's mission, must respect:

- The college's Mission "to educate students for lives of leadership and service in a global society through academic and co-curricular programs of recognized excellence in the liberal arts and in the context of the historic Christian faith"
- The college's Christian Aspirations to be faithful, to be welcoming and to be transformational
- The college's Virtues of Public Discourse: humility to listen; hospitality to welcome; patience to understand; courage to challenge; and honesty to speak the truth in love; and
- The college's Freedom of Expression Statement

The college must avoid jeopardizing its tax-exempt status under the 501(c)(3) rules of the Internal Revenue Code. To this end, the college may not be involved, directly or indirectly, in any political campaign or provide any form of endorsement for a political candidate.

POLICY

1. **Primary Purpose of the Event:** The event must have a clear purpose or intent that advances the organizing group's mission and respects Hope's Mission, reflects Hope's Virtues of Public Discourse and Freedom of Expression Statement and allows participants to seek Hope's Christian Aspirations.

4.0 CAMPUS DEMONSTRATIONS

Because of the college's commitment to free expression (Freedom of Expression), peaceful campus demonstrations and assembly by the members of the Hope community are permitted subject to the time, place, and manner limitations described in this policy. Demonstrations should be conducted in a manner congruent with Hope's Christian Aspirations, Virtues of Public Discourse and educational mission.

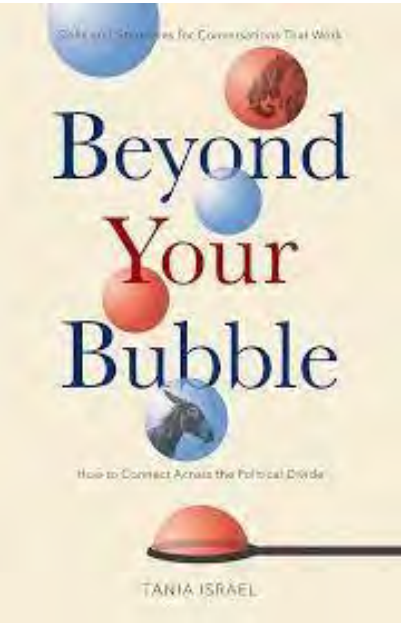
The opportunity to protest or demonstrate will always be balanced with the right of the individuals to participate in their education free from disruption or obstruction. Because protests and demonstrations are public events, coordination across various Hope College offices is required to support the safety and wellbeing of participants and members of the College community, as well as to address costs associated with the event.

For this reason, individuals or groups wishing to protest or demonstrate are required to register their protest or demonstration event with the Office of the Vice President for Student Formation & Dean of Students prior to the event. The VP/Dean or her designee will coordinate additional approvals as necessary (e.g., Campus Safety, Public Affairs and Marketing, Physical Plant). Protesting or demonstrating groups are required to follow all college policies and are expected to protest or demonstrate peacefully. Regardless of whether a demonstration is planned or spontaneous, demonstration activity will be stopped and participating individuals will be referred to the conduct process if the following behaviors occur:

Campus Demonstrations Policy: Improved

Launch Efforts

Across Campus Launch: Fall 2024



Summer Book group: Beyond Your Bubble
Led by Director of Counseling and Psychological Services
& Associate Dean for Residential Life & Education

Student Formation Staff Retreat
(kick-off retreat for Student Formation professional staff)
Co-led scenario workshop by
Director of Center for Diversity and Inclusion
and Senior Associate Dean of Students

Soulful Speech: Pre College Conference
(workshops for faculty and staff in late August)
Workshops and development sessions coordinated by Vice President for Culture and Inclusive Excellence

Student Leadership Training
Instructional sessions in student leader training workshops
Led by Associate Dean of Student Life

SOULFUL
SPEECH
Cultivating Freedom of Expression
at Hope College
Pre College Conference 2024

Purpose

Our purpose is to engage with Hope's Freedom of Expression Statement…

- The Statement is new—no expectation that we'll have all the answers today :)
- No pressure to have the "right" answer for scenarios (scenarios adapted from the Bipartisan Policy Center Task Force on Freedom of Expression)
- May be messy, muddy, gray areas—we give each other grace in the muddiness
    - The questions that arise are, themselves, part of the currency for today!
    - Post-Session Feedback opportunity where those questions, comments, additional thoughts about the Statement or using the Statement can be entered

Freedom of Expression

- Visual → Pictures, photographs, images, and video
- Audio → Music, expressed words, and more
- Conduct → Performance or action
- Speech → Talking, writing, printing, broadcasting, and using the internet

INTERACTIVE ACTIVITY

- Each Group will discuss one case study scenario
- Discussion handouts to guide the conversation
- How would your institution's freedom of expression statement apply to the scenario? If your campus doesn't have a freedom of expression statement, would having one help?

Activity Wrap-Up

Resources

- Thank you for engaging today!
- Additional resources and today's materials in Google folder (QR code)
- Where can we go to follow up or seek support when scenarios arise at Hope?
  - Student Development
  - Human Resources
  - Title IX/Equity & Compliance
  - Ombuds
  - Student Complaint Form (online)
  - Discrimination & Harassment Reporting Form (online)

	PRE	POST
Engaging with colleagues I know.	40%	70%
Engaging with colleagues I don't usually get to interact with.	72%	98%
Having the opportunity to express my own perspectives.	23%	96%
Hearing perspectives different from my own.	71%	90%
Learning more about freedom of expression, in general.	57%	89%
Learning more about using Hope's Freedom of Expression Statement.	75%	89%
Knowing where to locate support for questions about using Hope's Freedom of Expression Statement.	38%	76%
Getting access to materials/resources.	34%	86%
I understand Hope's Freedom of Expression Statement.	---	79%
I feel ready to use Hope's Freedom of Expression Statement.	---	61%

What did you appreciate or find helpful in this session about using Hope's Freedom of Expression Statement? (63 comments)

1. Value of Scenarios
2. Diverse Perspectives
3. Collaborative Dialogue
4. Application of Policy
5. Interactive Learning
6. Complexity and Nuance
7. Structured and Focused Facilitation
8. Curiosity and Open-endedness
9. Real-world Relevance
10. Appreciation of Colleagues

OpenAI. (2024). ChatGPT [Large language model]. https://chatgpt.com/c/66e1aede-0b68-8002-888e-2eaef17e15ab

Key Takeaways

- Reflecting your mission and engaging your people
- Having a statement helps, but doesn't solve everything
- Practicing and applying in a lower stakes context
- Practicing wisdom and discernment in a communal fashion

Thank you for joining our session!

Check out Guidebook for our session's resources and PPT.