



**Compliance, Audit, Risk Management and Legal Affairs (CARL) Committee**  
**November 11, 2025**  
**10:15 a.m.**

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**Discussion Item**

CARL-4      Hot Topics: Free Expression

**Background Information**

Jerry Blakemore, Vice Chancellor for Institutional Integrity and General Counsel, Wade Maki, Chair, UNC Faculty Assembly & Chancellor's Fellow for Strategic Planning, Cathy Akens, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, and Patricia Lynch, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Human Resources Officer will report on the University's activities with faculty, staff, and students related to their free expression rights and responsibilities.

**Attachments**

4.1      Hot Topics: Free Expression Engagement Slides

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# Hot Topics: Freedom of Expression



Cathy Akens, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs  
Jerry D. Blakemore, Vice Chancellor for Institutional Integrity  
and General Counsel

Wade Maki, Chair, UNC Faculty Assembly and  
Chancellor's Fellow for Strategic Planning

Patricia Lynch, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor and  
Chief Human Resources Officer

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# Freedom of Expression: Campus Engagement

- Legal Overview
- Campus Engagement
  - Faculty/Staff
  - Human Resources
  - Students



# THE LAW

**US Constitution**

**NC Constitution**

**NC Campus Free Speech Act**

**Federal Regulations**

**UNC System Policy**

# Legal Overview

- U.S. and NC Constitutions provide for Free Expression rights
- NC Campus Free Speech Act requires UNC System to develop a free expression policy applicable to all constituent institutions
- First Amendment rights are not absolute
  - Exceptions include: harassment, true threats, incitement, obscenity, false advertising
- University's can provide reasonable time, place, manner restrictions on speech
- Employees can be held responsible for speech that is disruptive to University operations
- Faculty have Academic Freedom rights