

KALAMAZOO COLLEGE  
2017-2018 ACADEMIC CATALOG

## Academic Freedom

For its highest effectiveness, liberal learning requires an environment of free inquiry in which the whole range of human aspiration and achievement, knowledge, and culture can be subjected to searching scrutiny. Liberal learning believes that people should be free to construct and criticize without restraint of official dogmatism. Liberal learning specifically denies that if an idea is unpopular it is therefore suspect, or that if an idea is popular it is therefore true, and trusts instead in those canons of discrimination that are given in the Western tradition of historical scholarship and ethics.

Standing self-consciously within this tradition of liberal learning, Kalamazoo College claims for its teachers and students the freedom to engage in the careful and critical examination of the history of ideas; the freedom to create, to hold, to advocate, and to act on behalf of ideas that express their own convictions and integrity; the freedom to engage in the controversy that an unfettered examination and expression of ideas generates; and the freedom to invite to campus representatives of points of view that are important to an informed understanding of the conflict of ideas in our own time.

Since freedom of any kind always exists within certain clearly understood boundaries, these freedoms are subject to the following limitations:

1. The freedom of individual members of the College to hold, advocate, and act on behalf of ideas does not entail the right to receive endorsement or support of those ideas from the College as a corporate body. It is understood that no one may act as a spokesman for the corporate institution who has not been expressly authorized to do so.
2. Ideas held, whether by members of the College or by its guests, may be advocated openly in order that the processes of learning and of advocacy may be served by open criticism and by counter-advocacy.
3. It is understood that both advocacy and action will avoid destruction of property and injury to the personal or intellectual rights of others.
4. It is understood that the commonly accepted prohibitions against plagiarism, slander, libel, and incitement to force or violence are in effect in the exercise of these freedoms.
5. It is understood that freedom of advocacy and action does not entail the right to violate the regulations of the College with impunity.

The Board of Trustees affirms its belief in upholding academic freedom on the campus. It is convinced that the maximum educational opportunity occurs when the College preserves for all its members the right to question, to debate, to criticize, and to dissent. On the other hand, it is equally convinced that freedom is only possible in an environment predicated on peace and orderliness. Therefore, the Board of Trustees wishes it clearly understood that lawlessness, either on campus or off campus, and interference with the College's educational process cannot be condoned.

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