Promote Dialogue, Debate, Free Speech and Free Inquiry on Colleges Campuses

*Chapter 2 - Item 144\_U*

*U.1. As part of the biennial six-year financial plan required in the provisions of § 23.1-306, Code of Virginia, each public four-year institution of higher education, Richard Bland College, and the Virginia Community College System shall include in its six-year plan and amendments to its plan submitted to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) an official commitment and set of policies and practices to support freedom of expression and inquiry, free speech, academic freedom, and diversity of thought.*

*2. Each public four-year institution of higher education, Richard Bland College, and the Virginia Community College System shall also submit an annual report on freedom of expression and inquiry, free speech, academic freedom, and diversity of thought to the Secretary of Education, including related incidents and statistics from the prior academic year.*

**Norfolk State University fully supports freedom of expression and inquiry, free speech, academic freedom, and diversity of thought. While there were several programs held on campus related to free speech and academic freedom, the major initiative for the 2021-2022 academic year was a policy review. The Division of Student Affairs worked with partners across the University community to update the institutional policy attached regarding Freedom of Speech. The purpose of the review was to ensure that the policy was up-to-date and compliant with current state and federal laws, reflective of our mission and purpose as a state institution, and includes an educational component on the policy for the campus community. The Board of Visitors for Norfolk State University approved the updated policy during their May 2022 meeting.**

**At this time, Norfolk State University does not have any incidents or statistics to report regarding freedom of expression. As we begin a new academic year, Norfolk State University is committed to developing a framework to track and report incidents and statistics going forward. In addition, Norfolk State University is committed to disseminating the Freedom of Speech and Expression and Campus Space Utilization policy to the entire University community on an annual basis as part of our educational efforts. Plans are being made as we approach the beginning of the fall 2022 semester to provide educational opportunities for the University community to learn about the tenants of free speech and practice freedom of expression and inquiry inside and outside of the classroom. We look forward to reporting examples of our work to support free speech at Norfolk State University in the next annual report.**

**The Council of Presidents are working on a joint statement regarding freedom of expression and inquiry, free speech, academic freedom, and diversity of thought. NSU President Javaune Adams-Gaston serves as a committee member. More to come!**