

Emerson College

Policy on Institutional Neutrality and Mutual Respect

To perform its mission as a leading college of arts and communication, Emerson College must sustain an environment enabling freedom of inquiry, maintain independence from political pressures, and avoid actions that may have the unintended effect of silencing discourse and debate. For these reasons, Emerson College and its operating units will not take official positions or issue statements on complex geopolitical issues, nor will Emerson College consider political pressure in allocating resources or selecting strategic partners. Official positions and statements may be appropriate on issues that directly affect the college and its mission. Official expressions of empathy or support in the face of tragedy or injustice may be appropriate so long as they do not silence voices within our community.

While performing official duties, Emerson employees may not engage in actions or speech that suppress the expression of diverse viewpoints or suggest they are speaking for the institution. Furthermore, our campus community should actively avoid undue collective pressure about what to believe and should strongly encourage mutual respect toward all community members regardless of their beliefs.

Emerson College has a long history of fostering civic engagement and civil discourse in an inclusive and respectful learning environment. We reaffirm our commitment to respect in speech and dialogue, which is fundamental to our community's integrity and intellectual growth. All community members—students, faculty, staff, and alumni—are expected to engage in dialogue that prioritizes mutual respect and understanding. This commitment is essential for a supportive, collaborative, and inclusive academic atmosphere where diverse perspectives can be shared and valued.

Emerson's commitment to institutional neutrality and mutual respect does not arise from a position of indifference or insensitivity to suffering or injustice. It derives from our commitment to inclusivity and pluralism and our obligation to respect a diversity of viewpoints. By maintaining institutional neutrality and mutual respect, Emerson College will remain an open, supportive, and inclusive space for community members of all racial and ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, gender identities, religions, national origins, abilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, and beliefs.

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