



## The Youngstown State Commitment

As a vibrant intellectual community dedicated to the pursuit of truth, knowledge, and mutual understanding, Youngstown State University reaffirms its commitment to fostering an environment where different ideas can flourish without fear or coercion. We call upon every higher education institution in America to embrace the following ideals, which form the bedrock of our shared academic life:

**Unwavering Respect for Freedom of Speech.** We affirm that freedom of speech is the cornerstone of higher education and of the American founding. All voices, even those we find challenging, offensive, or unpopular, deserve to be heard in open forums. No idea should be censored or suppressed based on subjective discomfort; instead, we counter speech we disagree with through more speech, robust debate, and the power of logic and reason.

**Commitment to Civil Dialogue.** We pledge to engage in discourse with empathy, intellectual humility, and a genuine willingness to listen. Civil dialogue means treating one another with dignity, even amid disagreement—asking questions, seeking common ground, and building bridges rather than walls. In classrooms, protests, and casual conversations, we strive for exchanges that elevate ideas and humanize participants. Emotional outbursts and ad hominem attacks impede our ability to learn and grow.

**Collective Rebuke of Violence and Lawlessness Against Free Speech.** We stand united in condemning any endorsement, celebration, or participation in violence, threats, vandalism, or illegal actions intended to silence, intimidate, or disrupt the free expression of thoughts and ideas. Such acts betray the principles of a free society and undermine our mission. When they occur, we will publicly and unequivocally rebuke them and will support accountability through appropriate institutional and legal channels while protecting the rights of all to speak and assemble peacefully.

By living these ideals, we honor the legacy of free inquiry that defines great universities, and we ensure that American higher education remains a beacon of enlightened thought for generations to come. Let us hold each other accountable with grace and resolve, turning potential conflicts into opportunities for growth.