

Faculty Resolution on Civility and Free Speech

Proposed June 2, 2010 by Larry Mosqueda

As amended and passed at June 2, 2010 Faculty Meeting

The faculty of The Evergreen State College wish to affirm the importance of civil discourse, and the principle of nonviolent speech and action. We also wish to affirm the right of all members of our community to free political speech and action. This includes discussion, debate, teaching and learning about local, national and international issues, and political dissent, including participating in demonstrations and nonviolent civil disobedience. We decry any attempt to repress, brutalize or conduct surveillance of community members who are so engaged in the legitimate practice of their citizenship.

Evergreen's founders drew up a Social Contract as a reference for the college in its effort to govern itself in a participatory and respectful manner. It states, "Evergreen can thrive only if members respect the rights of others while enjoying their own right." We recognize the real distress experienced by many at Evergreen due to economic recession, drastically shrinking state support of the cost of higher education, and other factors more endemic in American society. In this context, the faculty underscores the value of respect, and encourages all members of the college to foster a climate of discourse that maintains integrity between our actions and principles.

We as faculty recognize our own responsibility to promote passionate disagreement and civil discussion and action.

We therefore call upon all members of this community to not only abide by but also participate in and defend the principles of civil discourse and free political speech and action.

We recognize that this resolution is only one step in an ongoing process of articulating our shared values and standards, and we commit ourselves to continued discussions in the coming year about issues related to free expression and civility.