
III. Free Speech and Human Rights in the Academic Community

A. Freedom of Speech and Political Activity

Free speech is a constitutional right in a democratic society and a cornerstone of intellectual life at Bowdoin. Members of the college community are encouraged to express their views on all matters including controversial, political issues in the public domain. Preservation of freedom of speech is a primary task of the College; the right to express both popular and unpopular views is to be protected. The College furthers this end best by serving as a forum where ideas may be debated and discussed. When taking public positions members of the college community should make an effort in good faith to avoid the appearance of speaking for Bowdoin.

B. Human Rights in the Bowdoin Community

The students and faculty of Bowdoin College belong to a community of scholars dedicated to the principles of free inquiry and free expression. The College is also a community of men and women whose pursuit of knowledge and whose social relations should rest upon the ethical foundations of a free and humane society: tolerance, honesty and civility. An institution of higher learning, devoted in large part to the examination of human values, can realize its goals only when each of its members recognizes the dignity and worth of every other member, and when the community as a whole is willing to declare intolerable any act or statement that constitutes or results in the harassment or intimidation of another human being. Every student and faculty member at Bowdoin must maintain toward every other student and faculty member an unqualified respect for those rights that transcend differences of race, sex, or any other distinctions irrelevant to human dignity. When violations of those rights occur, Bowdoin will assume its responsibility to protect the members of the college community from discrimination and intimidation.