

DARTMOUTH

TO: The Board of Trustees
From: Sian Leah Beilock, President
Date: Oct. 31, 2024
Subject: Motion re Institutional Statements

Motion re Institutional Statements

Dartmouth seeks to provide maximum space for its community to pursue robust debate on complex issues, including controversial issues of the day. The institution should not presume that these issues are settled nor that there is a consensus within the community. An institutional endorsement of a specific position or belief may deter community members who do not share that belief from expressing their skepticism or opposition, thereby chilling speech, shutting down debate and therefore curtailing the development of the best ideas and outcomes. For these reasons, I move that the Board endorse the recommendation of general restraint in issuing institutional statements articulated in the Oct. 31, 2024, report of the ad hoc Committee on Institutional Statements. In short, Dartmouth's leaders, as well as its units and departments, will generally refrain from commenting on external matters; however, when confronted with issues directly relating to Dartmouth's [mission](#), senior leaders will reaffirm Dartmouth's core values and commit to taking actions in support thereof. Examples of such issues include who is recruited into the Dartmouth community, the development and content of curriculum, and support for research and creative expression.

Institutional spokespersons for Dartmouth should be limited to the board of trustees, president, provost, and their specific designees; spokespersons for Dartmouth's schools should be limited to their respective deans and specific designees.

VOTED: Except when confronted with issues directly relating to Dartmouth's mission, where senior leaders can reaffirm Dartmouth's core values and commit to taking actions in support thereof, Dartmouth's institutional spokespersons will endorse the principle of general restraint in issuing institutional statements articulated in the Oct. 31, 2024, report of the ad hoc Committee on Institutional Statements.