

## **Resolution on Freedom of Expression**

**Whereas** the University is fundamentally committed to the open-ended pursuit of knowledge and unfettered inquiry and debate;

**Whereas** as public citizens, all enrolled students and faculty have rights guaranteed them under the Constitution, chief among which are freedom of thought, speech, and opinion, including the right to reasoned dissent;

**Whereas** the University is committed to a culture of diversity, an essential element of which is the diversity of viewpoint and conviction that is fostered by free expression;

**Whereas** the University is both obligated and committed to protect the right to freedom of expression within the Constitutionally defined parameters of that right;

**Whereas** the [Code of Virginia 23.401-1](#) prohibits the University from abridging student and faculty Constitutional rights to freedom of expression;

**Whereas** the Code of Virginia 23.401-1 requires that the University inform students, across a range of media and venues, of their Constitutional rights to freedom of expression;

**Be it therefore resolved** that the Faculty Senate recommends that JMU faculty add the following statement to their syllabi:

**As public citizens, all students and faculty enjoy the Constitutional right of freedom of thought, speech, and opinion, including the right to reasoned dissent, without fear of abuse or retribution, provided that these rights are exercised through reasoned discourse pertinent to the subject matter and within the defined parameters of the course. University [Policy 1121](#) describes this right and how to seek redress if one believes that one's rights to free expression have been violated. These rights, and the corresponding responsibilities, are further described in [Academic Policy 12](#) and [Faculty Handbook IIIA2](#).**