

SALISBURY UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE MOTION

Submit this form to the Faculty Senate President

SUBJECT: Formation of an Ad Hoc Committee/Working Group to Improve Adherence to Freedom of Speech and Inclusion Principles for those with Conservative Viewpoints

SENATOR PROPOSING MOTION: Mary DiBartolo

SENATOR SECONDING MOTION:

MOTION (this section alone will be recorded in the minutes):

Resolved, that the Faculty Senate requests that the Faculty Senate President for the 2026-2027 academic year asks the Consortium Coordinating Committee (formed as of July 1) to create an ad hoc committee to develop an action plan with the charge of facilitating free speech and inclusion on campus for students, faculty and staff, including those with conservative viewpoints. The plan shall involve education of campus community regarding principles of freedom of speech (including examples of free speech vs. compelled speech) and strategies to enhance inclusion for all, regardless of political viewpoints. This committee shall be chaired by the VP of Inclusion, Access & Belonging and include several volunteer representatives (suggested minimum of 2 each) from the student body, faculty, staff, etc. with the goal of the first meeting being held early in the fall semester of the upcoming academic year. It is also hoped that once adequate education will take place in AY 2026-27, there will also be proper monitoring with reporting of violations of such (online anonymous system already in place).

JUSTIFICATION:

As a USM institution, Salisbury University subscribes to and posts detailed statements on the University website supporting freedom of speech/expression, as well as valuing inclusion and belonging. However, many faculty, staff and students feel this is not the case if one has conservative beliefs/values; students report feeling oppressed, ridiculed and/or fear retribution (including being verbally chastised and/or graded differently); faculty and staff have voiced similar concerns (various examples were summarized for President and other administrative staff present at 3/10 Faculty Senate mtg). This motion represents the need to develop a concrete action plan to educate and thereby improve both freedom of speech and inclusion/belonging for the entire campus community regardless of political viewpoints.

NOTE: I also ask for the group to consider that voting be done anonymously given the potential for fear of consequences to any faculty member who may vote in favor of inclusion based on political affiliation.

ANTICIPATED IMPACT:

Negative: None

Positive: If adopted, this motion will go a long way to foster critical inquiry, academic freedom, and the open exchange of diverse ideas essential for a functioning democracy and intellectual growth.

Is this a recommendation to the Provost? Yes ___ No X

Is this a recommendation to someone else? No ___ Yes, to Faculty Senate President (AY 26-27)

VOTE: Number of Senators Present: _____ Motion Passes or Fails: _____