

Meeting of the
Oklahoma Free Speech Committee
MINUTES
Tuesday, September 12, 2023, 12:00 p.m.

Notice. The meeting notice was posted with the Secretary of State on Tuesday, December 6, 2022 at 11:43 a.m. The meeting agenda was posted on the State Regents' website on Monday, September 11, 2023 at 11:00 a.m.

- 1. Call to order.** Meeting called to order at 12:09 p.m. The following members were in attendance: Andy Lester (Chair), Rep. Caldwell, Valerie Couch, Mariana Pitts, and Sen. Floyd. Dr. Raúl Font, Dr. Rick Hall, Tesia Zientek, and Regent Hickman were unable to attend.
- 2. Minutes of Previous Meeting.** Representative Caldwell moved to approve the meeting minutes. Judge Couch seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- 3. Comments from the Chair.** Chairman Lester spoke about his update to the State Regents on what the committee had accomplished so far. The work of the committee is ahead of the expected timeline and he thanked the hard work of the committee for those results.
- 4. Task Force Reports.**
 - a. Institutional Policies Task Force Report (Valerie Couch). Judge Couch presented a preview of the work ahead for the task force.
 - The task force will need to take institutions' governing boards, location and other attributes into account when reviewing institutional policies. The review teams will consist of two members each, and schedules will be considered when determining the 25 site visits. Judge Couch brought the committee's attention to the draft schedule of site visits. One of the goals of the site visits is to gain the perspective of the campus leaders, learn the origin of the policies, and ask questions about any potentially concerning policies. There was a discussion about whether site visits could take place over Zoom, or if an in-person meeting would be more valuable. By letting each institution know exactly what the committee is looking for, some of the requested staff may not be needed, or may be substituted.
 - b. Complaints Task Force Report (Tesia Zientek). Chairman Lester gave a brief report on the complaint that was received before the complaints process was established.
 - The complaint involved a student using profanity with his professor. The Complaints Task Force leadership consulted with staff and decided that the complaint didn't present a free speech issue material enough to warrant further committee action and replied to the complainant stating as much.
 - The student's institution had issued a disciplinary complaint against the student for harassment, so staff referred the student back to his institution to work through the disciplinary process.

- c. Training Task Force Report (Mariana Pitts). Ms. Pitts summarized the future goals of the task force.
 - The task force has logistics to determine in the near future, but nothing to report at this meeting.
5. **Staff Report.** Chris Turner reported on behalf of the State Regent's staff that the complaints form should be live on the website within the next few weeks.
6. **Other Business or Discussion.** Processes by which the institutions would be notified that they need to post a link to the complaints form were discussed. The recent updated reports by FIRE on a few of the Oklahoma institutions were also discussed, concluding that the student survey results were particularly interesting but could be biased. The requirement that institutions produce an annual free speech report was also mentioned, and it was decided that their compliance with this requirement should be considered during the site visits.
7. **Meeting Adjourned:** 1:12 p.m.