

Statement on Freedom of Speech

*In the toil of thinking; in the serenity of books; in the messages of prophets, the songs of poets and the wisdom of interpreters; in discoveries of continents of truth whose margins we may see; we delight in free minds and in their thinking.**

Ryerson embraces unequivocally the free exchange of ideas and the ideal of intellectual engagement within a culture of mutual respect. It is a powerful ideal that encompasses every dimension of the University. Everyone who is part of the University, as well as guests and visitors, has a role to play in this shared enterprise. This responsibility extends to both proponents and detractors of any idea or point of view. Recognizing and respecting diversity of people, thought and expression are essential and an integral part of the ideal.

*In the majesty of the moral order; in the faith that right will triumph; in the courage given us when we ally ourselves to truth in any form; in the privilege of being co-workers in good causes; we celebrate the unseen goals we share and serve.**

In order to achieve and sustain Ryerson's ideal, members of its community must have freedom of thought and expression, freedom from harassment or discrimination and the freedom to consider, inquire, and write or comment about any topic without concern for widely held or prescribed opinions. This right to freedom of thought and expression inevitably includes the right to criticize aspects of society in general and the University itself.

Ryerson does not avoid controversies, difficult ideas, or disagreements over deeply held views. When such disagreements arise within the University or within a broader social context, the University's primary responsibility is to protect free speech within a culture of mutual respect. The right to freedom of speech comes with the responsibility to exercise that right in an atmosphere free of intimidation and in an environment that supports the free speech rights of those with opposing views.

While Ryerson is committed to freedom of thought and the free exchange of ideas, it is also recognized that there are limits to the right of free speech that are recognized in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The University may act when speech on campus is used in a way that is itself unlawful or prevents the lawful exercise of free speech by others.

*Let us build a world safe from war and oppression, free and satisfying, one that ultimately furnishes answers for us all.**

**Ryerson Invocation, 1990*

[Statement approved by Senate – May 4, 2010]