

**RESOLUTION ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INQUIRY**

**WHEREAS**, the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors is committed steadfastly to upholding the protections of the First Amendment of the United States Constitution; and

**WHEREAS**, concerns have been expressed that freedoms of expression and inquiry in universities are being curtailed, and the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors began discussions about these issues in 2021 that have continued in the ensuing years; and

**WHEREAS**, as the Board continued their discussions, they considered statements adopted at other universities and whether Virginia Tech needed a statement reinforcing its commitment to freedom of expression and inquiry to complement the Virginia Tech Principles of Community; and

**WHEREAS**, in July 2022, the Provost and President of the Faculty Senate sponsored a Task Force on Freedom of Expression and Inquiry consisting of faculty, students, staff, and two Board of Visitors members and charged it with drafting a statement affirming Virginia Tech's commitments to academic freedom and the Constitutional right of free speech and developing recommendations for exercising these commitments in a manner that exemplifies the Virginia Tech Principles of Community;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Visitors accepts the report of the Task Force on Freedom of Expression and Inquiry issued in December 2022 and expresses its appreciation to the chair and members of the task force for their dedication and efforts to gain a comprehensive understanding of the First Amendment and academic freedom, to craft a statement that was shared with the university community for input, and to develop a set of suggested actions; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board endorses the Virginia Tech statement committing unequivocally to upholding freedom of speech and academic freedom; and

**LASTLY, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Board requests periodic updates about decisions on the suggested actions enumerated in the task force report and implementation of proposed policy changes, procedures and best practices, and educational opportunities.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the resolution accepting the December 2022 report of the Task Force on Freedom of Expression and Inquiry, endorsing the statement contained therein committing unequivocally to upholding freedom of speech and academic freedom, and requesting periodic updates on the implementation of suggested actions proposed in the task force report be approved.

March 20, 2023