

Title

Submitted for endorsement by the University Senate

May1, 2012

WHEREAS, The university exists for the public good and confers numerous intangible benefits to its constituents, such as greater civic participation, more openness to the opinions of others, and more advanced levels of moral reasoning; and

WHEREAS, Western Kentucky University is a public institution whose missions include preparing students to be productive, engaged, and socially responsible citizen leaders in a global society; and

WHEREAS, The faculty of Western Kentucky University seek to achieve this mission in diverse ways, including encouraging students to develop non-violent, non-destructive, creative and distinctive methods to express their ideas; and

WHEREAS, In a university with a rich and active intellectual life instances of controversy naturally arise and raise instructive questions about appropriate modes of free expression and reasonable responses to such expressions; and

WHEREAS, External groups and media organizations might seek to take advantage of the inevitable discomfort with controversial issues for a range of reasons—from furthering ideological agendas to gaining audiences; therefore, be it

RESOLVED THAT Western Kentucky University should, as befits its stature as a leading American university with international reach, vigorously and publicly defend the integrity and rights of our students as they develop their skills in research, scholarship and creative activities, as well as the academic freedom of the faculty who encourage those developing skills; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED THAT If and when controversies arise, the faculty, students, and administration of Western Kentucky University should seek to use the opportunity to encourage fruitful dialogue and debate among the faculty and students in order to enhance our capacity to achieve real learning outcomes; and finally, be it

RESOLVED THAT The University Senate requests that President Ransdell provide a response to this resolution in a timely manner.