

University Policy 1.01.11**Institutional Neutrality****Policy Approval Date: February 28, 2025****Policy Effective Date: February 28, 2025****Procedure Approval Date: February 28, 2025****Procedure Effective Date: February 28, 2025****POLICY STATEMENT**

Capella University is committed to maintaining institutional neutrality on complex and controversial social or political issues. The university recognizes the importance of preserving an academic environment that promotes open dialogue and intellectual exploration. In extraordinary circumstances, the Capella University President may authorize an official statement on behalf of the university addressing issues directly pertinent to the university's foundational mission and educational purpose, following a rigorous review process.

While individual members of the university community are encouraged to engage in meaningful discourse and form their own perspectives, the institution itself will refrain from taking partisan positions on broader social and political debates.

RATIONALE

Capella University's institutional neutrality reflects a fundamental commitment to academic excellence and intellectual exploration. By preserving a neutral institutional stance on social and political matters that do not directly affect the university's mission and operations, Capella University creates a robust intellectual ecosystem that:

- Protects and promotes academic freedom;
- Encourages the free exchange of varied perspectives;
- Supports scholarly inquiry and critical thinking;
- Provides a safe space for students, faculty, and staff to explore complex ideas without institutional bias;
- Maintains the university's role as a platform for learning rather than a political actor; and
- Ensures that the university remains focused on its primary mission of education, research, and student development.

DEFINITIONS

None

PROCEDURES

- I. Any deviation from this neutrality will occur only when an issue fundamentally intersects with the university's core educational mission and operations, and only after careful deliberation by university leadership.

II. Exception Process

- A. The Capella University President may authorize university statements regarding issues materially related to the core mission and/or function of the University following the approval process below. See also university policy *1.01.01 Mission Statement and Educational Philosophy*.
- B. Statement Approval
 1. Consultation
The president will engage in deliberative discussions with senior university leadership to assess the significance, potential impact, and appropriateness of the proposed statement.
 2. Board Notification
Prior to public release, the president will formally notify the Board of Trustees of the intended statement, providing sufficient context and rationale for their review and awareness.
 3. Communications Review
The university's public relations team will conduct a thorough review of the draft statement to ensure clarity, accuracy, and consistency with institutional messaging and communication standards.

POLICY OWNERS

Academic Owner: President

Operations Owner: President and General Counsel

RELATED DOCUMENTS

University policy 1.01.01 Mission Statement and Educational Philosophy

University policy 1.01.09 Inclusion and Belonging

University policy 1.01.10 Academic Freedom

SEI External Communications Policy

REVISION HISTORY

Original Policy Approval Date: February 28, 2025

Administrative edits as result of ongoing review: 4-1-25