

University Senate
Proposed: October 26, 2001
Adopted: October 26, 2001

RESOLUTION REAFFIRMING FREE AND OPEN DEBATE
IN THE AFTERMATH OF RECENT TERRORIST ATTACKS

WHEREAS the attacks of September 11, 2001, have caused tragic loss and grief in the Columbia community and beyond, and

WHEREAS those and subsequent events have heightened emotions in the Columbia community and across the nation, and

WHEREAS Columbia University is dedicated to the free expression of ideas and open debate as well as the respect for diversity of opinions and beliefs;

BE IT RESOLVED that the University Senate expresses grief and regret over the losses resulting from the September 11 attacks;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that at this time of national crisis the University Senate calls on all members of the Columbia community to preserve an environment conducive to the free exchange of ideas and the civil discussion of diverse opinions.

Proponent:
Student Affairs Committee

RATIONALE FOR THE REAFFIRMATION
OF FREE AND OPEN DEBATE
IN THE AFTERMATH OF RECENT TERRORIST ATTACKS

The Student Affairs Committee proposes that the University Senate, in this time of loss, conflict, and change across the nation, reaffirm a principle long-held at Columbia University, that of free and open dissent and debate.

Columbia's student body is now confronted with challenges unlike any previously experienced in American life. Emotions are vehement, and opinions can be fierce. During recent weeks, some student members of the Columbia community have felt pressure to curtail their opinions of the national response to the September 11 attacks.

Yet the continuous practice of free and open discourse produces a cacophonous, vibrant, creative community. This resolution reaffirms open discourse as a prime value in our community and encourages diverse participation in it.