

A MESSAGE FROM THE
CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

CIVIL DIALOG AT UWL

Thursday, Oct. 13, 2022

Message sent to UWL community 10/13

Dear UW-La Crosse community,

The University of Wisconsin-La Crosse leadership team and I are aware of the public conversation regarding recent chalking on campus and social media posts by and about student organizations; these messages have since been shared widely online.

It is UWL policy to provide all members of the university community the broadest possible latitude to speak, write, listen, challenge and learn. However, UWL's leadership team and I are deeply disappointed to see students abandoning civil discourse and engaging in speech that promotes hate, is threatening, or that alludes to violence. Rather, it is the viewpoints that are reflective of critical thinking and intellectual honesty that are most becoming of the university community, and we expect no less from every individual in our community.

While we support and uphold our students' right to free speech, we also acknowledge the right of every member of

the campus community to speak out in opposition to ideas they find offensive or harmful. We may disagree with one another, but we do so without harassment, intimidation, disruption of learning or other university activities, and discrimination. This is part of the robust and vigorous public debate, which is central to the purpose of the university. Encountering new, different or opposing perspectives can be challenging and uncomfortable, but should always be respectful.

If you are experiencing incidents of bias or hate, please reach out for support from the [Bias Education and Support Team](#), and we encourage everyone to learn more about [our First Amendment considerations](#).

For more information on our policy on civil discourse and free speech, visit <https://www.uwlax.edu/chancellor/civil-discourse-and-free-speech/>

Sincerely,

Joe Gow, Chancellor
Dina Zavala, Interim Vice Chancellor of Diversity & Inclusion
Kara Ostlund, Dean of Students



Joe Gow, Professor
University of Wisconsin-La Crosse

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