

Approved by the Board of Trustees, December 6, 2018



Claremont McKenna Policy on Institutional Nonpartisanshipⁱ

Claremont McKenna College is a nonpartisan institution of higher education. To ensure the full freedom of faculty, students, and staff to express their views, the College shall refrain from establishing partisan institutional positions that are not directly related to its educational mission.

Statement in Support of Institutional Nonpartisanship

Making partisan choices or statements is a fundamental individual right. Citizens are not constrained in voicing opinions or exercising rights to free speech and assembly. Free expression and the rigorous engagement of diverse viewpoints are the bedrock of higher learning. But when colleges and universities take sides, they corrupt the necessary conditions for learning and the role of higher education in supporting democratic principles. Therefore, in order to sustain an environment conducive to the generation and application of knowledge and to safeguard the role of free expression, the President and Vice Presidents of Claremont McKenna College shall not express partisan positions on behalf of the College.

The protection of free expression is dependent on the refusal to establish institutional positions on issues not related to the College's educational role. Just as the First Amendment forbids Congress from the establishment of religion in part to protect its free and plural exercise, the College shall not establish partisan positions in order to protect the ability of each member of the community to learn through the freedom of expression and an engaged diversity of viewpoints.

Accordingly, there can be no such restrictions (other than those imposed by law) on the College's faculty, students, staff, parents, alumni, or invited speakers or guests. Indeed, the College encourages individuals to express their beliefs and positions fully, persuasively, and constructively. They are expected to develop and express diverse viewpoints, listen actively, ask thoughtful questions, and seek a deeper understanding of disagreements and how best to resolve them. However, the College does not speak through these individuals.

Institutional nonpartisanship does not mean the College will remain silent on policies that have direct bearing on the College's educational mission and function. This includes issues of access and affordability and the rights and interests of the College's faculty or students in education policy. Regardless of the broader political implications, the College will express its views freely on such matters.

ⁱ At the Board of Trustees meeting on February 25, 2023, the Board endorsed The Kalven Report, which originated from the University of Chicago, as consistent with the College's Policy on Institutional Nonpartisanship.