



**A Report, *Balancing Diversity and Free Expression in Higher Education: Diversity Officers' Experiences*, Now Available**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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The National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE) announces the availability of a report on the experiences of Chief Diversity Officers navigating the tensions between diversity and free expression. This report, *Balancing Diversity and Free Expression in Higher Education: Diversity Officers' Experiences*, is a joint initiative with the University of California (UC) [National Center for Free Speech and Civic Engagement](#). It is a research project lead by the Center's 2020-2021 class fellow, Jennifer Lambe, associate professor, Communication Department, at the University of Delaware.

According to Lambe, "The most important takeaway from interviews with and survey of diversity officers is that colleges and universities have to think about these issues in a holistic way. Yes, there are speech-protective laws that must and should be respected, but that should not be the end of the conversation. Both proactive and reactive strategies can be used to address the harms of hate and bias incidents while still respecting free expression."

The full 21-page report can be read and accessed here:  
<https://freespeechcenter.universityofcalifornia.edu/fellows-20-21/lambe-research/>  
Questions can be answered by Ms. Lambe by contacting her at [jlambe@udel.edu](mailto:jlambe@udel.edu).

According to NADOHE President Paulette Granberry Russell "The work of senior diversity officers (SDO), includes the ability to navigate challenging incidents of speech and other forms of expression that impact the climate and culture of universities and colleges. Ms. Jennifer Lambe, through her project with the National Center for Free Speech and Civic Engagement, examined the role of the SDO to balance their diversity, equity and inclusion efforts and free expression, including an opportunity for participants in the study to identify effective and ineffective responses to hate and bias incidents. The bottom line—SDOs must be an active participant in the development of campus strategies related to free speech. Proactive and reactive strategies must include balance between DEI and free expression. Care to those who are targeted and the creation of community norms against hate and bias should be a priority."

More information on the University of California [National Center for Free Speech and Civic Engagement](#) fellows' work, which addresses critical issues that are central to advancing campus discourse and democratic engagement, can be accessed here: <https://mailchi.mp/uci/fellows-research-release-13361742>

"We are proud of this year's fellows and their projects, which touch on real and pressing issues that took on even greater urgency during the last year," said UC National Center for Free Speech and Civic Engagement Executive Director Michelle N. Deutchman. "Their research will have a material impact on the day-to-day lives of students, faculty, staff and administrators on campuses nationwide."

As the pre-eminent voice for chief diversity officers in higher education and with more than 1,100 members representing 750 colleges and universities, NADOHE's mission is to lead higher education towards inclusive excellence through institutional transformation. For more information about NADOHE, visit [www.nadohe.org](http://www.nadohe.org).