

# Institutional Neutrality Policy

**Policy Type:** Corporate

**Policy Owner:** Vice President, External Partnerships and Strategic Enrolment

**Approval Date:** February 17, 2026

**Replaces:** None

**Initial Year of Issue:** 2026

**Corresponding Procedure:** [Institutional Neutrality Operating Procedure](#)

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## Introduction

Institutional neutrality is the principle that institutions should remain impartial and avoid taking definitive public positions on social, global, and political issues, unless these issues directly relate to the institution's mission and are within its capacity to action. This policy offers several benefits, including safeguarding the College's brand, reputation, and partnerships.

Cambrian College is viewed as an objective and non-partisan institution. When the College does comment on social, global, or political matters, it is important that the College speaks with one voice and such a statement will come from the President or appointed representative.

This policy is distinct from Cambrian's Free Speech Policy (Freedom of Expression). The Free Speech Policy protects the individual rights of students, employees, and community members to express diverse views and opinions. In contrast, the Institutional Neutrality Policy governs when, how, and by whom Cambrian College, as an institution, may take a public stance on social, global, or political issues.

## Purpose

To ensure Cambrian College ("the College") adopts the principle of institutional neutrality by maintaining an impartial institutional position when publicly commenting on social, global, or political issues that are outside of its core mandate.

## Scope

This policy applies to the President, Senior Team, the Chair of the Board of Governors, and those delegated authority to speak on their behalf, using all institutional channels and assets, including official brand material, college property, institutional social media accounts, the College website, and official communications of the Office of the President to officially represent the College.

Types of communication captured by this policy may include, but are not limited to:

- Official press releases and public statements
- Messages published through institutional social media accounts
- Speeches, interviews, or commentary provided on behalf of the College
- Official correspondence or endorsements issued using College resources

This policy does not apply to statements that relate to the mission or policy commitments of the College, or those grounded in human rights, equity, survivor rights, and trauma-informed practice.

It also excludes personal statements made by Cambrian employees outside of their institutional duties or those outlined in the College's Free Speech Policy.

## Definitions

**Brand assets:** any official brand materials representing the College, including logos.

**College property:** space – physical or digital – owned, controlled, or operated by the College.

**Institutional social media account:** a corporate social media account (e.g. Facebook, X, LinkedIn, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, Threads, etc.) managed by the Digital Media department, which represents the institution as a whole. It is the official social media account of the College. Institutional channels also include the official college website, and the official email account of the Office of the President.

**Physical assets:** any college-owned or operated assets such as vehicles, billboards, banners, stationery, etc.

## Policy Statements

### 1. Maintain a position of institutional neutrality

- 1.1. Cambrian College is committed to preserving its core mandate and business purpose. In doing so, the College shall refrain from taking definitive public positions on topical, social, or political issues and current events unless they are directly related to the mission of the College and are within Cambrian's ability to action. This includes written and spoken statements as well as visual expressions, such as changes to brand assets (e.g., logos and wordmarks).
- 1.2. When such a public position is warranted, it must be approved and issued by the Office of the President or designate and communicated through official institutional channels, such as internal email, website, or institutional social media accounts. It may be reproduced on college-affiliated platforms.

### 2. Personal opinions will always be honoured and protected

- 2.1. Cambrian College encourages respectful dialogue and embraces a wide of range of beliefs, as well as political and social opinions within the campus community.
- 2.2. Nothing in this policy is meant to prevent individuals from respectfully expressing their own views while adhering to the law and related College policies, such as the Free Speech Policy (Freedom of Expression).
- 2.3. Any institutional communication or decision under this policy shall be consistent with obligations outlined in related policies, including but not limited to: [Accessibility](#), [Customer Service Policy](#), [Code of Conduct Policy](#), and [Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence Policy](#).

### 3. Preserve long-term institutional reputation

- 3.1. Cambrian College and its brand shall not be used, co-opted, or associated with issues or causes that do not have a direct impact or influence on the College's mandate or purpose as a destination for higher education.
- 3.2. The College shall not apply this policy in a manner that is frivolous, vexatious, retaliatory, or intended to suppress legitimate concerns.

### 4. Exceptions

- 4.1. Exceptions to this policy may be made by the President, in consultation with the Vice President, External Partnership and Strategic Enrolment, where a clear and compelling case exists that commenting on an issue is essential to protecting the College's mission, values, or community.

## Responsibilities and Accountability

**Board of Governors** is responsible for:

- Ensuring that institutional neutrality is upheld at the governance level.
- Monitoring risks to the College's reputation associated with public commentary.

**President** is responsible for:

- Serving as the sole (or delegated) spokesperson for institutional statements on social, global, or political issues.
- Approving all exceptions to this policy, in consultation with the Senior Team and the Communications department.
- Ensuring institutional communications are consistent with the College's mission, values, and obligations under related policies.

**Vice President, External Partnerships and Strategic Enrolment** is responsible for:

- Overseeing implementation, communication, and compliance with this policy.
- Ensuring the development, review, and availability of this policy and its corresponding procedure
- Advising the President and Senior Team on reputational risks related to public statements.

**Senior Team** is responsible for:

- Ensuring employees within their respective areas are aware of and comply with this policy.
- Identifying and escalating issues that may present reputational risk to the College.
- Consulting with the President to determine if a public statement is warranted.

**Communications and Marketing Department** is responsible for:

- Receiving and responding to requests or inquiries for a public statement.

- Drafting official public statements
- Managing official institutional channels (website, social media, press releases, etc.) to ensure alignment with this policy.
- Ensuring that official brand assets are not altered or used in ways that could be perceived as taking a stance outside the College's mandate.
- Providing guidance to employees on appropriate use of institutional communication channels.

**College members** are responsible for:

- Being aware of this policy and adhering to its requirements.
- Understanding that personal views must not be presented as the official stance of the College.
- Ensuring personal use of social media and public commentary does not misrepresent or conflict with institutional neutrality.
- Directing media or public inquiries seeking an institutional comment to the Communications department.

**Students and Student Leaders** are responsible for:

- Respecting the institutional neutrality of Cambrian College when engaging in activities that may be perceived as representing the College.
- Ensuring that student-led initiatives, events, or communications do not misappropriate official College brand assets or imply official endorsement.

## Procedures/Forms

- Institutional Neutrality Operating Procedure

## Related Policies

- [Code of Conduct Policy](#)
- [Free Speech Policy \(Freedom of Expression\)](#)
- [Marketing and Communications Policy](#)
- [Posting of Communication Materials Policy](#)
- [Social Media Use Policy](#)

- [Support of Community Initiatives and Events Policy](#)
- [Website Governance Policy](#)