

## Statement in favor of Academic Freedom and Non-harassment

The members of the Regents' Academic Advisory Committee for History (RAACH) share a collective commitment to freedom of expression for faculty and students. We are concerned about reports of faculty who have received threats or hostile questions about classes related to diversity as well as current discussions in our state about external monitoring of course content. We are equally troubled by public concerns that students are not given full freedom of expression. We wish to reaffirm that we encourage open and respectful dialogue and freedom of speech in all classrooms for all students and faculty.

Historical inquiry by its very nature exposes students to ideas, perspectives, and experiences different from their own. It challenges students to develop empathy for people who may be quite different from themselves. It exposes them to the great diversity of the human experience. As faculty members we strive to create an open, impartial dialogue about history, historical actors, and the human experience in our classrooms, and one that is rooted in scholarship that represents the highest professional standards of our discipline. This may also expose students to difficult and at times challenging issues. However, we insist, as professionals, on the right and responsibility to teach history comprehensively and fully.

Moreover, the members of the RAACH insist that Georgia students-- as future leaders in our state, our nation, and the global economy-- need and deserve to be exposed to multiple perspectives and difficult issues in their college education. The classroom provides an ideal site for students to engage with difficult or controversial issues and to practice civil dialogue.

Finally, we roundly reject harassment and intimidation of *anyone* for expressing their ideas, whether they be students engaging in respectful debate with faculty or faculty members teaching the prevailing knowledge in our discipline, as inconsistent with honesty and academic freedom.