



Statement to the Emory Community on the Events on Emory Campus of Thursday, April 25th, 2024

We, the undersigned core faculty members of Emory's Center for Ethics, believe in the right of members of the Emory Community to address through political action their concerns about contemporary issues, both domestic and international. We support the right, and the responsibility, of civic engagement through nonviolent action, which is vital for any democracy, and respect the students and faculty who engage in peaceful protest.

We understand that a wave of protests and encampments have appeared in campuses across the country, and that university administrators must balance protecting their campuses, preventing antisemitic and other hate speech, as well as vandalism, and allowing protests and gatherings. We are dismayed, however, by how events unfolded on Emory's campus last Thursday, April 25, 2024. Our campus should foster a culture of free speech and critical thought, where differing viewpoints are embraced. We believe Emory's administrative and academic leadership appeared to miss an opportunity to protect the passionate convictions that members of our community should be allowed to peacefully express.

Emory faculty have developed a number of models for having constructive engagement, active listening, and having these difficult conversations. We believe engagement should have been our first response.

Emory's leadership communicated that it moved quickly to involve law enforcement officers to disperse protestors. Acknowledging the administration's responsibility to protect the members of the Emory community, we believe that such shows of force should be a last resort, not an initial response, to people engaged in peaceful acts of protest. A pedagogic opportunity was lost, Emory students, staff and faculty were needlessly and forcefully arrested, and Emory's reputation has been compromised.

We believe Emory missed an opportunity to be a model of what higher education should stand for. We plan to invite the Emory community to a series of conversations on campus around some of these controversial issues, and invite partners around the university to join us in this important work. We also call on Emory – its leadership, students, faculty, staff, and broader community members – to recommit itself to the right and the responsibility of civic engagement and peaceful assembly.

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