



UPSTATE

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

EDUCATION · HEALTHCARE · RESEARCH

Office of the President & Health System CEO

Oct. 30, 2017

Dear Students:

I hope this note finds your studies going well.

I know your time is tight, but I wanted to highlight for you an Oct. 26 hearing on Capitol Hill by the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education Labor & Pensions about “Exploring Free Speech on College Campus.”

It is an illuminating discussion that addresses the question posed by committee member U.S. Sen. Patty Murray: “How can we protect this constitutional right [free speech] while also making sure our colleges and universities are places where everyone can feel safe so they can learn and respectfully debate ideas.”

Sen. Murray’s question is one all of us share, whether we are administrators, members of the faculty and staff or students.

I invite you to view the hearing at <https://www.help.senate.gov/hearings/exploring-free-speech-on-college-campuses>.

If you are not able to view the proceedings, the abovementioned site will allow you to download the testimony of the panelists: Dr. Robert Zimmer, president of University of Chicago; Nadine Strossen, John Marshall Harlan Professor of Law, New York Law School; J. Richard Cohen, president of the Southern Poverty Law Center; Dr. Allison Stanger, Russell J. Lend '60 Professor of International Politics, Middlebury College.

This hearing is compelling as it addresses the free speech debate today, the legal underpinnings of this first amendment right that applies to public institutions such as our university, and our desire to always preserve discourse in an environment of learning that is safe, welcoming, civil, non-violent, respectful and recognizes the basic humanity of each and every one of us and the value of diversity and inclusion.

Be well, and I look forward to meeting many of you in small groups to continue our dialogue throughout the year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Danielle Laraque-Arena', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Danielle Laraque-Arena, MD, FAAP
President & Health System CEO
SUNY Upstate Medical University