

1 Credo for Free and Responsible Communication in a Democratic Society

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3 *Adopted by the Speech Association of America, 1963; Reaffirmed by the Legislative Assembly*
4 *passing the report and recommendations of the Taskforce on the Public Policy Platform, 2011;*
5 *Legislative Assembly reaffirmed with edits, 2017.*
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7 Recognizing the essential place of free and responsible communication in a democratic society,
8 and recognizing the distinction between the freedoms our legal system should respect and the
9 responsibilities our educational system should cultivate, ~~we members of~~ the National
10 Communication Association ([NCA](#)) endorses the following statement of principles:

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12 WE BELIEVE that freedom of speech and assembly must hold a central position among
13 America's constitutional principles, and we express our determined support for the right of
14 peaceful expression by any communicative means available.

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16 WE SUPPORT the proposition that a free society ~~recognizescan absorb with equanimity speech~~
17 ~~which exceeds the boundaries of generally accepted beliefs and mores;~~ that much good and
18 little harm can ensue if we err on the side of freedom, whereas much harm and little good may
19 follow if we err on the side of suppression.
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21 WE CRITICIZE as misguided those who believe that the justice of their cause confers a license
22 to interfere physically and coercively with the speech of others, and we condemn intimidation
23 ~~that attempts to restrict free expression, whether by powerful majorities or strident minorities,~~
24 ~~which attempts to restrict free expression.~~
25

26 WE ACCEPT the responsibility of cultivating by instructionprecepts and example, in our
27 classrooms and in our communities, enlightened uses of communication; of developing in our
28 students a respect for precision and accuracy in communication, and for reasoning based upon
29 evidence and a judicious discrimination among values.
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31 WE ENCOURAGE our students to accept the role of well-informed and articulate citizens, to
32 defend the communication rights of those with whom they may disagree, and to expose abuses
33 of the communication process.
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35 WE DEDICATE ourselves fully to these principles, confident in the belief that reason and justice
36 will ultimately prevail.
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