

Hearing Before the United States House of
Representatives

Judiciary Committee:

Free Speech on College Campuses

Testimony of Jasmyn Jordan

University of Iowa Class of 2025

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Good morning Chairman Jordan, ranking member Nadler, and members of the committee. My name is Jasmyn Jordan and I am blessed to have this opportunity to speak with you all today. I was raised in the church and homeschooled from preschool-5th grade. Both of these were crucial in shaping my early upbringing and worldview. They gave me the strong foundation of moral beliefs and values that the Constitution was founded on. Lessons like “Iron sharpens Iron”, “Be a leader not a follower”, and “So Help Me God” are ingrained into every aspect of my character. As I progressed to the public school environment, this strong moral compass guided me throughout my journey, and I carried it with me to college.

In Spring 2022, I joined Iowa Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) when I discovered that this organization aligned with the Christian Conservative values instilled in me by my church and family. The more involved I became in the club, the more I discovered that the playing field for freedom of speech on college campuses was not equalized. The first time I noticed this was when Iowa YAF hosted Kellyanne Conway as a speaker. In response, I was doxxed (personal information and photo released) in a group chat of over 800 students, and was falsely labeled as a Nazi, token, white supremacist, and bigot. Some individuals even expressed that I made them uncomfortable and feared that I might commit a hate crime against them simply because I am black and hold conservative principles. These students believe that if you are a conservative, you are hateful, support oppression, and only want to benefit straight, white men even though such beliefs are untrue.

When we hosted Lt. Col. Allen West to speak on our campus last year, he spoke on the topic of “Debunking Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion” and proved that “America is Not Racist”.

We used chalk advertisements to promote the event which is something many colleges do to effectively let students know about upcoming events. Immediately, our chalk was altered, which is a violation of school policy. New messages were put in place saying that Allen West is racist, and that racism is prevalent in schools. At Allen West's Lecture, a protestor stood in the back holding a sign that read, "Stop the alt-right. Punch your local Nazi today." This is blatant irony. Conservatives are slandered by students and faculty as harmful yet here is an obvious example of someone openly delivering a violent threat and they face no repercussions. The entitlement continues.

I find that when a conservative doesn't want to hear a speaker, they do not attend the event. When a leftist does not want to hear a speaker, they do everything they can to shut the lecture down. Our club recently hosted Matt Walsh. Students and faculty were willing to do almost anything to cancel the event just because they found Walsh's speech offensive. Some people were so dedicated to silencing our voices that literally as one of us was advertising with chalk, a leftist student was effacing each of those letters with a wipe. We received death threats along with plenty of verbal harassment. The night before the speaking event, my hallmate stalked outside of my bedroom door by putting his ear on it multiple times to see if I was in my room because he was outraged by my involvement. That was a terrifying experience! When I talked to our Hall Coordinator about this, she replied "People are allowed to think, feel, and react as they want to about the upcoming event". At the event, someone threw 20,000 marbles on the floor to prevent people from entering the venue. Attendees were spat on. Outside, university's own marching band played loud music to try to drown out the speaker's message.

I share these occurrences with you all to show that despite repeatedly meeting with University Administration, the rules are continually permitted to be broken by left-leaning students. They, in fact, are coddled by our school. The University expresses affirmations and puts together “support, solidarity, and celebration spaces”. These individuals act out against conservatives without care or consequence and are empowered to act this way because of the lack of action by the administration and university leaders. Conservative organizations do not get the same resources that these other organizations receive. Conservatives often have to hide who they are and what they believe in so that they do not lose relationships or receive a lower grade or face constant doxxing, harassment, intimidation or threats.

I went to college with the expectation that I would hear different points of view because I thought that it would be a place where young people could come together, disagree, and still be friendly or courteous. However, after two years, I have realized that this is not the case at all and that students who hold opposing views are often subjected to frequent violent threats and other forms of harassment with no accountability.

Our founding fathers guaranteed every US citizen the right to free speech in the Constitution. It is an important resource for all Americans, not just a small percentage of them, particularly if they hold different views and ideas from those of others. To ensure the peaceful continuation of this nation, we must all come to understand that while holding differing opinions and expressing them, we should nevertheless show respect for one another and refrain from causing each other bodily, mental, or emotional harm.