

# INTERNATIONAL

## TRAVEL NEWS

*With footprints around the globe*



Professors fiercely champion free speech. Many believe that unfiltered, even offensive, expression is fundamental to post-secondary academic life. But what about their students? Should student social media posts be punishable, even if they are made off-campus?

This emerging issue in the perpetual battle over free expression speaks to the perils of ever-present devices, ubiquitous wifi and instantaneous communication. Given Bill C-10's potential impact on Canadian online speech, such as the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) potentially regulating content we view on social media, defining the contours of online expression is important.

### **Tinker tailors speech: The disruption test**

Tinker v. Des Moines remains the iconic student expression case. The case involved young activists who wore black armbands to school to protest the Vietnam War. Administrators expelled the students until they removed this "offensive" clothing. The students fought back.

In response, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Abraham Fortas wrote that students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or freedom of expression at the schoolhouse gate," guaranteeing student speech constitutional protection in America.

The Tinker standard became determinative. Expression was protected as long as it did not disrupt education.

Subsequent cases refined Tinker's broad speech protection. Bethel prohibited sexually vulgar speech made during a school assembly. **Hazelwood School District** vs. Kuhlmeier granted a school editorial control over sponsored activities like student newspapers. Morse v. Frederick permitted a school to restrict speech promoting drug use. Mahanoy Area School District v. B.L. involves a cheerleader who was suspended for posting expletives on Snapchat (she had expressed frustration over not making her high school cheerleading squad). This case is currently being decided by the U.S. Supreme Court. Substantial disruption remains the standard.

<https://www.internationaltravelnews.com/news/270008957/campus-free-speech-does-it-extend-to-what-students-say-online>

June 23, 2021

# COMMUNITY NEWS

## High school students accepted into the Emerson STEM Academy

St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley has accepted students from the Ferguson-Florissant, Hazelwood and Ritenour school districts into the Emerson STEM Academy for fall 2021.

Students are selected for the ESA after submitting an application, including essays and recommendations, and completing an interview. Selection for this dual enrollment program is competitive and requires students to meet the following goals by the time of high school graduation:

1. Be interested in pursuing a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math) major or career.
2. Be willing to complete at least 12 hours of college credit before high school graduation.
3. Be willing to take and pass MTH 140 or place into MTH 160 or higher STEM math.
4. Have a cumulative, unweighted GPA of 2.5 or higher (3.0 recommended).

In addition to the academic benefits of taking dual enrollment courses, students in the ESA program also receive the following perks:

- Textbooks, materials and supplies are covered for dual enrollment courses.
- Students have access to the exclusive ESA Suite, which is complete with computers, a place to store belongings and a place to meet.
- Dual enrollment students have access to all the benefits provided to STLCC students, including Universal Pass (U-PASS enables students to ride the MetroBus and MetroLink at no extra cost.), student clubs and activities, Academic Success & Tutoring, Instructional Resources, etc.
- Students have a dedicated STLCC faculty liaison to serve as a mentor.

"I'm pleased to welcome this new group of students into the Emerson STEM Academy and tell them congratulations," said Elizabeth Gassel Perkins, Ed.D. "They met the require-



Photo courtesy STLCC  
ESA students and administrators. Emerson STEM Academy students and administrators share a moment during a breakfast held Dec. 13, 2019.

ments of this competitive program that will enable them to earn college credit, work with mentors and participate in the program's various STEM activities while they are still in high school.

"I'm glad we're able to provide this amazing opportunity to them, and I know this program will only enhance their abilities and prepare them for careers in these areas."

Districts with at least 10 students participating in the ESA program are also eligible to receive up to \$15,000 to-

ward the cost of student transportation from their high school(s) to STLCC for the purpose of participating in dual enrollment courses on campus for fiscal year 2022.

Three renovated engineering classrooms on the campus of St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley is the home of the academy. A \$1 million grant from Emerson awarded in 2016 made the dedicated space and enrichment program possible.

# THE CONVERSATION



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Racialized students account for 40 per cent of undergraduates and graduates at Canadian universities. Weighing unrestricted expression via dynamic technologies against fostering a tolerant public sphere will test the fundamental freedoms we cherish in our democratic society.

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Canada has no formal case law equivalent to *Tinker*, so student online expression rules tend to vary depending on campus policies. For example, the University of Toronto Mississauga suggests that faculty, staff and students who post to institutional accounts follow the Golden Rule in guiding their posts, among other prudent recommendations.