

**Senate File 127 - Introduced**

SENATE FILE 127  
BY GRUENHAGEN

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act establishing a school of intellectual freedom at the  
2 university of Iowa.  
3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

unofficial

1 Section 1. SHORT TITLE. This Act shall be known and may be  
2 cited as the "School of Intellectual Freedom Act".

3 Sec. 2. NEW SECTION. **263C.1 Definitions.**

4 As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise  
5 requires:

6 1. "Board" means the state board of regents.

7 2. "School" means the school of intellectual freedom  
8 established by section 263C.2.

9 3. "University" means the state university of Iowa.

10 Sec. 3. NEW SECTION. **263C.2 School of intellectual  
11 freedom.**

12 1. A school of intellectual freedom is established as an  
13 independent academic unit within the university. The school  
14 shall be physically located in the college of liberal arts and  
15 sciences.

16 2. The school shall conduct teaching and research in the  
17 historical ideas, traditions, and texts that have shaped the  
18 American constitutional order and society.

19 3. The board may name the school in accordance with any  
20 philanthropic naming policies or practices of the board or  
21 university.

22 Sec. 4. NEW SECTION. **263C.3 Functions of the school.**

23 1. The school shall offer instruction in all of the following  
24 subjects:

25 a. The texts and major debates that form the intellectual  
26 foundation of free societies, especially that of the United  
27 States.

28 b. The principles, ideals, and institutions of the American  
29 constitutional order.

30 c. The foundations of responsible leadership and informed  
31 citizenship.

32 2. The school shall offer university-wide programming related  
33 to the values of free speech and civil discourse.

34 3. The school shall work to do all of the following:

35 a. Expand the intellectual diversity of the university's

1 academic community.

2     b. Foster civic engagement among university students and  
3 faculty.

4     4. The school may offer courses; develop certificate, minor,  
5 and major programs as well as graduate programs; and offer  
6 degrees.

7     Sec. 5. NEW SECTION.   **263C.4 Bylaws.**

8     The school shall establish bylaws governing the school subject  
9 to the approval of the dean of the school. In addition to  
10 any other bylaws established, the bylaws shall include all of  
11 the following requirements, which shall take precedence over any  
12 other requirements in the bylaws:

13     1. The school shall educate students by means of free, open,  
14 and rigorous intellectual inquiry to seek the truth.

15     2. The school affirms its duty to equip students with the  
16 skills, habits, and dispositions of mind they need to reach  
17 their own informed conclusions on matters of social and political  
18 importance.

19     3. The school affirms the value of intellectual diversity  
20 in higher education and aspires to enhance the intellectual  
21 diversity of the university.

22     4. The school affirms a commitment to create a community  
23 dedicated to an ethic of civil and free inquiry, which respects  
24 the intellectual freedom of each member, supports individual  
25 capacities for growth, and welcomes the differences of opinion  
26 that naturally exist in a public university community.

27     Sec. 6. NEW SECTION.   **263C.5 Funding — use.**

28     1. The school may accept and administer private and external  
29 donations and gifts.

30     2. Any moneys appropriated to the school, and any private and  
31 external donations to the school, shall be used only for the  
32 direct operation of the school and shall not be used for any  
33 indirect costs of the university.

34     Sec. 7. NEW SECTION.   **263C.6 School faculty.**

35     The university shall employ at least five tenure-eligible

1 faculty members to provide instruction through the school.  
2 Faculty members appointed to the school may hold joint  
3 appointments to other academic units of the university. Faculty  
4 members who are not appointed to the school shall have no  
5 authority to approve, deny, or modify the terms of appointment  
6 of faculty to the school.

7 Sec. 8. NEW SECTION. **263C.7 Academic council.**

8 1. No later than December 31, 2025, the board shall appoint  
9 an academic council for the purpose of assisting in the selection  
10 of a dean of the school pursuant to section 263C.8.

11 2. The board may appoint up to nine members to the council.  
12 No more than one member of the council may be an employee of the  
13 university. A majority of the members appointed to the council  
14 shall constitute a quorum.

15 3. The board shall determine the initial length of each  
16 member's term in accordance with this subsection. A majority  
17 of the members initially appointed to the council shall serve  
18 initial terms of four years. The remaining initially appointed  
19 members shall serve initial terms of two years. The board  
20 shall appoint new members to fill vacancies on the council in  
21 accordance with this section.

22 Sec. 9. NEW SECTION. **263C.8 Appointment of dean.**

23 1. The academic council established under section 263C.7  
24 shall conduct a nationwide search for candidates for the dean of  
25 the school. The council shall strictly adhere to all relevant  
26 state and federal laws in conducting the search. The council  
27 shall submit a list of finalists for the position to the  
28 board, which shall select and appoint the dean from the list.  
29 Subsequent deans shall be chosen in the same manner.

30 2. The dean shall be eligible for tenure.

31 Sec. 10. NEW SECTION. **263C.9 Duties of dean.**

32 1. The dean of the school shall have the sole and exclusive  
33 authority to manage the recruitment and hiring process and to  
34 extend offers for employment for all faculty and staff of the  
35 school and to terminate employment of all staff of the school.

1 2. The dean shall oversee, develop, and approve the  
2 curriculum, courses, and programs of the school.

3 3. The dean shall have the sole and exclusive authority to  
4 invite guest speakers to the university on behalf of the school.

5 4. The dean shall consult with the dean of the college of  
6 liberal arts and sciences when carrying out the dean's duties.  
7 However, the dean shall report directly to the president of the  
8 university or a designee of the president.

9 Sec. 11. NEW SECTION. **263C.10 Annual report.**

10 The dean of the school shall submit an annual report to  
11 the governor, the general assembly, and the board of regents  
12 by December 31. The report shall provide a full account of  
13 the school's achievements and shall identify any opportunities,  
14 challenges, and obstacles in the development of the school.

15 EXPLANATION

16 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with  
17 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

18 This bill establishes a school of intellectual freedom  
19 (school) as an independent academic unit within the university of  
20 Iowa (university). The school shall be physically located in the  
21 college of liberal arts and sciences. The school shall conduct  
22 teaching and research in the historical ideas, traditions, and  
23 texts that have shaped the American constitutional order and  
24 society. The bill authorizes the state board of regents (board)  
25 to name the school in accordance with any philanthropic naming  
26 policies or practices of the board or university.

27 The bill provides functions of the school, including  
28 instruction on specified subjects, offering university-wide  
29 programming related to the values of free speech and civil  
30 discourse, and working to expand the intellectual diversity of  
31 the university's academic community and foster civic engagement  
32 among university students and faculty. The bill authorizes the  
33 school to offer courses; develop certificate, minor, and major  
34 programs as well as graduate programs; and offer degrees.

35 The bill requires the school to establish bylaws and specifies

1 certain subjects that must be included in the bylaws.

2 The bill authorizes the school to accept and administer  
3 private and external donations and gifts. The bill provides  
4 that any moneys appropriated to the school, and any private and  
5 external donations to the school, shall be used only for the  
6 direct operation of the school and shall not be used for any  
7 indirect costs of the university.

8 The bill requires the university to employ at least five  
9 tenure-eligible faculty members to provide instruction through  
10 the school. Faculty members appointed to the school may hold  
11 joint appointments to other academic units. The bill provides  
12 that faculty members who are not appointed to the school shall  
13 have no authority to approve, deny, or modify the terms of  
14 appointment of faculty to the school.

15 The bill requires the board to establish an academic council  
16 no later than December 31, 2025, for the purpose of assisting  
17 in the selection of a dean of the school. The bill provides  
18 for membership and procedures of the council. The bill provides  
19 that the board shall select and appoint the dean from a list of  
20 finalists submitted by the council.

21 The bill provides duties of the dean, including recruitment,  
22 hiring, and termination of employment of school faculty and  
23 staff; overseeing, developing, and approving the curriculum,  
24 courses, and programs of the school; and inviting guest speakers  
25 to the university on behalf of the school. The bill requires  
26 the dean to consult with the dean of the college of liberal  
27 arts and sciences when carrying out the dean's duties. The bill  
28 provides that the dean shall report directly to the president of  
29 the university or a designee of the president.

30 The bill provides that the dean shall be eligible for tenure.

31 The bill requires the dean to submit an annual report to  
32 the governor, the general assembly, and the board of regents  
33 regarding the school.