



Groups Launch Lawsuit Against University of Minnesota for Restricting Student Speech on Gender Identity & Transgender Issues, While Enforcing Pronouns

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[June 22, 2026] On behalf of [Young America's Foundation](#) (YAF), [Southeastern Legal Foundation](#) (SLF) filed a [federal lawsuit against the University of Minnesota](#) (UMN) over its policies that restrict students from speaking on one side of the debate about gender identity and transgenderism while also preventing them from using biological pronouns in reference to trans students.

SLF and YAF argue that these policies are a direct violation of students First Amendment rights. While the University attempts to justify the policies by saying that speech expressing traditional views based in biology and gender identity offends its hearers, the First Amendment does not allow universities, of all places, to restrict student speech just because someone may not agree or like it. The lawsuit argues that these policies are pure viewpoint discrimination, where students are afraid to speak about their views publicly, in fear that they will face severe discipline from the school.

The complaint explains, "Because of these policies, students fear speaking broadly supported ideas like "men should not compete in women's sports or use their bathrooms," or "there are only two genders," or "sex is immutable," or "a man cannot get pregnant," or "a man cannot become a woman, and a woman cannot become a man." They fear speaking because they might be reported and subject to discipline."

SLF President Kim Hermann said, "College campuses are meant to be a place where students are allowed to freely express their views and opinions. The University of Minnesota's actions fly right in the face of this, enforcing policies that prevent students who believe in biological sex from voicing their right to speak freely on gender identity or transgenderism. These students have to walk on eggshells while engaging with these topics, making sure to not voice opinions different from that of the school, or not use biologically correct pronouns of people, in fear of school disciplinary actions. It sounds to me like the school wants to be a safe place for some students but not all."

YAF President Governor Scott Walker said, “The fact that there are any universities in the US attempting to suppress certain views that they deem wrong is a complete outrage. While students at the University of Minnesota should just have to worry about their classwork, they now also have to worry about violating these policies that are infringing on their rights to speak freely. Not only is this unfair to students, and particularly conservative students, but it’s completely unconstitutional.”

Southeastern Legal Foundation is a national, nonprofit legal organization dedicated to defending liberty and Rebuilding the American Republic®. Since 1976, SLF has been going to court for the American people when the government overreaches and violates your constitutional rights.

As the principal outreach organization of the Conservative Movement, Young America’s Foundation is committed to ensuring that increasing numbers of young Americans understand and are inspired by the ideas of individual freedom, a strong national defense, free enterprise, and ^[]traditional values. With more than 60 years of history and by providing essential conferences, seminars, internships, and the largest campus lecture program in America, students around the country know that when they’re under attack, YAF has their back.

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