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# Open Letter: Academic Freedom at IUB

About this petition

An Open Letter on Academic Freedom at Indiana University, Bloomington

We are faculty members of Indiana University, Bloomington. As IU professors who care deeply about academic freedom on our campus, we write to express our serious concern about the recent letter that has been sent by Rep. James Banks (R-IN) to IU President Pamela Whitten. In the letter, Rep. Banks raises questions about whether IU has been sufficiently responsive to antisemitism on campus, and indicates that failure to satisfy his concerns could lead to Congressional investigation and possible funding cuts.

We are alarmed by the threatening tone of the letter, the way in which it injects ideology into the proper governance of the university, and the way it conflates academic leadership with the policing of controversial ideas.

We understand that antisemitism is a form of hate that has no place in a diverse and inclusive university. We feel the same way about all forms of bigotry, including anti-Arab and Islamophobic discrimination and hostility.

We also strongly believe that it is essential to distinguish between real anti-Jewish conduct and pro-Palestinian advocacy. During this time of real crisis, tensions are high, and students, whether Jewish-American or Arab-American, whether “pro-Israeli” or “pro-Palestinian,” are upset, frightened, and feeling defensive. Real moral concerns and political arguments are being voiced. Some of the political rhetoric is no doubt hyperbolic and triggering. But most of this involves serious disagreements and has nothing to do with “hate crime.”

A campus is a place where young people come to learn, to expand their horizons, and to test out ideas and political convictions within the bounds of the law. It is not uncommon for college students to assume strong political positions and sometimes to speak in ways that offend others or strain the limits of academic freedom. We believe that the IU administration has an obligation to maintain safety for everyone on our campus. But we do not believe that any administration should be pressured to treat controversial political speech as a security threat, or to use legitimate safety concerns as a pretext to stifle academic freedom.

If Rep. Banks had written his letter with due concern about both Anti-semitism and Islamophobia; if he had expressed that concern without a threat of federal defunding of the university; if he had not unilaterally mandated a burden of reporting by a strict deadline; and if he had not made it clear that he regarded statements promoting a Palestinian-rights perspective to be intolerable, we would find his letter less inappropriate than we do.

But in the present environment, his letter can only serve to further divide our students, by inhibiting the free expression of ideas—including controversial political ideas—at a time when the exchange of words rather than bullets is sorely needed.

November 19, 2023

Jeffrey C. Isaac, James H. Rudy of Political Science

Purnima Bose, Professor of English and International Studies

Alex Lichtenstein, Professor of History

Benjamin Robinson, Associate Professor of Germanic Studies

## Signatures

1. Name: Abdulkader Sinno (asinno@iu.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:00:36  
Comments:

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2. Name: Amrita Chakrabarti Myers (apmyers@iu.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:00:50  
Comments:

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3. Name: Michael Gasser (gasser@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:02:14  
Comments:

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4. Name: Rebecca J Manring (rmanring@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:07:31  
Comments:

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5. Name: Eileen Julien (ejulien@iu.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:10:54  
Comments:

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6. Name: Andrea Siqueira (asigueir@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:13:49  
Comments:

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7. Name: Stephanie Kane (stkane@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:14:02  
Comments:

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8. Name: David McDonald (davmcdon@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:15:26  
Comments:

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9. Name: Michael Martin (martinmt@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:15:31  
Comments:

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10. Name: Andrew Dabrowski (dabrowsa@iu.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:18:41  
Comments:

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11. Name: Lawrence S Moss (lmoss@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:19:03  
Comments: I'm professor of mathematics here.

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12. Name: Marcia Baron (mbaron@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:19:21  
Comments:

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13. Name: Alison Calhoun (abcalhou@iu.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:24:19  
Comments:

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14. Name: Rega Wood (rega.wood@stanford.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:24:56

Comments:

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15. Name: John Louis Lucaites (lucaites@iu.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:26:08  
Comments:
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16. Name: Michael Grossberg (grossber@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:26:23  
Comments:
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17. Name: Jean Robinson (robinso@iu.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:29:10  
Comments:
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18. Name: Luis Fuentes-Rohwer (lfr@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:41:55  
Comments:
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19. Name: Lessie Frazier (frazierl@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:43:38  
Comments:
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20. Name: Judith Brown (jcb@iu.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:48:11  
Comments:
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21. Name: Robert Terrill (rterrill@iu.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:51:11  
Comments:
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22. Name: Linda Charnes (lcharnes@iu.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:52:27  
Comments:
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23. Name: Amr Sabry (amr.sabry@gmail.com) on 2023-11-19 19:54:28  
Comments:
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24. Name: James Narenore (naremor@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:54:31  
Comments:
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25. Name: Nancy Lipschultz (nlipschu@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:56:11  
Comments:
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26. Name: Abhijit Basu (basu@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 19:59:29  
Comments:
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27. Name: Mary Ellen Brown (brown2@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 20:01:04  
Comments:
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28. Name: Dirk Van Gucht (vgucht@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 20:05:36

Comments:

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29. Name: Joseph Varga Associate Professor Labor Studies (jvarga@iupui.edu) on 2023-11-19  
Comments:

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30. Name: Asaad Alsaleh (alsaleha@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 20:26:24  
Comments:

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31. Name: Jeffrey Gould (gouldj@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 20:27:16  
Comments:

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32. Name: Robert Arnove (arnove@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 20:31:19  
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33. Name: Ishan Ashutosh (iashutos@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 20:31:41  
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34. Name: Giovanni Zanovello (giovzano@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 20:35:32  
Comments:

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35. Name: Robert Arnove (arnove@inndiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 20:37:30  
Comments: Chancellor's Professor Emeritus of Education

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36. Name: Robert Ivie (rivie@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 20:42:58  
Comments: Professor Emeritus in English and American Studies

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37. Name: Laura Ginger (ginger@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 20:43:15  
Comments:

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38. Name: Ivan Kreilkamp (ikreilka@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 20:57:12  
Comments:

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39. Name: Lara Kriegel (lara.kriegel@gmail.com) on 2023-11-19 21:12:48  
Comments:

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40. Name: Nicolas Valazza (nvalazza@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 21:15:53  
Comments:

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41. Name: Mary L Gray (mlg@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 21:18:24  
Comments:

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42. Name: Heather Akou (hakou@iu.edu) on 2023-11-19 21:19:17

Comments:

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43. Name: William E Scheuerman (scheueroos@hotmail.com) on 2023-11-19 21:20:28  
Comments:
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44. Name: Oana Panaité (opanaite@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 21:29:01  
Comments:
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45. Name: Massimo Scalabrini (mscalabr@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 21:42:51  
Comments:
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46. Name: Bob Eno (eno@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 21:52:53  
Comments:
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47. Name: Massimo Ossi (mossi@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 22:08:30  
Comments:
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48. Name: Jack Bielasiak (bielasia@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 22:18:19  
Comments:
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49. Name: Aidan Khamis (ackhamis@iu.edu) on 2023-11-19 22:21:16  
Comments:
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50. Name: malaika khan (kmalaika1999@gmail.com) on 2023-11-19 22:22:13  
Comments:
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51. Name: Asma Afsaruddin (aafsarud@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 22:23:03  
Comments: Class of 1950 Herman B Wells Endowed Professor, Professor of Middle Eastern Languages & Cultures
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52. Name: Afsheen Khan (afsheenkhan@hotmail.com) on 2023-11-19 22:33:06  
Comments:
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53. Name: Oscar Kenshur (okenshur@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 22:43:21  
Comments:
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54. Name: Stephen Vinson (vinsons@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 22:48:09  
Comments: Professor of Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures
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55. Name: Lois Webster (loisawebster@gmail.com) on 2023-11-19 23:01:17  
Comments: All students deserve to feel valued and supported in this difficult time. Caring for the safety and emotional needs of your student body as a whole is your responsibility

regardless of the SOURCE OF YOUR FUNDING!

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56. Name: Lauren M Maclean Arthur Bentley Chair (Macleanl@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 23:04  
Comments:
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57. Name: Maria Bucur (mbucur@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 23:08:15  
Comments:
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58. Name: Ismeta Ahmetasevic (ismetahmetasevic@gmail.com) on 2023-11-19 23:08:33  
Comments:
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59. Name: Joseph Wei (jowei@iu.edu) on 2023-11-19 23:11:02  
Comments:
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60. Name: Micol Seigel (mseigel@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 23:15:16  
Comments:
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61. Name: Leah Shopkow (shopkowl@iu.edu) on 2023-11-19 23:15:37  
Comments: We need to provide protection for all of our students against criminal attack and also to allow all of our students to express legitimate political opinions, even if those opinions do not please others. That is what it means to live in a democracy.
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62. Name: Jane Goodman (janegood@iu.edu) on 2023-11-19 23:17:59  
Comments: Professor of Anthropology
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63. Name: Constance M Furey (cfurey@iu.edu) on 2023-11-19 23:23:25  
Comments:
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64. Name: Aviva Orenstein (aorenste@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-19 23:45:28  
Comments:
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65. Name: Hassnaa Mohammed (hassigns@gmail.com) on 2023-11-19 23:46:18  
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66. Name: Sonia Lee (soslee@iu.edu) on 2023-11-19 23:54:57  
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67. Name: Yusuf elhafy (yusufelhafy@gmail.com) on 2023-11-19 23:59:10  
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68. Name: Julia Roos (roos@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 00:37:38  
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69. Name: Sumit Ganguly (sumitganguly1950@gmail.com) on 2023-11-20 01:04:51  
Comments:
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70. Name: Bradley Levinson (bradley.levinson@gmail.com) on 2023-11-20 01:05:52  
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71. Name: Lynn M Jamieson (lyjamies@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 01:18:05  
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72. Name: James Capshew (jcapshew@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 01:29:18  
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73. Name: John Walbridge (jwalbrid@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 01:29:39  
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74. Name: Diane Henshel (Dhenshel@iu.edu) on 2023-11-20 02:04:33  
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75. Name: Alex Tanford (tanford@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 02:22:14  
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76. Name: Sara Friedman (sfriedm@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 02:44:03  
Comments: Professor of Anthropology and Gender Studies
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77. Name: Enrico Lunghi (elunghi@iu.edu) on 2023-11-20 02:54:06  
Comments:
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78. Name: Mauminah Raina (mraina@iu.edu) on 2023-11-20 03:21:11  
Comments:
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79. Name: Judy Failer (jfailer@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 06:34:22  
Comments:
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80. Name: Stephen Macekura (smacekura@gmail.com) on 2023-11-20 10:12:35  
Comments:
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81. Name: Kausar Siddiqi (kausarfs@comcast.net) on 2023-11-20 13:17:58  
Comments:
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82. Name: nicholae cline (nacline@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 13:40:07  
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83. Name: Aaron Ponce (ajponce@iu.edu) on 2023-11-20 13:45:25  
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84. Name: Patricia Ingham (pingham@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 14:02:57  
Comments:
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85. Name: H Wayne Storey (hstorey@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 14:03:41  
Comments:
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86. Name: Sue Tuohy (stuohy@comcast.net) on 2023-11-20 14:09:51  
Comments: Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology
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87. Name: Kevin J Rottet (krottet@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 14:13:30  
Comments: Department of French and Italian
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88. Name: Freya Thimsen (a.freya.thimsen@gmail.com) on 2023-11-20 14:31:22  
Comments:
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89. Name: Darlene J Sadlier (sadlier@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 14:34:52  
Comments:
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90. Name: Michel Chaouli (chaouli@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 14:48:32  
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91. Name: Talat khan (talatara@hotmail.com) on 2023-11-20 14:52:21  
Comments:
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92. Name: Sabine Lammers (slammers@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 15:09:33  
Comments:
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93. Name: Amy Pickard (pickard@iu.edu) on 2023-11-20 15:12:35  
Comments: Department of Learning, Design, and Adult Education
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94. Name: Teresa Kovacs (tekovacs@iu.edu) on 2023-11-20 15:14:52  
Comments:
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95. Name: Jeffrey Dyer (jefmdyer@iu.edu) on 2023-11-20 15:15:57  
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96. Name: Marianne Kielian-Gilbert (kielian@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 15:55:34  
Comments:

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97. Name: Diana Ojeda (diojeda@iu.edu) on 2023-11-20 16:00:44  
Comments:
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98. Name: Joungmok Lee (jl377@iu.edu) on 2023-11-20 16:14:37  
Comments: Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures
- 
99. Name: Leslie Rutkowski (lrutkows@iu.edu) on 2023-11-20 16:35:56  
Comments:
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100. Name: Cynthia Bannon (cbannon@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 16:38:58  
Comments:
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101. Name: George Dreher (dreher@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 16:48:10  
Comments:
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102. Name: Isabel Planton (iplanton@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 17:10:36  
Comments:
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103. Name: Lane Sorensen (lasorens@iu.edu) on 2023-11-20 17:46:56  
Comments:
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104. Name: Ranu Samantrai (rsamantr@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 18:09:29  
Comments:
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105. Name: Tom duffy (duffy@iu.edu) on 2023-11-20 18:34:12  
Comments: We should be fostering conversations. Not shutting down speech
- 
106. Name: Peter Guardino (pguardin@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 18:53:02  
Comments: Provost Professor, Department of History
- 
107. Name: Sidrah Badar (sidrahbadar210@hotmail.com) on 2023-11-20 19:32:40  
Comments:
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108. Name: Paul Losensky (plosensk@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-20 19:53:35  
Comments:
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109. Name: sandy washburn (swashbur@iu.edu) on 2023-11-20 22:31:53  
Comments:
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110. Name: Olimpia Rosenthal (orosenth@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-21 01:20:13  
Comments:

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111. Name: Ethan Michelson (emichels@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-21 03:06:47  
Comments: Professor, Sociology, East Asian Languages and Cultures
- 
112. Name: Michael Hamburger (hamburg@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-21 04:44:07  
Comments: Professor, Earth & Atmospheric Sciences
- 
113. Name: Gardner Bovingdon (gbovingd@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-21 07:02:06  
Comments:
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114. Name: Jessie A Cook (jessieacook@icloud.com) on 2023-11-21 12:52:28  
Comments:
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115. Name: Jonathan Elmer (elmerj@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-21 13:21:16  
Comments:
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116. Name: Jason Baird Jackson (jasonbairdjackson@gmail.com) on 2023-11-21 14:13:01  
Comments:
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117. Name: Kody Steffy (ksteffy@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-21 14:14:47  
Comments:
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118. Name: Rebekah Sheldon (rsheldon@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-21 15:11:34  
Comments:
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119. Name: Shannon Gayk (shannongayk@gmail.com) on 2023-11-21 15:12:55  
Comments: Associate Professor of English
- 
120. Name: Joshua Kates (jkates@indiana.edu) on 2023-11-21 16:00:12  
Comments:
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121. Name: Ricardo Guzman (riguzman@iu.edu) on 2023-11-21 16:01:55  
Comments: Associate Professor of Spanish
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