

Position Statement on Official Communications Concerning Tragic Global Events and Ongoing Crises

Tragic global events and ongoing crises (including geopolitical tensions, war, terrorism, conflict, and other situations) are often complex, contested, and may be understood differently across our community.

In recognition of this diversity of perspective and the sensitive nature of such events, this statement seeks to clarify when Yorkville University and Toronto Film School (“Yorkville”) will issue official communications, when it will not, and how members of the community can access support.

Our Goals

Our approach to institutional communication during global crises is guided by three goals:

- Consistency and transparency about Yorkville’s *institutional voice*—when the university speaks publicly as an institution.
- Protection of academic freedom, so members of our community can learn, discuss, debate, and respectfully disagree.
- Ensure support resources are visible and accessible, without requiring a new university statement each time a global crisis occurs.

What We Will Do

Yorkville will focus on actions that are within our direct responsibility and control, including:

- Sharing and promoting support resources for students and employees through reminders distributed at the start of each semester.
- Maintaining a respectful learning and working environment.
- Responding to discrimination, harassment, and safety concerns through established institutional processes.

- Providing guidance and communication when an event affects Yorkville's operations, safety, or legal obligations.

What We Will Not Do

In general, Yorkville will not issue official statements regarding:

- Wars and international conflicts
- Geopolitical crises
- Contested political, social, or moral debates that are not directly connected to Yorkville's mission, safety, operations, governance, or legal responsibilities

This does not mean the university is indifferent to these events or their impacts. Rather, it reflects a commitment to avoid speaking on behalf of a community that includes many perspectives, and to avoid creating an expectation that the university should comment on every major global development.

When Yorkville May Issue an Official Statement

Yorkville may issue an official institutional statement only when there is a clear Yorkville-specific reason to do so, such as:

- Impacts on safety or university operations
- Issues connected to Yorkville's mission, governance, or legal responsibilities
- Threats to academic freedom or freedom within the university environment
- Discrimination, harassment, or bias-related concerns affecting members of our community
- Domestic incidents or crises within Canada that affect our community or operations

If an Official Statement Is Issued

When Yorkville does issue an institutional statement under the limited conditions above, it will:

- Focus on Yorkville-related impacts, such as safety, operations, student and employee support, and where to access help.
- Provide clear links and direction to support resources and reporting pathways.
- Avoid attempting to explain or adjudicate complex geopolitical disputes where the university is not positioned to speak for the entire community.

- Avoid language that suggests everyone at Yorkville shares a single perspective.

Students, staff, and faculty may express personal views publicly, including on political, social, and geopolitical matters. When doing so, it's important that the expression of views is done so using personal accounts and not those affiliated with Yorkville, i.e. Yorkville email, LMS, etc. For further clarity, a disclaimer is often helpful, such as: "Views are my own and do not represent Yorkville University [or Toronto Film School]."

Reminder of Available Supports:

GuardMe Student Support Program (GMSSP)

Available 24/7 to all eligible students, GMSSP offers confidential support tailored to individual needs.

- One-on-one professional counselling
- Support for stress, anxiety, grief, and emotional well-being
- Culturally responsive counselling options
- Digital self-help tools, podcasts, and peer support resources

How to access GMSSP:

- Download the **TELUS Health Student Support** app
- Call **1-844-451-9700**
- Visit www.gmssp.org

Yorkville University & Toronto Film School Mental Health and Wellness Counsellors

Students may also access counselling and wellness support directly through our internal services.

- Email: wellness@yorkvilleu.ca
- Book an appointment:
 - Yorkville University
 - Toronto Film School

Accessibility & Academic Accommodations

If you require academic accommodations or additional support related to your studies, our Accessibility and Academic Accommodations team is here to help: <https://success.yorkvilleu.ca/accessibility/information-for-students>