

## Resist censorship in response to threats of violence

Contributed by Chris Goff  
Tuesday, 01 December 2009

The National Coalition Against Censorship, along with Free Exchange on Campus members including the American Association of University Professors, the American Civil Liberties Union, the American Federation of Teachers, the Modern Language Association, the National Education Association, and the People for the American Way Foundation (among others), has released a Call to Action over censorship in response to threats of violence. The call to action was prompted by the Yale University Press's decision to remove cartoons featuring images of the Prophet Mohammed from a scholarly work, citing a fear of religiously-motivated violence.

"The failure to stand up for free expression emboldens those who would attack and undermine it. It is time for colleges and universities in particular to exercise moral and intellectual leadership," the groups said in the statement.

"Self-censorship is a way of avoiding issues that should be addressed and avoiding responsibility for being part of the conversation," said Joan E. Bertin, NCAC's Executive Director. "The right to free speech is meaningless if it can be defeated simply by saying that someone might take offense and lash out."

The full text of the statement can be found [here](#).