

# PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE: REAFFIRMING THE VALUE OF EVERY HUMAN LIFE

Thursday, September 11, 2025

To the campus community,

Yesterday, Charlie Kirk was fatally shot while speaking at Utah Valley University. There is no place for violence on college campuses or anywhere, and we unequivocally denounce this terrible act and reaffirm the value of every human life.

One reason universities exist is to build understanding across differences. At Oakland University, we welcome a diversity of viewpoints, including those that challenge us, to help prepare thoughtful global citizens who can contribute to a pluralistic society. In today's polarized environment, such respectful critical thinkers are needed now more than ever – for civility is the key to truly hearing one another and building bridges across divides.

As we begin another academic year, I ask each of you to join me in modeling civil discourse. Let's commit to recognizing our common humanity and listening to one another with curiosity and humility. That does not mean we must agree on everything; the free exchange of competing ideas is essential to advance knowledge. Protesting is also a valuable form of expression, so long as it does not escalate to violence and follows our [time, place and manner requirements](#). But civility does mean upholding the dignity and worth of all Golden Grizzlies. Such a commitment to respect and pluralism underpins the work of our [Center for Civic Engagement](#), and I encourage community members to explore its programming.

While we welcome viewpoint diversity and free speech on campus, we do hold a firm line against violence, discrimination, intimidation and unlawful harassment. Every student, faculty and staff member has the right to safety on campus, and we are determined to uphold an inclusive and welcoming learning environment. If you experience or witness a concerning incident, please report it to our [Dean of Students office](#). I also encourage you to visit our [student services webpage](#) to learn more about our safety and health resources, including the [OU Counseling Center](#), which is available to all students, staff and faculty.

I hope you will join me this year in elevating civil discourse. As we also remember the tragic events of September 11, we are reminded that violence is never the answer. All of us belong at OU, and together we can make our university a model of dialogue and civility.

Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D.  
President