

Hate speech

What's Hate Speech?

Imagine someone saying nasty things or encouraging violence towards another person just because of their race, religion, gender, or who they love. That's hate speech. The Cambridge Dictionary describes it as speech that promotes hate or violence based on factors like race, religion, or sexual orientation.

Keep in mind, hate speech isn't just words. It can be an action, a gesture, or even an online post. This can happen among students among teachers/employees, or among teachers/employees and students.

At Faculty of Medicine (shortened as LF MU), everyone believes in a safe space free from hate. They make sure students and staff feel safe and respected.

Where Do People Face Hate Speech?

Sadly, you can come across hate speech almost anywhere – in schools, on the streets, or even while browsing the internet from your home. Nowadays, the internet is a big source of hate speech.

What About Freedom of Speech?

LF MU values everyone's right to express themselves. The law and university rules protect this freedom. But remember, just because you can say something doesn't mean you should. Think of it this way: your freedom to speak stops where it might hurt someone else. If speech is harmful or crosses a line, it's not protected and should be stopped.

Examples: What's Okay and What's Not

1. Saying: *"I think John is clumsy, silly, and can't behave."*
✓ This might not be nice, but it's an opinion about an individual.
2. Saying: *"Group Y, where John belongs, is a huge problem because they're all thieves and should be wiped out in the worst way."*
✗ Not okay! This is targeting an entire group and promoting harm.

When you're not sure if what you're saying is okay, ask yourself: *"Is my statement hurting or limiting someone else's freedom?"* or *"Can my words harm someone?"* If the answer is yes, be careful!

You could find yourself in trouble, facing disciplinary actions or even legal sanctions.

What Happens if You Cross the Line at University?

If you make a not-so-nice comment related to life at the university, the Disciplinary Committee of LF MU might step in. Why? Because it might count as disciplinary offence of "intolerant rude behavior" (based on certain rules). And if it's serious, you might even risk getting kicked out.

But What If It's Really Bad?

If what you said or did is super harmful, it could be considered as a crime under Act No. 40/2009 Coll., the Criminal Code. Think of it like this: if you're motivated by hate because someone is from a certain group, and you act on it or promote violence, that's really serious. The law has specific sections that spell out these crimes. You could face fines, community service, or even jail.

Who Should You Talk To If You See Hate Speech?

If you hear or face hate speech, don't stay silent. You can reach out to the MU Ombudsman or even the Dean to let them know. If it's super serious and might be a crime, consider contacting the police or prosecutor's office.

Crimes under Act No. 40/2009 Coll., Criminal Code:

§ 352 Violence against a group of the population and against the individual

If you threaten a group of people/an individual with death, harm, or significant damage, or use violence against people because of their background, you can be put in prison (max. 3 years).

§ 353 Dangerous threats

If you threaten another with death, serious harm in such a way as to cause reasonable apprehension, you could be sent to prison (max. 1 year).

§ 354 Dangerous pursuit

If you are stalking someone for a long time, persistently contact them online or threatening to harm them, you will also be sent to prison (max. 3 years).

§ 355 Defamation of nation, race, ethnic or other group of persons

If you publicly defame other nation, race, ethnic group, language, political opinion or religion, you could end up in jail (max. 3 years).

§ 356 Incitement to hatred against a group of people or to restriction of their rights and freedoms

If you publicly conspire, incite hatred towards a nation, race, religion, class or other group of people or limit the rights and freedoms of their members, you could end up in jail (max. 3 years).

§ 403 Establishment, support and promotion of a faction aimed at the suppression of human rights and freedoms

If you establish, support or promote faction which openly proclaims racial, national, religious or class hatred, you will be imprisoned (max. 10 years).

§ 403a Dissemination of works for the promotion of a faction aimed at the suppression of human rights and freedoms

If you produce, import, export, offer, mediate or sell work which is related to support for faction suppressing human rights, in large amounts, you will end up in prison (max. 6 years).

§ 404 Expression of sympathy for a faction aimed at the suppressing human rights and freedoms

If you publicly show sympathy for the faction which is against human rights, you will be imprisonment (max. 3 years).

§ 405 Denying, questioning, endorsing and justifying genocide

If you publicly deny, approve or attempt to justify genocide or other war crimes, you will end up in prison (max. 3 years).

EN materials for more information:

DEL VIGNA, F., CIMINO, A., DELL'ORLETTA, F., PETROCCHI, M. and M. TESCONI. *Hate me, hate me not: Hate speech detection on Facebook*. Italy: University of Pisa, 2017. Available from:

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Fabio-Del-Vigna/publication/316971988_Hate_me_hate_me_not_Hate_speech_detection_on_Facebook/links/591af15d0f7e9beed7f5ff61/Hate-me-hate-me-not-Hate-speech-detection-on-Facebook.pdf

WARNER, W. and J. Hirschberg. *Detecting Hate Speech on the World Wide Web*. New York: Columbia University, 2012. Available from: <https://aclanthology.org/W12-2103.pdf>

BLEICH, E. The Rise of Hate Speech and Hate Crime Laws in Liberal Democracies. In: *Journal of Ethic and Migration Studies*, vol. 37, 2011, p. 917-934. Available from:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1369183X.2011.576195>