



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY COUNSEL

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November 18, 2020

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL (sabrina.conza@thefire.org)

Sabrina Conza
510 Walnut Street, Suite 1250
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Dear Ms. Conza:

Thank you for your letter concerning the UNC Housing Media Relations Policy and for taking the time to speak with us about this policy on November 5, 2020. We appreciate your feedback on this policy, and the on-going relationship we have enjoyed with the Foundation.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill takes seriously our commitment to protecting free expression and the free speech rights of our students and employees. We have had a green-light rating from your organization for many years now and we are proud of that recognition.

As we discussed, the First Amendment does allow employers to place some limits on the speech rights of employees, while respecting their right to speak as private citizens. I have attached a copy of the newly revised UNC Housing Media Relations Policy.

The First Amendment is a cherished value to us as the nation's first public university. We look forward to working with you in the future in this commitment to free speech rights for our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kristen S. Lewis".

Kristen Simonsen Lewis
Assistant University Counsel



Staff Media Relations Policy

The purpose of this policy is to assist Carolina Housing staff members to respond to media inquiries concerning matters related to their employment. Please note that this Policy does not limit employees' ability to comment on their personal experiences, as long as the employee refrains from sharing confidential information about Carolina students or other University employees, including resident advisors.

Any media requests for a statement about a Housing matter (excluding non-confidential personal experiences or reflections) must be directed to the staff member's supervisor. The supervisor will then share the request with either the Director of Administrative Services (currently Rick Bradley) or the Executive Director of Carolina Housing (currently Allan Blattner). These senior staff members will work directly with University Media Relations staff to determine an appropriate response.

This Policy is not intended to limit employees' rights under the First Amendment to speak as private citizens.

Any questions about this policy should be directed to Allan Blattner at housing@unc.edu.