



Zach Greenberg <zach.greenberg@thefire.org>

Letter from the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression, October 13, 2022

Carrie Ryan Gallia <ryang001@umn.edu>
To: "zach.greenberg@thefire.org" <zach.greenberg@thefire.org>

Wed, Oct 19, 2022 at 11:46 AM

Dear Zach,

Thank you for your letter. I understand that Dean Tolar may have sent you an email yesterday afternoon that was intended for a different recipient. He has in fact referred your letter to me for a response. As you know, the University takes seriously its obligations under the First Amendment, as it recognizes the free exchange of ideas as one of its cornerstones.

Please know that the oath at the White Coat Ceremony addressed in your letter is entirely ceremonial in nature. First-year medical students are not required to recite the oath or participate in it in any way, and their progress in medical school does not depend on the recitation of the oath. In other words, the University does not compel any medical student to engage in speech. Instead, the oath writing committee, comprising students in the first-year class, works collaboratively to draft an oath that represents the values of many of the members of that class, and first-year medical students are invited to recite the oath. Those who decline to participate in the oath are free to do so without pressure or repercussion.

Best regards,
Carrie

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