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Dr. Carlos Campo Response to 9_8 Letter from FIRE

Lindsie Rank <lindsie.rank@thefire.org>
To: Aaron Ross <aross23@ashland.edu>
Cc: Carlos Campo <ccampo@ashland.edu>

Thu, Sep 21, 2023 at 2:12 PM

President Campo,

SPFI appreciates your response to our latest correspondence, as well as your administration's [efforts to restate](#) its commitments to academic and press freedom. These are great strides toward restoring trust in Ashland's promises of expressive freedoms.

While we understand Ashland likely believes delegating the responsibility of prior review of *The Collegian* to its adviser resolves the censorial issue, this change unfortunately does not alleviate our concerns. Officially-mandated prior review constitutes censorship, even when delegated to a faculty member. Further, this system defies the proper role of a student media adviser to provide pre-publication advice when asked, offer post-publication feedback, and give training to equip student journalists, but not to direct or review all content before publication. This is why the College Media Association — the national organization of college media advisers — includes in its [code of ethics](#) that advisers should “[d]efend, critique and teach without censoring, editing, directing or producing.” Requiring *The Collegian*'s faculty adviser to review content before publication also raises academic freedom concerns. The arrangement puts additional pressure on the faculty adviser, who may fear reprisal if he does not ensure content satisfies Ashland administrators. This concern is not abstract in light of the controversy surrounding Ted Daniels' dismissal.

We recognize Ashland's efforts to renew its commitments to expressive freedom, and we look forward to the university removing all requirements that *The Collegian* undergo prior review. We would also welcome further action by Ashland, such as an email to all faculty, providing further reassurances that their pedagogy will not jeopardize their employment. SPFI is optimistic that we can work together to ensure all members of the Ashland community, including student journalists and faculty members, feel free to engage in expression.

Best,

Lindsie Rank*
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