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THE FIRE QUARTERLY

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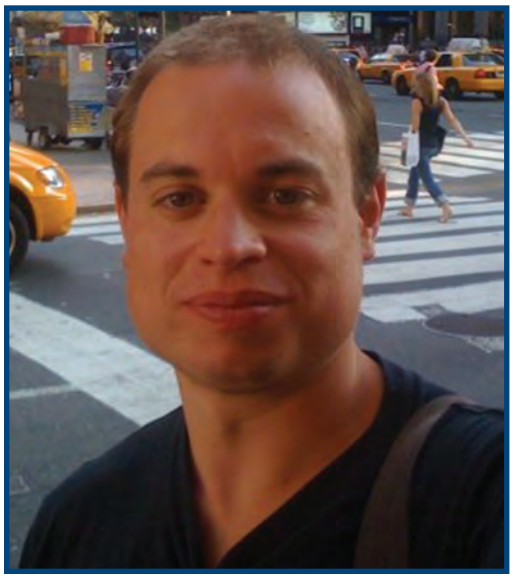
Victory: Syracuse University Drops Allegations Against Student Blogger

Syracuse University College of Law (SUCOL) dropped its prosecution of law student Len Audaer after threatening him with severe punishment for "harassment" over his role in a fake-news parody blog about life in law school. "Independent prosecutor" and SUCOL professor Gregory Germain had threatened Audaer with expulsion for more than three months over the satire posted anonymously on the blog *SUCOLitis*. Germain refused to reveal what expression in particular justified the charges, or even who was charging him, unless Audaer signed a highly restrictive gag order on himself and the press that would have kept the key details of his case a secret.



Len Audaer

"Sunlight has again proved one of the best disinfectants," FIRE President Greg Lukianoff said. "Just days after FIRE named Syracuse in *The Huffington Post* as one of the worst universities in the nation for free speech, Syracuse dropped the entire prosecution. Without national attention to Syracuse's violations of its own promises of free speech, Professor Germain could have ended Audaer's career before it started."

Audaer's ordeal began on October 15, 2010, when he was summoned to a meeting with SUCOL Associate Professor of Law Gregory Germain due to "extremely serious" charges. In the meeting, held on October 18, Audaer learned that the charges involved "harassment" for his alleged involvement with *SUCOLitis*. The blog emulated *The Onion* and attributed obviously fake quotes to SUCOL students, faculty, and staff. The blog included a disclaimer stating, "No actual news stories appear on the site," and was designed to be hidden from Internet search engines like Google.

Germain had threatened Audaer with harassment charges despite not knowing for sure whether Audaer had any relationship to *SUCOLitis*. *SUCOLitis* attributed its publication to a "team of scarily talented 2 and 3L students."

FIRE wrote Syracuse University Chancellor Nancy Cantor on October 25, pointing out that the investigation violated Syracuse's binding promises of free speech and that the content of *SUCOLitis* fell far outside of Syracuse's definition—and the state and federal definitions—of harassment. SUCOL Dean Hannah R. Arterian responded on November 1, stating that the investigation would continue.

Then, Germain demanded that Audaer and his attorney, Mark Blum (SUCOL '91), sign a gag order as a condition of gaining any documentation of his case. Provisions for such an order are nowhere to be found among SUCOL's procedures for addressing code of conduct violations. Germain then officially proposed the gag order to the SUCOL Code of Student Conduct Hearing Panel. Contrary to Syracuse's false public statement about the gag order (which was never issued), it would have effectively prevented any media from reporting on the case using case documents, and it would have prevented Audaer from interviewing witnesses.

Continued on page 4



From the Vice President of Programs

Adam Kissel

College students I meet as a FIRE lecturer, whether they are in California, Iowa, or Virginia, appear increasingly aware of *who* is violating their constitutional rights on campus. As the army of campus administrators grows and intrudes into more aspects of a student's daily life—both on and off campus, on Facebook, in the dorms—students can hardly avoid them anywhere. It's one thing to muddle through a few hours of class per week, quite another to face a "community values"-thumping administrator at every turn, wielding the campus speech code.

Today's college freshman arrives on campus to be handed a statement of values, sometimes called a pledge or a creed, sometimes with disciplinary force or just enough ambiguity to scare or shame students into compliance. If a college really trusted in the quality of its education, however, I think the college would say something like this:

"We deeply want you to graduate from our fine college with this wonderful array of values and virtues. Our curriculum is designed to persuade you that these are indeed the best and most noble moral views for a person to have. But we also want you to learn how to think for yourself. We are not going to liberate you from the values of your home community only to impose new values upon you. Maybe you will agree with some of our views and not others, change your mind a few times, or graduate with a much deeper and more disciplined understanding of the views you have today. Fine—so long as you have made your views fully your own.

"You'll probably offend one another a lot as you work out your deepest beliefs and challenge one another to think your best thoughts. That's one sign that our curriculum is working. When you feel offended, don't come to us to punish the offender, but fight argument with argument and try to meet 'bad' speech with 'better' speech, recognizing that others might be just as eager to persuade you as you are to persuade them."

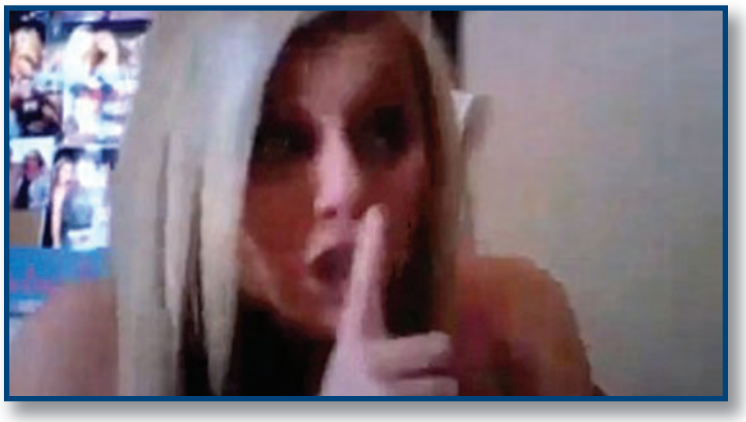
This message resonates with the students I meet. Unfortunately, it is the opposite of what they hear on campus. They get mass e-mails about the latest "bias incident" on campus—and they laugh at how seriously and gravely a low-level dean takes the kind of language they use with one another every day. They are strongly encouraged to report on one another's allegedly biased thoughts. Resident Assistants are sometimes trained (as at the University of Georgia) to call in the campus police when something that might be deemed offensive is written on the dry erase board on a student's dorm room door—and the police actually come. An "intervention team" springs into immediate action as the "first responders" when someone reports on someone else's biases. Students are also encouraged to report "bias incidents" involving their professors.

Meanwhile, behavioral intervention teams are encouraged to imagine a continuum of aggressive behavior from arguing with your girlfriend to being the next mass murderer on campus. Special software can be bought by student life administrators to record and categorize incidents in a database—including such completely innocent outbursts as a student angrily claiming that someone else "stole" a student government election. Worried about liability for *not* knowing what is happening off campus, administrators buy more software to keep tabs on online expression.

The students I meet appreciate the idea that campus bureaucrats need to show they are solving significant problems on campus so that they can stay employed and their portfolios can grow. The latest Vice President for Solving a Serious Problem, at a salary of hundreds of thousands of dollars per year, together with a problem-solving investigative tribunal, needs to demonstrate a lot of successful prosecutions of Violators Causing the Problem. That often involves a lot of intrusion on the innocent private lives of students using money that could have been spent on, say, financial aid, or not spent at all.

One line that often gets a chuckle from college students is our old chestnut, "If you aren't regularly offended at college, you should ask for your money back." Today's students—the ones who are paying attention to their individual rights—see more and more reasons why they should be asking for some of their money back.





UCLA Drops Disciplinary Investigation of Student's YouTube Rant

In a victory for the First Amendment, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) dropped its disciplinary investigation of a student's "Asians in the Library" YouTube video. Following UCLA's announcement, however, student Alexandra Wallace released a statement apologizing and indicating that she was leaving UCLA for "personal safety reasons," including threats against her and her family.

"We are pleased that UCLA will not attempt to punish Alexandra Wallace for her constitutionally protected speech. The cure for 'bad' speech is 'better' speech, and the outpouring of parody and criticism of Wallace's video demonstrates once again that our nation's First Amendment tradition of vigorous discourse is the best way to handle speech controversies," said FIRE President Greg Lukianoff. "However, the fact that Wallace cites fear for her safety among her reasons for leaving UCLA is deeply troubling. Serious threats of physical harm are not protected by the First Amendment, and FIRE urges UCLA and local law enforcement to continue to investigate any credible threats of violence against Alexandra Wallace in the wake of her video."

In the video, which has been viewed on YouTube more than six million times, Wallace mocks Asian students who speak in Asian languages on their cell phones in the library, including those students inquiring about the safety of loved ones following the recent disasters in Japan. Wallace also complains about Asian students whose families do chores for them. After UCLA officials announced an investigation of the video for possible charges, including harassment, FIRE sent UCLA Chancellor Gene D. Block a letter on March 15, 2011, urging him to end any investigation of Wallace's speech because the content of the video is protected by the First Amendment.

FIRE's letter reminded Chancellor Block that, as a public institution, UCLA is bound by the First Amendment and cannot lawfully punish students for engaging in protected speech. FIRE noted that Wallace's speech failed to meet the legal definition of peer-on-peer hostile environment harassment announced by the Supreme Court in *Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education* (1999), defining actionable harassment as conduct that is "so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive, and that so undermines and detracts from the victims' educational experience, that the victim-students are effectively denied equal access to an institution's resources and opportunities."

Following FIRE's letter, UCLA School of Law Professor Eugene Volokh discussed the controversy and FIRE's view on his popular legal blog, *The Volokh Conspiracy*, agreeing with FIRE that Wallace's speech was protected by the First Amendment and therefore could not serve as grounds for punishment. On March 18, *The New York Times* editorial board also urged UCLA not to punish Wallace, quoting Professor Volokh and noting the importance of First Amendment rights on campus.

Meanwhile, many responses to Wallace's video were posted on YouTube by UCLA students and others, voicing a wide range of commentary prompted by Wallace's views.

While many students and others responded to Wallace's protected speech with speech of their own, UCLA student newspaper the *Daily Bruin* reported that police were investigating threats against Wallace and were "working to ensure her safety." True threats of violence are not protected by the First Amendment. In the 2003 case *Virginia v. Black*, the Supreme Court ruled that "those statements where the speaker means to communicate a serious expression of an intent to commit an act of unlawful violence to a particular individual or group of individuals" do not enjoy First Amendment protection.

Arizona State University Eliminates Speech Code, Earning FIRE's 'Green Light' Rating



In February, Arizona State University (ASU) eliminated its unconstitutional speech code, earning a coveted "green light" rating from FIRE. While more than two thirds of the nation's colleges maintain policies that clearly and substantially restrict freedom of speech, ASU is now a proud exception, having revised a policy that unconstitutionally restricted the free speech of students and student organizations on campus.

"Arizona State University should be commended for making this simple but important change to guarantee the First Amendment rights of its students," FIRE President Greg Lukianoff said. "We hope that more colleges will follow its example and reform their codes to protect free speech."

FIRE first contacted ASU in September 2010 about its "Advertising and Posting" policy for student organizations. Because of its viewpoint restrictions, student groups taking unpopular views on controversial issues could easily have run afoul of the policy. In January, ASU General Counsel José Cárdenas notified FIRE that ASU would revise the policy in light of FIRE's concerns. The new policy, instead of stating that advertising must not include certain types of controversial expression, provides that campus postings "*should* be consistent with ASU's policy of discouraging demeaning, sexual or discriminatory portrayal of individuals or groups." (Emphasis added.)

Cárdenas assured FIRE that the language change reflects the policy's aspirational nature and that students would not be punished under the policy for constitutionally protected expression.

ASU, with a total enrollment of more than 60,000 students, is the largest university to have a "green light" rating. Although only 14 schools have a "green light" rating, the list has grown in recent years. Both the University of Virginia and The College of William & Mary recently eliminated their speech codes to earn green lights.

"ASU and the other 'green light' schools are leading the way for free speech on campus," said Samantha Harris, FIRE's Director of Speech Code Research. "We hope that this exciting development will inspire other universities to work with FIRE to protect the free speech rights their students deserve."

Continued from page 1

On January 27, 2011, FIRE named Syracuse in *The Huffington Post* as one of the worst universities in the nation for free speech. Syracuse then prematurely released a statement similar to the statement it had been negotiating confidentially with Audaer and Blum in mediation. The version Syracuse released was false and misleading.

During negotiations, Syracuse had also pressured Audaer to agree to never criticize Syracuse for its prosecution. Rejecting Syracuse's plan to completely muzzle him, Audaer instead voluntarily posted an apology in his own words on his website. Later, Syracuse informed Audaer and his attorney that it had dropped the case without conditions and that no charges would be filed against Audaer.

FIRE had been preparing to add Syracuse to FIRE's Red Alert list of the "worst of the worst" colleges for free speech—those schools displaying the most severe and ongoing disregard for the fundamental rights of their students or faculty members. Now, Syracuse will not be added to the list despite Syracuse's restrictive speech code, which clearly and substantially violates Syracuse's stated commitment to free speech.

"From beginning to end, Gregory Germain and Syracuse in general botched everything about this case," FIRE Vice President of Programs Adam Kissel said. "Many thanks to Audaer's attorney, Mark Blum, for volunteering his services. FIRE hopes that the public relations nightmare stemming from this case will teach Syracuse University to stop threatening students with expulsion for expression that is supposedly protected by Syracuse's own binding promises of free speech."

THE HUFFINGTON POST

FIRE in *The Huffington Post* on America's 12 Worst Schools for Free Speech



On January 27, 2011, *The Huffington Post* published FIRE's list of America's 12 Worst Schools for Free Speech. An expansion of FIRE's Red Alert list of the "worst of the worst" schools for student and faculty rights, this "dirty dozen" slideshow includes the schools that come onto FIRE's radar screen again and again for their repeated and egregious violations of fundamental rights, as well as schools whose policies are so bad that they simply had to be included.

For many FIRE supporters, the presence of most of these schools on our list was not a surprise. They included Syracuse University, DePaul University, SUNY Binghamton, UMass Amherst, Yale University, Bucknell University, Michigan State University, Colorado College, Tufts University, Brandeis University, Johns Hopkins University, and Marshall University.

Bucknell, Michigan State, Colorado College, Brandeis, Tufts, and Johns Hopkins already comprise FIRE's Red Alert list. For the six schools not included on this list, FIRE staff members used experience as a guide. Which administrations have failed over and over again? Which ones just don't seem to get it? The exception was Marshall University in West Virginia, which made the list simply because it had so many policies that so thoroughly violated students' First Amendment rights. Marshall represents the wide swath of universities that maintain unconstitutional speech codes.

The Huffington Post list tripled FIRE's daily Web traffic throughout the first week and inspired an explosive 470 reader comments. The slideshow also resulted in at least 25 news articles and blog posts linking to the dirty dozen. Within days, Syracuse dropped the investigation that had landed the school at the top of the list, and Marshall announced it would review and update its policies.

FIRE's slideshow can be viewed at http://huff.to/gjCEs8. Please be on the lookout for a second *Huffington Post* slide show for America's best colleges for free speech.

From the CFN
CAMPUS FREEDOM NETWORK

FIRE Staff at Student Conferences

Over the past few months, FIRE staff have interacted with students at key student conferences, including the Students For Liberty International Conference (ISFLC) and the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC). At the conferences, FIRE staff signed up approximately 100 students for the Campus Freedom Network, passed out copies of the 2011 *Spotlight* report and FIRE's new *Challenging Your College's Speech Code* pamphlet for potential student plaintiffs, and talked to hundreds of students about current threats to freedom on campus. This year at CPAC, FIRE's Vice President of Programs, Adam Kissel, spoke on a panel entitled "Defending Free Speech on Campus," and his address helped spread FIRE's message to a ballroom full of student attendees at the conference.



FIRE Co-founder Alan Charles Kors joins FIRE staff members at CPAC

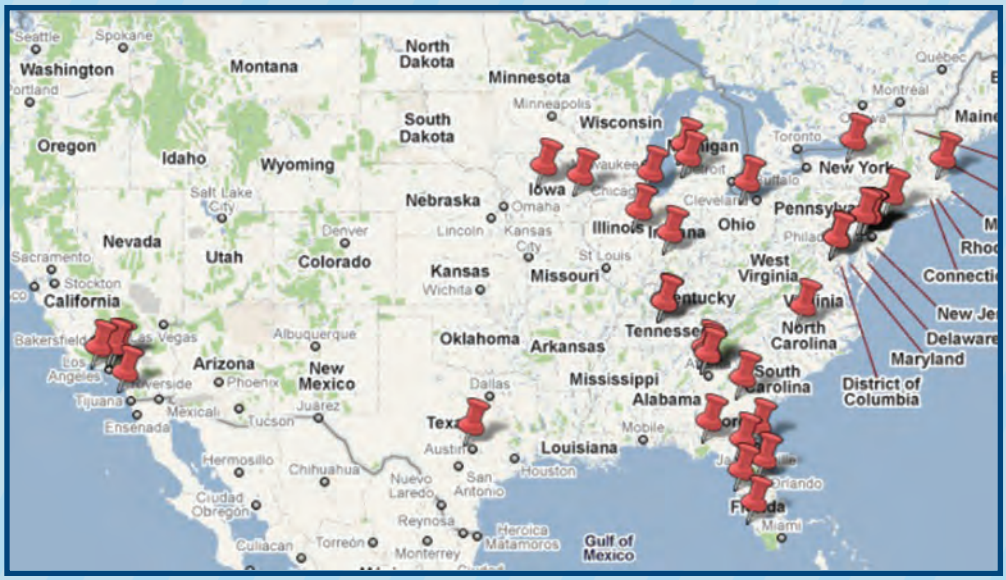
Meeting students face-to-face at these conferences is one of the most fun and effective ways the CFN reaches out to engage new students each year. ISFLC and CPAC are just two of the many student conferences that FIRE attends to inform students of their rights and spread our nonpartisan message of protecting free speech on college campuses. We are looking forward to attending the annual Campus Progress conference in Washington, D.C. this summer, as well as the Students For Liberty (SFL) regional conferences in the fall.

–Jaclyn Hall, Campus Freedom Network Associate Director

PLEASE VISIT

FIRE's SPOTLIGHT
THE CAMPUS FREEDOM RESOURCE

for comprehensive information on the state of liberty on America's campuses, including pages for individual academic institutions, relevant links to our research of speech codes, and case materials from FIRE's Individual Rights Defense Program.



FIRE Speakers Bureau

The Campus Freedom Network's Speakers Bureau has had a busy year! Through the Speakers Bureau, students can invite FIRE speakers to their universities to tell their fellow students about threats to liberty on campus and teach them how to defend their rights.

FIRE works to change the culture of college censorship by talking to student audiences directly about their rights on campus. By the end of the 2010-2011 school year, FIRE speakers will have addressed students at more than 35 events, including campus speeches and major student conferences like CPAC and SFL regional conferences. The Speakers Bureau is a crucial tool for FIRE to spread our message on campus, and we are proud that our engaging staff is in such high demand. FIRE speakers are already scheduled to speak on more than 20 campuses in 2011, including Claremont-McKenna College, Vanderbilt University, University of California San Diego, Pepperdine University, University of South Florida, Florida State University, University of Florida, Oberlin College, Iowa State University, and American University.

Save the Date: 2011 CFN Conference July 14–16

We are excited to announce that the 2011 Campus Freedom Network Conference will be held July 14–16 at Bryn Mawr College, just outside of Philadelphia. The CFN Conference brings together committed students from across the country to learn from eminent First Amendment scholars and meet fellow advocates for free speech on campus. Our distinguished keynote speakers for the 2011 Conference will be Nick Gillespie, editor of Reason.com and Reason.tv, and Robert Corn-Revere, a prominent First Amendment attorney and partner at Davis Wright Tremaine. Students can apply to attend the conference by visiting thecfn.org/conference.



New Board Vindicates First Amendment Rights at Southwestern College, Rescinds Punishment for 'Free Speech Patio' Protest

Late in February, three faculty members at Southwestern College (SWC) in Chula Vista, California, had formal reprimands removed from their records, following a vote by the new SWC Governing Board that vindicated their First Amendment rights. Last academic year, the three professors were banned from campus, placed on leave, and formally reprimanded because they had joined with students who had strayed beyond the college's unconstitutional free speech zone—a single patio.

"Last fall, Southwestern College suspended four faculty members and banned them from campus for allegedly violating an unconstitutional free speech zone policy," said FIRE Vice President Robert Shibley. "Despite taking more than six months to draft a replacement, Southwestern still hasn't been able to produce a constitutional policy. The new proposed policy still restricts the rights of peaceful protesters on campus. Free speech zones like this one are unacceptably repressive."

On October 22, 2009, a group of students and faculty members assembled in SWC's "free speech zone" to protest various actions taken by the SWC administration. According to a professor who was in attendance, one of the students said, "Let's go where they can hear us." When some of the protesters reached the courtyard where SWC Superintendent/President Raj K. Chopra's office is located, they were met by police officers who would not let them pass. Three faculty members who were with the group for different periods of time, and a fourth who was merely in the area, were placed on paid leave and banned from campus that night via letters hand-delivered to their off-campus homes. The faculty members also were banned "from using any District facilities, phone or email."

FIRE wrote Chopra on November 3, 2009, explaining why both the "Freedom of Expression" policy and its application to the protesters were unconstitutional. In a November 25 response, SWC attorney Jonathan A. Pearl promised to "carefully consider the issues" raised by FIRE.

SWC convened an administrator-faculty-student committee to draft a new policy in January 2010. The committee announced a new proposed policy on April 28, but it contained significant unconstitutional flaws. In May, both FIRE and ACLU-SD sent letters protesting the constitutional problems in the new policy. FIRE's letter of May 12 points out that the new policy not only threatens First Amendment liberties, but also betrays a public college's function as a true marketplace of ideas.

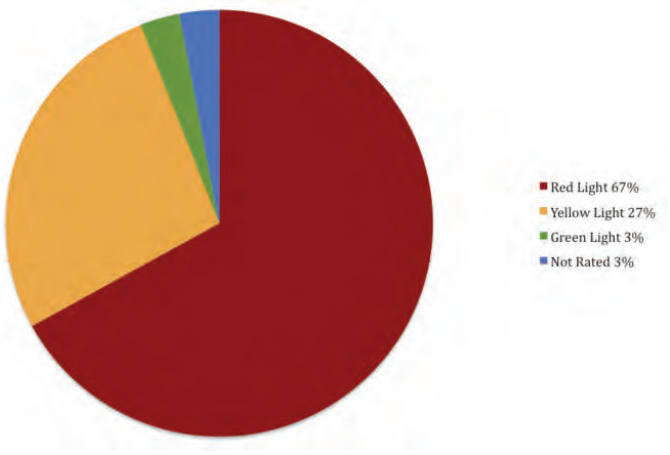
"Time is running out at SWC. All these months after violating the rights of its own faculty members, SWC has failed to produce a constitutional policy," said Adam Kissel, Director of FIRE's Individual Rights Defense Program. "The 'free speech patio' policy remains on the books, chilling speech on campus every day and further violating the rights of students and faculty members. This policy must be revoked immediately in order to forestall further damage to free speech on campus."



Southwestern College campus map showing the location of the "Free Speech Patio"

FIRE Report: Campus Speech Codes Trend Down While New Threats to Free Speech Emerge

On December 20, 2010, FIRE released its 2011 report on campus speech codes, revealing that 67 percent of the 390 colleges and universities analyzed maintain policies that seriously infringe upon students' free speech rights. While this number has dropped for the third year in a row, alarming trends on the horizon suggest that a surge in restrictions may be imminent if supporters of free speech do not remain vigilant.



Spotlight on Speech Codes 2011: The State of Free Speech on Our Nation's Campuses reports on policies at America's largest and most prestigious colleges and universities. Some of this year's most outrageous speech codes include:

- Colorado College prohibits any act that causes any individual or group "ridicule, embarrassment, harassment, intimidation or other such result."
- Cal Tech prohibits using electronic information resources to "offend" anyone.
- The University of Florida prohibits "[h]umor and jokes about sex that denigrate a gender."

This year, the percentage of public campuses that clearly and substantially restrict student speech dropped from 71 percent to 67 percent, and the percentage of private campuses that do so declined from 70 to 65 percent. However, recent legislation introduced in Congress and similar state bills threaten to undermine this progress.

"The continued decline in the number of speech codes on campus is encouraging," FIRE President Greg Lukianoff said. "But if we do not continue to guard vigilantly against restrictions on students' free speech rights, these gains could be eroded very quickly."

Federal and state bills aimed at combating "bullying" on university campuses threaten to redefine student-on-student harassment in a way that seriously jeopardizes student speech rights. While well intentioned, these bills ignore the crucial difference between children in elementary and high schools and adult college students, as well as the fact that much of what is being termed "bullying" on the college campus is actually already prohibited by existing laws.

FIRE's fifth annual report is the largest and most comprehensive effort to date both to quantify the proportion of colleges and universities that restrict free speech and to assess the severity of those restrictions. The report surveys publicly available policies at institutions ranked in the 100 "Best National Universities" and at the 50 "Best Liberal Arts Colleges," as rated in the 2009 "America's Best Colleges" issue of *U.S. News & World Report*. FIRE also researched codes at more than 230 additional major public institutions. The research was conducted between September 2009 and September 2010.

The policies cited in the report are accessible online in FIRE's searchable speech code database, Spotlight: The Campus Freedom Resource. Individuals interested in drawing attention to their institutions' policies can easily do so by adding FIRE's Speech Code Widget to their blog or website.

Spotlight on Speech Codes 2011: The State of Free Speech on Our Nation's Campuses also discusses legal developments affecting free speech on campus. For instance, yet another speech code was ruled unconstitutional in federal court in *McCauley v. University of the Virgin Islands* (2010), continuing the long line of legal precedent holding that speech codes at public universities violate students' First Amendment rights.

"FIRE works around the clock to fight speech codes on campus, so we are obviously very pleased with the continued positive trend," said Samantha Harris, FIRE's Director of Speech Code Research. "But the fact remains that students at more than two thirds of America's top colleges and universities are being denied their fundamental rights. FIRE will continue to fight until that number is zero."

FIRE's THE TORCH Want more FIRE news and views? Check out *The Torch*, FIRE's blog, for daily updates at www.thefire.org/torch.

FIRE to Administrators of Public Colleges Nationwide: Beware of Personal Liability for Free Speech Violations

In late December 2010, FIRE warned the presidents and top lawyers at nearly 300 public colleges and universities across the nation that they and their staff should be ready to pay out of their own pockets if they continue to violate their students' free speech rights.

"For too long, public college administrators have been intentionally violating the free speech rights of their students, secure in the knowledge that they won't personally lose a dime should a court rule against them," said FIRE Senior Vice President Robert Shibley. "This has given administrators the opportunity to censor whatever opinions they dislike and make all of us pay for it. But thanks in large part to FIRE, the excuse that makes this possible—that they 'didn't know' that students had free speech rights—is quickly vanishing."

FIRE's certified mailing put the presidents and general counsel of 296 of the biggest and most prestigious public colleges across the nation on notice, highlighting significant legal developments from the past year. FIRE's mailing warned these top administrators that with the state of the law on campus speech codes clearer now than ever before, they and their employees violate the speech rights of students at their own financial peril, as they can no longer count on "qualified immunity" to shield them from liability.

The legal doctrine of qualified immunity protects government officials from personal liability for monetary damages for violating constitutional rights if their actions do not violate "clearly established law" of which a reasonable person in their position would have known. For years, public universities have argued that their speech codes did not violate clearly established law regarding students' First Amendment rights, despite one legal decision after another striking down these codes.

But thanks to a continuing stream of federal court decisions, particularly in the Third Circuit, the argument that college administrators do not know that speech codes violate student free speech rights is increasingly untenable. Earlier this year, in *McCauley v. University of the Virgin Islands*, the Third Circuit Court of Appeals struck down university policies that absurdly prohibited "offensive" or "unauthorized" signs and conduct causing "emotional distress," noting that a "desire to protect the listener cannot be convincingly trumpeted as a basis for censoring speech for university students."

Administrators should also be aware of a recent federal case in Georgia coordinated by FIRE, in which a federal district court determined that former Valdosta State University president Ronald Zaccari was not shielded from personal liability for violating the clearly established rights of student Hayden Barnes. This major finding against a former university president should serve as important federal precedent for holding future administrative malefactors personally responsible for their abuses of student rights.

For colleges that wish to make an honest effort to rectify their speech codes, FIRE offers resources such as its guide to *Correcting Common Mistakes in Campus Speech Policies*, a bound version of which was included in every certified letter. FIRE is also willing to consult with any university that shows an interest in changing its policies to better protect free speech on campus.

"FIRE's certified mailing makes it that much more difficult for administrators at those universities to argue that they did not have reason to know they were violating students' rights," said Azhar Majeed, FIRE's Associate Director of Legal and Public Advocacy. "However, FIRE stands ready to help any institution that wishes to ensure that its policies respect the First Amendment."

Joined by Broad Coalition, FIRE Files Brief in Support of Student Rights in *Barnes v. Zaccari*

On behalf of a broad coalition of 15 organizations concerned about student rights on public campuses, FIRE filed an *amici curiae* brief on April 11 with the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit in the case of *Barnes v. Zaccari*. The brief asks the Eleventh Circuit to uphold a federal district court's September 2010 ruling denying the defense of qualified immunity to former Valdosta State University president Ronald M. Zaccari, arguing that public college administrators who violate the constitutional rights of students should be held liable for doing so.

Fanning the Flames: FIRE's Landmark 200th Victory

With the support of our friends and allies, FIRE has fought relentlessly for student and faculty rights on campuses across the nation since our founding in 1999. In March, we celebrated a landmark in that fight by marking our 200th public victory for individual rights at America's colleges and universities.

We are proud that, with our victory at UCLA, FIRE has now secured victories (sometimes more than one) at 142 different colleges and universities with a total enrollment of more than 2.9 million students. FIRE has also helped change 97 unconstitutional or repressive policies, advancing freedom of expression for more than 2.2 million students (and countless more who will eventually set foot on those campuses). These results speak volumes about FIRE's passionate determination to ensure that America's colleges and universities are restored as the marketplaces of ideas they were created to be. Each new victory further stems the tide of censorship and helps to spread a campus culture devoted to open discourse and vigorous debate.

Of course, none of these victories would have been possible without the generous support of our donors and the energetic advocacy of our allies. We are truly grateful for your contributions over the years, and our work stands as evidence of the concrete impact your contributions have had on campus. We hope you will continue working with FIRE, and we encourage you to consider donating whatever you can to help us drive toward more victories. At a time when many may question how to invest in America's future, you can be sure that your support stimulates real change and brings about true reform in higher education.

Thank you for helping us reach this milestone. We look forward to winning many more victories with your support!

Follow FIRE on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube!

FIRE has always been at the forefront of social networking and Internet technology, so it's no surprise that one of the most popular ways to get FIRE news and updates is now through accessing our Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube accounts. To "follow" FIRE, go to twitter.com/theFIREorg, facebook.com/thefireorg, and youtube.com/TheFIREorg.

About the Publication

The FIRE Quarterly is published four times per year by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education.

The mission of FIRE is to defend and sustain individual rights at America's increasingly repressive and partisan colleges and universities. These rights include freedom of speech, legal equality, due process, religious liberty, and sanctity of conscience—the essential qualities of individual liberty and dignity. FIRE's core mission is to protect the unprotected and to educate the public and communities of concerned Americans about the threats to these rights on our campuses and about the means to preserve them.

FIRE is a charitable and educational tax-exempt foundation within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to FIRE are deductible to the fullest extent provided by tax laws.

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FIRE Joins '1 for All' First Amendment Campaign

FIRE is pleased to join the 1 for All campaign to help raise awareness and understanding of the First Amendment. The new nonpartisan initiative "provides teaching materials to the nation's schools, supports educational events on America's campuses and reminds the public that the First Amendment serves everyone, regardless of faith, race, gender or political leanings." As one of many Friends of 1 for All, FIRE joins a broad coalition of national organizations including the Student Press Law Center, National Council Against Censorship, The New York Times Company, and Google. FIRE is proud to support 1 for All's efforts to build understanding and awareness of the First Amendment.

