

January 18, 2005

Mr. David French
President
Foundation for Individual Rights in Education
210 West Washington Square, Suite 303
Philadelphia, PA 19106

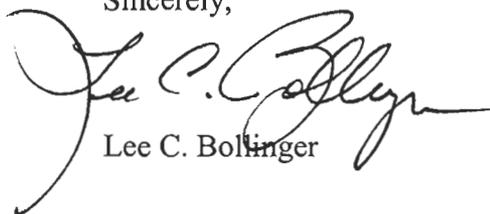
Dear Mr. French,

Thank you for the interest and concern expressed in your letter of January 10. As your letter indicates, all parties involved in this discussion have rights to self-expression that must be respected and preserved. I am strongly committed to the principle of academic freedom, which forms the very basis of academic life. However, I also believe that we must do everything we can to prevent the abuse of that freedom so that students and faculty alike are free to express reasonable and relevant viewpoints in the classroom.

As you know we have convened an ad hoc committee of faculty members to review allegations of intimidation – a move in keeping with the well-established tradition of academic peer review, which forms a critical part of university self-governance. Additionally, Floyd Abrams, a leading First Amendment lawyer, is serving as an advisor to the ad hoc committee. He will work closely with the committee to help ensure that **everyone who appears before it receives a fair and impartial hearing.**

Maintaining the proper atmosphere of free and open inquiry in the classroom is an essential and special responsibility of the faculty. The committee members have distinguished and varied professional backgrounds, and I am confident they will pursue their task in a manner consistent with the University's commitment to freedom of expression for both faculty and students.

Sincerely,



Lee C. Bollinger