

# On TU's brand of justice

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**The University of Tulsa's treatment of Trey Barnett was a mockery of due process. Instead of holding a hearing, the school constructed a one-sided story and then issued a disproportionate punishment. Every student should be concerned.**

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The University of Tulsa suspended a student 11 hours from graduation, without a hearing, without presenting compelling evidence and for something the student didn't even say himself.

TU then threatened disciplinary action when the student newspaper began investigating the suspension, without citing which university policies the newspaper supposedly violated. The implications for student life at this school are huge.

First of all, the administration mishandled Barnett's case on a number of grounds. The most glaring issue is that student Trey Barnett was deprived of a hearing, which the Student Code of Conduct says students are entitled to "in all cases."

Hearings ensure that both students and the university are on the same page by allowing students to provide witnesses to speak on their behalf and to present evidence in their favor.

Hearings also promote an open dialogue between the administration and the student.

According to the cover story, the university's case was built entirely on the testimony of Trey's accusers. All other evidence mentioned in TU's decision was either completely circumstantial or ambiguous.

Since TU has failed to provide any additional information, it seems that the administration had already determined that Trey was guilty and then worked backward, working any evidence they came across into a completely one-sided and misrepresented story.

Furthermore, TU alleges that Trey violated confidentiality by showing the complaint against him to his then-fiance, the person who actually posted the things that Trey was being punished for. The student code of conduct explicitly allows for such documents to be shared with potential witnesses. This was undeniable bullying.

It is absurd to punish a student for the speech of a third party. Trey did not write the posts that TU determined he was responsible for. They were not posted by his Facebook account. Individuals are tagged in posts that they do not author all the time.

All of the concrete evidence shows that Trey was not the author of these posts.

On top of that, the administration then threatened and bullied the Collegian for investigating the matter, blatantly hampering freedom of the press. While TU is a private school, the school's Statement on Rights, Freedoms, and Responsibilities states that, "the rights of free inquiry and free expression ... shall not be

infringed upon.”

TU said that the Collegian might violate university policy but failed to cite the policy or policies at issue.

If the administration disciplines the Collegian like they disciplined Trey, it will be because it did its job as a student newspaper.

What happened to Trey should be offensive to every student’s basic sense of justice. Every single one of us would expect to be accorded due process. Anything less gives the lie to TU’s virtuous, neighborly self-image and makes me question my decision to come here.

I’m disappointed in you, TU.