



Lewis Berger

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TL;DR Students for Free Thought have been denied LUCC recognition, Lawrence and LUCC need to do better.

LUCC has denied the recognition to the Students for Free Thought group. The decision is outlined at the bottom of this post.

On behalf of LUCC, I want to thank everyone who has come into General Council with a community concern and held LUCC accountable for being a representative voice of our student body. LUCC and this campus as a whole would not be the same without you and your commitment to better our community. I hope we continue to engage in meaningful dialogue that focuses on improving how we function as a student governing body.

Over the past few weeks we have been working to address a number of significant issues. In doing so, it has been a challenge to balance making good decisions quickly while also proceeding in the correct manner. It is vital that all of LUCC's decisions are thoroughly considered from different viewpoints so that the final decision is supported with strong legislative evidence and sound reasoning. We must also think about the consequences of our decisions on the rest of the campus community, and attempt to minimize any potential negative reactions towards members of the student body.

I understand the frustration with the processes that LUCC must go through at times. Certain decisions seem straightforward, but for the reasons stated above they often take longer than is ideal. I believe LUCC can and must do better going forward, but I greatly appreciate the role all of our students continue to take in making sure the correct decisions are reached. I think we can be extremely proud of how our students continue to stand up for what is right on our campus, even when it is stressful, time-consuming, and at times scary. However, we cannot continue to ask students to do all of the work to improve our campus.

I look forward to working together with all of you at Lawrence University to make our campus a safer, more inclusive place for all students.

Excerpt from Steering Minutes:

"Steering Committee has recommended to deny LUCC recognition to the group Students for Free Thought at the end of their trial period. The reasons for denial include, but are not limited to, the following:

- * The group has made a decision to keep its membership anonymous, which goes against the open and public nature of LUCC student organizations.
- * The group is similar to other groups already existing on campus
- * The membership guidelines of the group are very broad, and allow for a great deal of subjectivity in deciding who can and cannot participate in the group.
- * The mission statement of the group is very broad, and at times contradictory to itself.
- * The group failed to consider many of Steering's recommendations during the trial period, including recommendations to examine all of the problems previously stated. Other recommendations that were not followed include collaboration with other groups, campus outreach to find new and inclusive membership, and finding a neutral moderator, which we felt was essential.

Additionally, Steering believes it is important for LUCC groups to have a positive impact on the Lawrence University campus. We did not feel that this group would be capable of doing so and were concerned about the well-being of our campus at large.

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