



Amanda Hoelzeman &lt;ahoelzeman@uca.edu&gt;

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**Fwd: Library Sign Issue**

2 messages

Houston Davis &lt;hdavis@uca.edu&gt;

Mon, Jun 17, 2019 at 7:22 PM

To: kerstine@uca.edu, ronnie@uca.edu, ahoelzeman@uca.edu

Wanted to make sure that you saw this message to Dean Covington.

Houston D. Davis, Ph.D.  
President, University of Central Arkansas  
[hdavis@uca.edu](mailto:hdavis@uca.edu)

Go Bears!!

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Houston Davis <[hdavis@uca.edu](mailto:hdavis@uca.edu)>  
**Date:** June 17, 2019 at 6:22:18 PM CDT  
**To:** Dean Covington <[dcovington@uca.edu](mailto:dcovington@uca.edu)>  
**Cc:** Patty Poulter <[ppoulter@uca.edu](mailto:ppoulter@uca.edu)>  
**Subject:** Library Sign Issue

Dean,

If you would not mind, please share this with your faculty and staff. It is regarding the message on the Torreyson Library sign and is similar to responses that I have provided to others Friday and today when asked directly. I would also value the opportunity to meet with anyone on your team that would like to ask me questions and discuss the matter.

The issues surrounding the sign's use last week and addressed on Thursday were very complicated. No one argues that we should support our entire community and its diversity. Advocating for our LGBTQ community is not only appropriate but very important. I believe that the intent of the message was to show support for LGBTQ students, faculty, and staff, but it was not okay for the university sign to be used to make a personal statement or advocate for a personal viewpoint. That is the line that the sign itself crossed. Unlike our student groups or organizations, the library is an official arm of UCA and when it "speaks" on that sign, it speaks officially. We do have to be very careful that we walk the fine line between individual freedom of speech and institutional voice. This was one of those very complicated situations.

I join every other individual on this campus with personal beliefs, values, politics, and causes, but the university messaging and platform cannot be used to advance personal agendas. On an individual level, freedom of speech to advocate for one's position is incredibly important. I frequently get criticism from individuals and groups on campus about issues and ideas raised within the campus, but I remind those same people that my defense of their rights to causes/issues must be matched by a similar defense of that which offends them. But it is not within university policy to use the university platform to advocate for a personal viewpoint.

Timing of the sign in the summer also was considered. We have to be very mindful of the 100's of minors that are on campus during the summer which further complicates an environment that is normally programmed for adults and our very meaningful conversations about ourselves and our world. One outgrowth of that perspective on minors has been a start of a good conversation about best practices how to present or represent issues when minors are on the campus.

Again, I would value the opportunity to meet with any and all of your team. A genuine gesture of support for members of our community has morphed into a matter of freedom of speech versus institutional voice. That is not where I want to leave this because I do know that everyone involved came from a position of love and

6/19/2019

University of Central Arkansas Mail - Fwd: Library Sign Issue

support. Please let me know if you have time to pull interested team members together.

Thank you.

HD

Houston D. Davis, Ph.D.  
President  
University of Central Arkansas  
[201 Donaghey Ave](#), Wingo Hall, Suite 207, Conway 72035  
[hdavis@uca.edu](mailto:hdavis@uca.edu)

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**Houston Davis** <[hdavis@uca.edu](mailto:hdavis@uca.edu)>  
To: [ahoelzeman@uca.edu](mailto:ahoelzeman@uca.edu)

Wed, Jun 19, 2019 at 4:11 PM

[Quoted text hidden]



Amanda Hoelzeman &lt;ahoelzeman@uca.edu&gt;

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**Fwd: Library sign for Pride on the Pulse Anniversary**

1 message

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**Houston Davis** <hdavis@uca.edu>  
To: ahoelzeman@uca.edu

Wed, Jun 19, 2019 at 4:11 PM

Houston D. Davis, Ph.D.  
President, University of Central Arkansas  
[hdavis@uca.edu](mailto:hdavis@uca.edu)

Go Bears!!

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Taine Duncan <[tduncan@uca.edu](mailto:tduncan@uca.edu)>  
**Date:** June 12, 2019 at 4:33:42 PM CDT  
**To:** Houston Davis <[hdavis@uca.edu](mailto:hdavis@uca.edu)>  
**Cc:** Patricia Poulter <[ppoulter@uca.edu](mailto:ppoulter@uca.edu)>, Thomas Williams <[twilliams73@uca.edu](mailto:twilliams73@uca.edu)>, Dean Covington <[dcovington@uca.edu](mailto:dcovington@uca.edu)>, "Glenn, Jonathan" <[jona@uca.edu](mailto:jona@uca.edu)>, "Williams, Ronnie" <[ronnie@uca.edu](mailto:ronnie@uca.edu)>  
**Subject:** Re: Library sign for Pride on the Pulse Anniversary

Thank you for such a quick response, and I look forward to the ongoing conversation. I appreciate the importance of official voice, and the delicacy of balance. I truly appreciate both that you heard my concern, and that you are thoughtfully engaged with it.

Cheers,  
Taine

On Wednesday, June 12, 2019, Houston Davis <[hdavis@uca.edu](mailto:hdavis@uca.edu)> wrote:

You are correct that the issue addressed today was very complicated. No one argues that we should support our entire community and its diversity. Advocating for our LGBTQ community is not only fine but important. On an individual level, freedom of speech to advocate for one's position is incredibly important. But it is not okay to use the university platform to promote an agenda or advocate for a personal viewpoint. That is the line that the sign - which was offensive to many - crossed. We also have to be very mindful of the 1000+ minors that are on campus at present which further complicates an environment that is normally programmed for adults and our very meaningful conversations about ourselves and our world.

Unlike our student groups or organizations, the library is an official arm of UCA and when it speaks, it speaks officially. We do have to be very careful that we walk the fine line between individual freedom of speech and institutional voice. This was one of those very complicated situations.

Thank you for your very thoughtful email and real concerns. I'm working on a way to communicate this matter and make it a productive exercise that appreciates that there are no right or wrong perspectives. This email might not come close to that goal, but I wanted to get back to you as quickly as possible.

HD

Houston D. Davis, Ph.D.  
President, University of Central Arkansas  
[hdavis@uca.edu](mailto:hdavis@uca.edu)

Go Bears!!

Sent from my iPhone

On Jun 12, 2019, at 3:05 PM, Taine Duncan <[tduncan@uca.edu](mailto:tduncan@uca.edu)> wrote:

To my esteemed colleagues,

It was recently brought to my attention that the library has been asked to remove a sign of Pride solidarity in the form of a Lady Gaga lyric.

Though I am currently traveling today, this news was so upsetting to those colleagues and students—many of whom are themselves queer—that this information was brought to my attention. And as a supporter of the university's diversity mission, the director of gender studies, and a strong supporter of the importance of a welcoming and inclusive library at the core of student engagement, I feel compelled to voice my opposition to this decision. Because I am only hearing the aftermath, and am away from campus today, I am cc-ing anyone I thought might be able to leverage their authority and commitment to the diversity of our community to rectify this issue.

Today is the third anniversary of the Pulse shooting—an important date for many in the LGBTQ community and a stark reminder of the necessity for safety and support in a culture of hostility. Small gestures—often couched in the language of representation of safe zones—are always meaningful. However in the midst of Pride month and on this anniversary date, it is particularly meaningful to show solidarity and not erasure of our vibrant LGBTQ community. As the sign had been visible, seen, and engaged with—I saw it yesterday when I was in the library for a meeting and was myself heartened and proud—it is certainly an act of erasure.

Knowing each of you, I am certain that whatever prompted this decision was a difficult process and was not intended to do harm. However, I would argue that this will be the impact and effect. I apologize for sending this message en masse, but since I am in the Atlanta airport and don't know the best direct content, I wanted to cover my bases.

Thank you all for your care and commitment.

In solidarity,

Taine

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Taine Duncan, PhD  
Associate Professor of Philosophy  
Director of the Gender Studies Program  
Co-Editor, *Journal of Philosophy in the Contemporary World*  
Irby 118B  
University of Central Arkansas  
[tduncan@uca.edu](mailto:tduncan@uca.edu)  
Cell: 501-366-9912  
Gender Pronouns: she/her/hers

--  
  
Taine Duncan, PhD  
Associate Professor of Philosophy  
Director of the Gender Studies Program  
Co-Editor, *Journal of Philosophy in the Contemporary World*  
Irby 118B  
University of Central Arkansas  
[tduncan@uca.edu](mailto:tduncan@uca.edu)  
Cell: 501-366-9912  
Gender Pronouns: she/her/hers



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## Torreyson Library sign

1 message

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**UCA President's Office** <presidentsoffice@uca.edu>

Tue, Jun 18, 2019 at 10:18 AM

Reply-To: noreply@uca.edu

To: FS <fs@uca.edu>, student@cub.uca.edu

Faculty, Staff and Students:

There have been many questions regarding a quote that was removed last week from the external Torreyson Library sign. As I have been approached directly about this in the last couple of days, I have shared the following information and want you all to have this directly from me.

The issues surrounding the sign's use last week and removal were complicated. It is a core university value that we support our entire community and its diversity. Advocating for our LGBTQ community is not only appropriate but very important. I believe that the intent of the message was to show support for LGBTQ students, faculty, and staff, but it was not okay for the university sign to be used to make a personal statement or advocate for a personal viewpoint. That is the line that the sign itself crossed. Unlike our student groups or other organizations, the library is an official arm of UCA and when it "speaks" on that sign which serves information regarding library hours, it speaks officially. We do have to be very careful that we walk the fine line between individual freedom of speech and institutional voice. This was one of those complicated situations.

I join every other individual on this campus with personal beliefs, values, politics, and causes, but the university messaging and platform cannot be used to advance personal agendas. On an individual level, freedom of speech to advocate for one's position is incredibly important. I frequently get criticism from individuals and groups on campus about issues and ideas raised within the campus, but I remind those same people that my defense of their rights to causes and issues must be matched by a similar defense of that which offends them. But, it is not within university policy to use the university platform to advocate for a personal viewpoint.

Timing of the sign in the summer also was considered. We have to be very mindful of the hundreds of minors that are on campus during the summer which further complicates an environment that is normally programmed for adults and our very meaningful conversations about ourselves and our world. One outgrowth of that perspective on minors has been a start of a good conversation about best practices how to present or represent issues when minors are on the campus.

I am visiting with the team in the library to hear their thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. I believe that everyone involved came from a position of love and support. A genuine gesture by our library faculty and staff for members of our community has morphed into a misunderstanding about our core values and matters of freedom of speech versus institutional voice.

Let me be clear. I and the university support all of our students and the diversity of our entire community. Thank you for your time and attention.

Houston Davis



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## Torreyson Library sign update

1 message

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**UCA President's Office** <presidentsoffice@uca.edu>

Wed, Jun 19, 2019 at 2:49 PM

Reply-To: noreply@uca.edu

To: FS <fs@uca.edu>, student@cub.uca.edu

Faculty, Staff, and Students:

I wanted to provide an update to all of you of what has occurred, and what I have learned, since my email to you yesterday regarding the Torreyson Library sign.

I understand that the removal of this quote has caused fury and sadness across campus. My observation that the library sign is a university platform and should be reviewed as such has morphed into a debate about UCA's values and commitment to diversity. I am very sorry that this has been the outcome and that anyone has felt unwelcome or silenced. That was certainly never my intention. We are absolutely committed to supporting our LGBTQ students and our entire campus community.

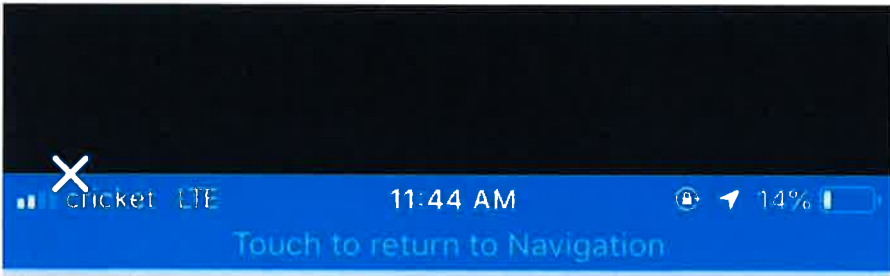
I have appreciated the emails and phone calls regarding the matter -- as well as conversations within and between meetings on the subject. I met with the library faculty and staff yesterday with regard to this issue. The sign has been a very important vehicle for the library to provide information and celebrate and support various groups and causes. I did learn that they have in the recent past had internal procedures that ensured that the sign was limited to library programs and services. We talked about short- and long-term strategies as well as best practices for making appropriate use of the sign. Also, today I will be meeting with PRISM leadership to hear their concerns. Our Student Services and Student Government Association leadership are also in discussions today regarding this subject. I am very appreciative of all of these groups and their willingness to share their candid thoughts and suggestions. I look forward to continued conversations.

Nothing about the communication yesterday was meant to imply that minors should not be exposed to the LGBTQ community. This is absolutely not how that was intended, but a great deal of feedback has made it clear that some interpretations led to that conclusion. We get numerous complaints in the summer about a host of issues because of the large number of minors on campus. Regardless of the subject matter, we do have to be mindful about all information and debate that typically is designed for students, faculty, and staff.

I also want to address the conclusion that some have come to that, because of this event, UCA does not value, support, and protect our LGBTQ community. That is simply not true. The university offers numerous services, programs, and events in support of this community each year. The Counseling Center collaborates on projects regularly with the PRISM Alliance; provides programming during October, which is LGBT History Month; participates in the Campus Pride Walk and the Little Rock and Conway Pride Parades; offers a safe space to discuss gender and sexual affinity; and provides programs to departments to increase understanding of our LGBTQ community. In addition, our office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion has an LGBTQ+ Affinity Group that has been in place since 2015. The office hosts an annual lavender graduation dinner; a UCA Pride Walk; a PRISM Drag Show Reception for queens and attendees; and it offers transportation to the Little Rock Pride Fest, among other things. You will find me at many of these events, supporting our students and their programs.

Related to the above, I also want to speak for our leadership team and the attention that we pay to defending the importance of every activity and event in the prior paragraph. It probably does not come as a surprise to many of you that we receive a limited amount of inside and a great deal of outside criticism regarding those programs. While I find myself defending them on a predictable annual cycle, I am proud to advocate for all of these programs and services and will always. While I know not to take the criticism personally, my professional record and the record of my leadership team does not merit some of the names that are being hurled nor the label of anti-LGBTQ. Those UCA faculty and staff close to day-to-day administrative operations are vigilant in defending and supporting our LGBTQ community. Not only do we defend, but we also form a large portion of the core group of faculty and staff attendees and participants at these events.

Thank you again for your time, attention, and thoughtfulness about these core values and our efforts to serve our students and community.



**UCA Torreyson Library**

2 hrs · 🌐



We have so much love & respect the LGBTQ members of our community. 💜

Here's a link to our LGBTQ+ resources libguide:

<http://uca.libguides.com/lgbtq>

🏳️‍🌈 Happy Pride 🏳️‍🌈



More

Edit





# ← Executive Staff



June 12, 8:24 AM



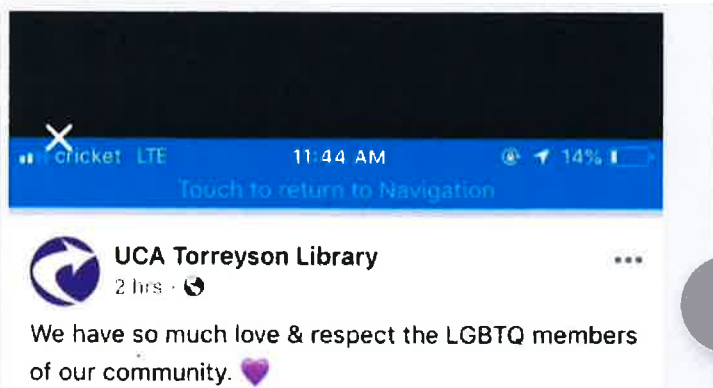
Houston Davis  
All - I have received



Houston Davis  
All - I have received several messages regarding a sign that our library has put front that involved in support of LGBTQ Month and a post that they put on Facebook last evening. Other than the level of complaint that is just interest politics vs interest politics, the allegation is that it has crossed the line of individual students, faculty or staff rights and appears to be that "UCA" via the library is promoting an agenda. The biggest concern is that it is during a week that we have 1,000 middle school students on campus. That position is that it is one thing for college students while it is a whole different thing when minors are involved.



Houston Davis



📎 Send Message 😊 ➤



# Executive Staff



Houston Davis



Send Message





# Executive Staff



June 12, 9:49 AM



Houston Davis



All - Based on conversations with several of you, I can represent that the general feeling of the group is that the sign does cross a line into pushing an agenda and making it appear that it is the university's position and cause. There is also an acknowledgement that this is more complicated because of summer camps and minors on campus. Supporting LGBTQ community is one thing. Using the UCA platform to make a political statement is another.



Williams Ronnie  
Most definitely.



Mike Lloyd  
Absolutely agree



Diane Newton  
Agreed



Amanda Hoelzeman  
They just posted it to Twitter too



June 12, 10:15 AM



Patty Poulter 2  
Agree



Send Message

# ← Executive Staff



June 12, 10:15 AM



Patty Poulter 2  
Agree



June 12, 10:42 AM



Houston Davis  
All - Jonathan and Ronnie are in the process of working with the library to pull down the sign and the post. Again, advocating for our LGBTQ community is fine. Having freedom of speech to advocate for one's position is fine. It is not okay to use the university platform to promote an agenda.



Patty Poulter 2  
Thank you, Ronnie, for working with Jonathan on this delicate matter.



Diane Newton  
Thank you.



June 12, 11:03 AM



Williams Ronnie  
My pleasure.



June 12, 11:30 AM



Houston Davis  
Do we have verification that the library has



Send Message



# ← Executive Staff



June 12, 10:42 AM



Houston Davis



All - Jonathan and Ronnie are in the process of working with the library to pull down the sign and the post. Again, advocating for our LGBTQ community is fine. Having freedom of speech to advocate for one's position is fine. It is not okay to use the university platform to promote an agenda.



Patty Poulter 2



Thank you, Ronnie, for working with Jonathan on this delicate matter.



Diane Newton



Thank you.

June 12, 11:03 AM



Williams Ronnie



My pleasure.

June 12, 11:30 AM



Houston Davis



Do we have verification that the library has taken the sign down?



Jeremy Gillam



Yes sir

Send Message [attach icon] [emojis icon] [send icon]





Patricia Poulter &lt;ppoulter@uca.edu&gt;

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**Draft Message to Library**

2 messages

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**Houston Davis** <hdavis@uca.edu>  
To: Patty Poulter <ppoulter@uca.edu>

Mon, Jun 17, 2019 at 6:06 PM

DRAFT MESSAGE

Dean,

If you would not mind, please share this with your faculty and staff. It is regarding the message on the Torreyson Library sign and is similar to responses that I have provided to others when asked directly. I would also value the opportunity to meet with anyone on your team that would like to ask me questions and discuss the matter.

The issues surrounding the sign's use last week and addressed on Thursday were very complicated. No one argues that we should support our entire community and its diversity. Advocating for our LGBTQ community is not only appropriate but very important. I believe that the intent of the message was to show support for LGBTQ students, faculty, and staff, but it was not okay for the university sign to be used to make a personal statement or advocate for a personal viewpoint. That is the line that the sign itself crossed. Unlike our student groups or organizations, the library is an official arm of UCA and when it "speaks" on that sign, it speaks officially. We do have to be very careful that we walk the fine line between individual freedom of speech and institutional voice. This was one of those very complicated situations.

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Timing of the sign in the summer also was considered. We have to be very mindful of the 100's of minors that are on campus during the summer which further complicates an environment that is normally programmed for adults and our very meaningful conversations about ourselves and our world. One outgrowth of that perspective on minors has been a start of a good conversation about best practices how to present or represent issues when minors are on the campus.

Again, I would value the opportunity to meet with any and all of your team. A genuine gesture of support for members of our community has morphed into a matter of freedom of speech versus institutional voice. That is not where I want to leave this because I do know that everyone involved came from a position of love and support. Please let me know if you have time to pull interested team members together.

Thank you.

HD

Houston D. Davis, Ph.D.  
President  
University of Central Arkansas  
201 Donaghey Ave, Wingo Hall, Suite 207, Conway 72035  
hdavis@uca.edu

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**Patricia Poulter** <ppoulter@uca.edu>  
To: Houston Davis <hdavis@uca.edu>

Mon, Jun 17, 2019 at 6:13 PM

I think this is very good. Going to give you a quick call.

Patty

[Quoted text hidden]

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Patricia S. Poulter, EdD

6/18/2019

University of Central Arkansas Mail - Draft Message to Library

Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs  
University of Central Arkansas  
Wingo Hall 213  
201 Donaghey Ave., Conway, AR 72035

Learn more about UCA!

AVID: UCA dedicates itself to Academic Vitality, Integrity, and Diversity.