



LEARN. DO. LIVE.

December 10, 2019

Lindsie Rank
Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE)
510 Walnut Street, Suite 1250
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Dear Ms. Rank:

Thank you for your letter expressing concern about recent allegations of censorship against the CWU Observer student newspaper. Let me assure you that the policy of CWU is not to censor its student media. Central is strongly committed to having a free and open campus that respects the First Amendment as well as the student media's right to access information.

In light of recent events, however, I have strongly reiterated to all campus departments and staff that the university does not require student journalists to submit questions for prior approval. You are correct that there is no written policy on general media relations. I have instructed the Vice President of Public Affairs, Krechiere Jackson, to work with student media representatives and journalism faculty to craft written guidelines to address these matters. These new guidelines should not only reaffirm the university's commitment to the First Amendment and freedom of expression but also outline the responsibilities of the student media.

We want to respect the informational needs of the student media while also providing departments with sufficient time to respond to those requests for information as well as some context for the interview so the person being interviewed can provide informed responses. We recognize the educational value of a student newspaper as a teaching tool for training students about responsible journalism as well as the important role journalism plays in ensuring an open and free society.

Again, thank you for sharing your concerns.

Sincerely,

James L. Gaudino
President

President's Office

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