



November 19, 2020

President Beth Rushing
Appalachian College Association
7216 Jewel Bell Lane
Bristol, TN 37620

Dear President Rushing,

My name is Zach Greenberg, and I'm an attorney with the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education ([FIRE](#)), a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to defending liberty, freedom of speech, due process, academic freedom, legal equality, and freedom of conscience on America's college campuses. I write today to offer FIRE's assistance to you and your members. Both ACA and FIRE share a mission of bettering institutions of higher education—a purpose we seek to further by introducing FIRE's [Model Code of Student Conduct](#).

FIRE's Model Code is a practical guide for college and university administrations seeking to govern student life in a manner that recognizes both institutional imperatives and student rights and needs. A comprehensive, workable document consisting of recommended policies and procedures, our Model Code is a distillation of FIRE's experience and expertise gained over two decades of studying college and university disciplinary systems and responding to daily requests for assistance from students, faculty members, and administrators nationwide.

We share the Model Code with ACA with the hope that your leadership, members, and constituencies agree that protecting student civil liberties is a necessary prerequisite for preparing our democracy's next generation for successful leadership and engaged citizenship. Students must be free to speak their minds and to navigate the world of ideas for themselves, both free from administrative censorship and safe from physical harm and discriminatory harassment. To this end, the Model Code strives for completeness and fundamental fairness through a structure that can be seamlessly implemented by educational institutions, and accessible to the entire campus community.

The full Model Code is available for free download on our website at www.thefire.org/modelcode. We look forward to discussing how FIRE and ACA might assist colleges and universities in adopting its provisions, and we'd be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zach", with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Zachary Greenberg
Senior Program Officer, Individual Rights Defense Program