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July 9, 2009

Mr. Adam Kissel  
Director, Individual Rights Defense Program  
Foundation for Individual Rights in Education  
601 Walnut Street, Suite 510  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Re: June 18, 2009 Letter to Grand Valley State University

Dear Mr. Kissel:

Your letter of June 18, 2009 addressed to President Thomas Haas of Grand Valley State University has been forwarded to me for review and response.

It appears to me that your letter was triggered by a search of the Grand Valley State University web site rather than by any discussion with anyone at the University. Your concern focuses on some language from three job postings involving the Music Department, specifically, "GVSU hopes to attract applicants with a demonstrated commitment to the principles of diversity with the skills necessary to effectively develop and lead in a cultural climate that recognizes, respects and celebrates differences."

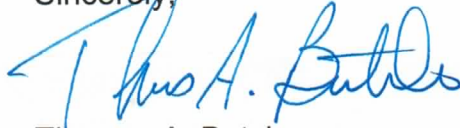
Grand Valley State University is a public institution of higher education that serves a diverse population of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University. Furthermore, students, faculty, and staff travel the globe in outreach and learning opportunities. In so doing, faculty and staff of the University must be able to successfully work in diverse locales and with people of many backgrounds, including but not limited to race, gender, religion, national origin, and sexual orientation.

In carrying out its mission, the Music Department develops its advertising for job vacancies to inform prospective candidates that there is an expectation of

working with and in diverse populations. The Music Department does not and has not required any candidate to accept any set of beliefs or submit to any "ideological loyalty oath" or "political orthodoxy" as your letter hypothesizes. Rather, the Music Department uses *bona fide* occupational qualifications of education, training and experience that are relevant to the faculty position.

As you have misinterpreted the employment advertising of the Music Department, we presume that there may be others that may misread it as well. As future openings occur, the Music Department will continue to search for candidates who can demonstrate that they have experience effectively teaching and working with diverse populations and its advertising will reflect that.

Sincerely,



Thomas A. Butcher  
University Counsel

Cc: President Thomas Haas  
Provost Gayle Davis  
Music Chair Danny Phipps  
Associate Vice President Scott Richardson