



Foundation for Individual Rights in Education

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August 24, 2010

President John J. DeGioia
Office of the President
Georgetown University
204 Healy Hall
37th & O Streets, NW
Washington, DC 20057-1789

Sent via U.S. Mail and Facsimile (202-687-6660)

Dear President DeGioia:

I am writing you again to ask you to clarify Georgetown University's commitment to free expression. We received no response to our letter of June 15 (enclosed), in which we requested a response by July 13.

Georgetown promises its students that "the expression of ideas and sharing of information" is "the very life of the university," yet it maintains a student organization "Access to Benefits Policy" that directly conflicts with this promise. Such a policy at any public university would be ruled unconstitutional because it denies official recognition to student organizations on the basis of ideology, giving certain ideas second-class status in the marketplace of ideas.

Again, it seems to us that Georgetown both promises and restricts free expression. Some of your students depended on Georgetown's promise of free speech when they enrolled; others prefer that Georgetown restrict free speech in the service of other values. Leaving Georgetown's promise of free speech ambiguous denies both groups the security that they have chosen the right university for them. Cannot Georgetown offer all student voices an equal chance to compete, without betraying its Catholic and Jesuit mission?

We respectfully ask you to respond by September 7.

Sincerely,

Adam Kissel
Director, Individual Rights Defense Program

Encl.

cc:

Rev. Charles L. Currie, S.J., President, Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities