

To the University of Delaware Community:

Freedom of speech is a hallmark of the academic community, but it also must be accompanied by an equal commitment to civility and respect for one another. A great university is an open marketplace of ideas where conflicting opinions and perspectives are welcomed. At the same time, as a community, we value the dignity and worth of everyone. That means respecting the rights and responsibilities that all of us share as human beings, and as citizens of the world.

When Katherine Dettwyler, a former adjunct faculty member, made posts online concerning student behavior and the Otto Warmbier incident, we issued a statement noting that the opinions she expressed do not reflect the values or position of the University. Here at the University of Delaware, we embrace a culture of inclusiveness, sensitivity and mutual support that is characterized by an environment where everyone is valued and welcome. This is an environment that holds no place for discrimination or harassment, as evidenced by our institutional non-discrimination policy.

With regard to the specific incident referenced above, on behalf of the institution, I again reiterate that our sympathies are with the Warmbier family.

I wanted to take this moment to reaffirm to you all that our values of respect and civility remain defining priorities for our people, our community and our great University of Delaware.

Sincerely,

Dennis Assanis
President