

September 14, 2017

Dear Members of the Transylvania Community:

This past week we witnessed a series of events that caused considerable pain to members of our community. The behavior that triggered these events, in particular, the online communication that propagated hateful messages targeting one of our students was reprehensible. In the absence of an immediate action that could be shared with the public many assumed and criticized the University for making no response. Nothing could be further from the truth.

We worked around the clock to address this situation. We did so by showing our fullest support and care for our students. We did so in a way that placed the safety of all students at the forefront of our concerns. We did so in a way that upheld the principles of civic community and society. We did so in a way that followed our policies and procedures that protect the rights of each individual. While following this process over the past 10 days felt frustratingly slow to many of you, it was essential to the integrity of institutional governance.

Transylvania University does not condone hatred, bigotry, bullying or harassment in any form. Our public record is clear on this. We have been proud to stand by DACA students and even to support the city of Lexington in its recent grappling over moving Confederate statues. (Recent statements can be found [here](#).) And as we have demonstrated in response to this situation, we will address any such behavior that is contrary to what we stand for as a University swiftly, decisively and in a manner consistent with our policies, procedures, and values as a University. Please keep in mind, however, that no responsible administrative action will keep pace with the proliferation of a story across the internet that obscures or misses facts about a situation. We are bound by laws that govern what we can and cannot say, especially with regard to our students.

As I shared with you in my earlier communication this week, the way we pursue justice is as important as the outcome we seek. If justice is to be lasting, the means by which it is achieved is as important as the achievement itself. As a country and as an institution, we are governed by laws. There are times when our laws force us to wait for an outcome we would prefer to see sooner. If we want justice to endure, however, we cannot succumb to frustrations that would have us circumvent the law or violate due process. The pursuit of justice is a long-term battle that requires insight, endurance, and resilience.

I want to thank all of you who offered support during this difficult time and modeled the type of behavior we espouse as an educational community. Together, as the resilient Transylvania community we are known to be, we will continue to work together to promote civil discourse and educate students who contribute to a more civil society.

Sincerely,

Seamus Carey  
President