

Nov. 9, 2012

To: Dr Mary Lyons
President,
University of San Diego

Dear President Lyons,

We, the undersigned, as members of the Advisory Council of the Frances G. Harpst Center for Catholic Thought and Culture (CCTC), deeply regret your actions to rescind the CCTC's invitation to Professor Tina Beattie, Professor of Catholic Studies at the University of Roehampton and a fellow member of our Advisory Council, to come to USD this fall as a visiting fellow of the CCTC.

We disagree that Prof. Beattie's public stance on same sex civil union legislation disqualified her from being a guest of this university and believe that the source of her invitation (be it from the CCTC or from a department, etc.) is irrelevant. We further believe that inviting speakers and visitors of this sort to USD to engage in a thoughtful, meaningful and respectful dialogue on issues of our time is very much in line with the mission of the CCTC. Inviting someone to campus to be a visiting scholar, guest speaker, etc. should not mean that we—USD, the CCTC and its Advisory Council or the faculty—necessarily agree with, much less endorse, this person. However, we do wish to engage on issues that are relevant and hope to have the ability to pursue such endeavors in the spirit of Catholic intellectual discovery and freedom. All of this is, of course, besides the real point because Professor Beattie was not due to speak on any controversial issues concerned here and is a distinguished scholar in good standing.

We wholeheartedly support the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences in urging you to reinstate the invitation to Prof. Beattie to come to USD as a visiting scholar of the CCTC without delay.

We also regret the fact that although Prof. Gerard Mannion, the director of the CCTC had discussions with senior members of the USD administration regarding Prof. Beattie's letter in the *Times* in England last summer, he was not consulted in advance of the decision to rescind the invitation to her. On the contrary, he was informed the visit would go ahead as planned. We further regret and hereby protest your failure to respond to our Oct. 31 request for an urgent meeting between the council and yourself to discuss these matters. We equally protest your failure to respond to the Oct. 29 letter from the Harpst Center Director.

Your current position that Prof. Beattie is not an appropriate speaker or visiting fellow for USD's Center for Catholic Thought and Culture, along with the non-consultative manner in which the decision was made, raises serious concerns for us about the future of the CCTC as well as our role as its advisors. We find the rationale for your decision to be inconsistent with our understanding of the nature, role and mission of the CCTC as historically understood and lived out. We regret that your most recent statement does not modify your decision, but rather appears to modify only the reasons for it, which in our opinion remain invalid.

In light of all this, it seems to us that it is imperative we receive clear and unambiguous answers from you in relation to these alarming developments so that the Advisory Council can work with the CCTC's director to safeguard the future of the Center and its staff for the benefit of USD and all concerned.

Sincerely,

Dr Stephen Conroy, PhD
Professor of Economics and Director of the Center for Peace and Commerce, School of Business Administration

Dr Mary Doak, PhD
Associate Professor, Theology and Religious Studies, College of Arts and Sciences

Dr Carlton Floyd, PhD,
Associate Professor, English, former Associate Provost for Inclusion and Diversity and former Director, Center for Inclusion and Diversity

Denys Horgan

Editor, San Diego Catholic Worker Newspaper and San Diego Catholic Worker Movement and Formerly UCSD Media Office, National Religion Correspondent for Toronto Globe and Mail, and Dominican Order

Dr Paul Lakeland, PhD

Aloysius P. Kelley S.J. Professor of Catholic Studies and Director of Fairfield's Center for Catholic Studies at Fairfield University, Connecticut, USA

Dr Necla Tschirgi, PhD

Professor of Practice, Human Security and Peacebuilding, Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies