



The American Spa
Academy & Inn

AmericanSpaAcademy.com 234-4383

Day Spa Packages

Holiday Gift Certificates starting at \$29

paid advertising

[Florida Colleges and Schools](#)
[Computer and Web Design Schools](#)
[Culinary Arts Schools & Colleges](#)
[Online College Degree Programs](#)
[Online Masters in Education Programs](#)

[Home Security Alarm Systems](#)
[Interior Design Schools](#)
[Online College Education](#)
[Colleges in New York & New Jersey](#)
[Online Colleges](#)

[On-Line Colleges & Degrees](#)
[Online Graduate Degree Programs](#)
[Online Degree Programs & MBA's](#)
[Colleges in Pennsylvania](#)
[Tech Colleges and Vocational Schools](#)
[Trade Schools](#)



a Deal

THE DAILY

Published independently
by students at Penn State

Collegian ONLINE

NEWS

[Friday, Dec. 15, 2006]

Report: PSU restricts speech

By **Ryan Pfister** [\(EMAIL\)](#)
Collegian Staff Writer

Despite recent revisions, Penn State's policies still restrict freedom of speech, according to the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE).

According to a FIRE report released last week, 73 percent of public schools reviewed by FIRE received a "red-light" rating, meaning they "have at least one policy that both clearly and substantially restricts freedom of speech."

Penn State has historically earned a red-light rating. Earlier this year, the university revised its policies on intolerance, nondiscrimination and harassment, but FIRE has not changed its rating of Penn State.

Penn State agreed to solidify the policy revisions as part of a settlement of a free speech lawsuit by Penn State student A.J. Fluehr, but Penn State spokesman Bill Mahon said the changes were already "in the works" before the settlement was agreed upon. Fluehr sued the university over three speech policies that he viewed as unconstitutional.

Samantha Harris, FIRE's legal director, wrote in an e-mail message that the recent policy revisions are a "very positive step in terms of students' rights." However, Penn State remains a red-light school because the Penn State Principles are still "highly unconstitutional," she wrote.

The Penn State Principles, adopted in 2001, "embody

the values that our students, faculty, staff, administration, and alumni possess," according to the document.

The principles include respecting the dignity of individuals, practicing academic integrity, demonstrating social and personal responsibility, and complying with university policies.

According to the document, taunting, ridiculing and insulting individuals or groups violate the first principle. Harris wrote that these prohibitions are unconstitutional.

"Most taunts and insults are wholly constitutionally protected," she wrote.

Harris wrote that Penn State would need to revise the principles to lose its red-light designation.

Mahon said the principles did not violate the constitution because the principles do not constitute university policy and have never been used for disciplinary purposes.

He said Penn State would continue to support "individual dignity" and had no plans to change the principles.

However, Harris wrote that the principles still have a "chilling effect" on free speech because students might think complying with them is mandatory.

"It is understood that members of the Penn State community agree to abide by the Principles to ensure that Penn State is a thriving environment for living and learning," according to the principles' introduction.

Harris, however, wrote that "if the principles are aspirational and not policy, the university needs to revise the language to make that clear so that students do not censor themselves for fear of punishment."

Fluehr said he thinks the legality of the principles is questionable.

"Taunting, ridiculing, insulting -- those are all things that people do every day," he said.

However, Fluehr said he had no plans to sue the university over the principles.

He said he thought it would be difficult to sue the university successfully over the principles because they were just guidelines.

Because of the terms of his lawsuit settlement, Fluehr would not comment on if the free speech climate had changed on campus since the previous policy revisions.



Send an [Opinion Letter to the Editor](#) about this article.



[Print this page](#)



[E-mail this page](#)

paid advertising

[auto insurance](#)

[mortgage refinance](#)

[car insurance quotes](#)

[Accounting Schools & Degrees Online](#)

[University of Phoenix Online Information](#)

[VNUS Closure - Treatment of Varicose Veins](#)

[Online Masters Degrees](#)

[Colleges in Chicago Illinois](#)

[Online MBA Programs](#)

[ADT Security Systems & Alarms](#)

[Motorcycle Mechanics Institute](#)

[Culinary Schools & Culinary Colleges](#)

[Interior Design Schools & Colleges](#)

[Online Masters Degree Programs](#)

[Swimming Pool Contractors & Builders](#)

[Automotive Schools](#)

[Fashion Design Schools](#)

[Online Degrees & Colleges](#)

[Interior Design Schools](#)

Wholesale [liquid vitamins](#)

[Concert Tickets](#)

[Ticket Broker](#)

[Home Security Camera](#)

[TOP HOME](#)

[NEWS](#) [SPORTS](#) [OPINIONS](#) [ARTS](#) [WEATHER](#) [CALENDAR](#)
[CLASSIFIEDS](#) [MAGAZINE](#) [SCI-HEALTH](#)

[Web Features](#) [About Us](#) [Contact Us](#) [Links](#) [Back Issues](#) [About RSS Feeds](#)

Copyright © 2006 Collegian Inc.

Updated: 2006-12-14 23:39:51 -4

Requested: 2006-12-15 10:07:17 -4

Created: 2006-12-14 23:39:51 -4