

Faculty Council Resolution on Tim McGettigan Censure
Passed at the February 4 meeting of the CSU-FC Faculty Council

“Faculty Council at Colorado State University (CSU) supports the academic freedom and First Amendment rights of Professor Tim McGettigan, a faculty member at our sister institution, Colorado State University – Pueblo (CSU – P). We deplore the fact that his Internet access was cut off, apparently without due process, after he sent a message containing his opinions about the proposed budget cuts at his university.

Professor McGettigan made a comparison of the proposed budget cuts at the Pueblo institution to the Ludlow Massacre in Pueblo at which innocent people were killed during a labor dispute. Whatever one thinks of the wisdom of this reference, it is difficult to claim that it is outside the bounds of speech protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. We do not find these words to be “threatening, intimidating, or harassing” which would put them in violation of the CSU-Pueblo Communications Policy which specifies types of speech that would be outside the protections of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

We also find President Di Mare’s references to Columbine, Virginia Tech, and Arapahoe High School, in her response to an Inside Higher Ed article on the controversy in Pueblo, to have a chilling effect on academic freedom and free speech rights at the Pueblo university she heads. Whatever shortcoming one might perceive in the way Professor McGettigan has expressed himself he is not a murderous gunman. He is entitled to academic freedom that allows one to disagree with administrator policies and proposals in addition to the First Amendment rights at stake here. We find the claims by some administrators in Pueblo and Denver that his speech was outside what is protected by academic freedom and the First Amendment to be completely unconvincing.

There is a natural imbalance of power between the administration and faculty and it is therefore incumbent on administrators to take that into account when contemplating actions such as that described above. We call on administrators and the Board of Governors of the Colorado State University system to reaffirm the rights of faculty to academic freedom and free speech rights.”