

THE PENDULUM

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ENDING THE FOOD FIGHT

A special edition of The Pendulum



Our hand-breaded, boneless breast of chicken is cooked in 100% refined peanut oil, which is naturally trans fat-free and cholesterol-free.

In this edition ...

Learn about the Board of Trustees' Chick-fil-A decision and what it means for Elon University.



Board of Trustees votes to keep Chick-fil-A at Elon

Katherine Blunt
News Editor

After considering the findings of the Vendor Policy Study Committee, Elon University's Board of Trustees voted to continue the school's partnership with Chick-fil-A. The restaurant, currently open in Octagon Cafe, will relocate to the first floor of McEwen Dining Hall by early fall.

After much deliberation, the Board of Trustees determined there was "no actionable cause to remove Chick-fil-A from campus," according to a statement by the Board.

"The Board is reluctant to put the University in a position of monitoring or making value judgments about the lawful philanthropic giving of vendors or related organizations, board members, alumni, faculty and staff, students or friends," the statement said. "Removing Chick-fil-A solely on the basis of the owners' stated views or their lawful philanthropic choices would stand in opposition to Elon's mission statement, which encourages freedom

of thought and liberty of conscience."

The Vendor Policy Study Committee was appointed in October 2012 to review Elon's vendor and purchasing policies following a campus-wide debate regarding Chick-fil-A's presence on campus. Spectrum, Elon's queer-straight alliance, argued the franchise's donations to anti-gay organizations opposed the university's commitment to fostering a diverse campus environment, while other students insisted the franchise did not discriminate against anyone.

The 15-member committee spent several months examining the variables involved in the Chick-fil-A controversy and delivered its findings to the Board of Trustees before the final decision was made. According to junior Ricky Rosati, Student Government Association executive treasurer and member of the committee, the group was committed to considering a number of different perspectives on the matter.

"The leadership of the committee was unbelievable," he said. "They created a conversation that needed to happen. We heard

from more than 200 students in the open forums, and only a handful talked about compromise. There had to be some kind of middle ground, and that was a term used constantly in the meetings because it gives people something to hold onto."

The committee received input from legal counsel, students and other stakeholders before presenting its Chick-fil-A research and vendor policy recommendations, which include making Elon's non-discrimination policy more visible on the university's purchasing website and establishing a formal process for stakeholders to raise grievances about on-campus vendors.

"We were called on as a committee to do research, but we were not recommending action to the Board of Trustees," Rosati said. "We were by no means in complete agreement. There were a lot of different perspectives on the committee to make it healthy."

Connie Book, co-chair of the committee, associate provost and associate professor of communications, said many members of the committee developed a better understanding of both sides of the issue

after completing the study.

"If we arrived at the committee feeling black and white, then we all left gray," she said in an address to the SGA. "I think that an inclusive environment makes way for differing viewpoints. That's what happened in our vendor policy committee. That process was so powerful for all of us. We hope that our students will have that same kind of moment with each other."

But some students remain opposed to the university's partnership with Chick-fil-A. Emily Kane, an advocacy and education chair for Spectrum, said she was disappointed with the final outcome.

"I was pretty optimistic," she said. "I figured they would have taken into consideration everything we were saying about the discrimination we felt because of Chick-fil-A's presence on campus, and I think it's pretty awful they decided to keep it when a group of students is clearly feeling pain over it. The decision may deter LGBTQ students from coming to campus because it sends a visual message. This was a decision they made. This was not passive action."

Other students were satisfied with the

Board's conclusion. Senior Darien Flowers, former SGA executive president, said he was pleased the Board affirmed the decisions he made last semester.

"I'm encouraged by the decision," Flowers said. "It is always encouraging when the highest authority stands behind a decision you made. My words came across to the people who are the ultimate authority. This decision is not a position on the issue, but rather an agreement that Chick-fil-A has not done anything egregious to warrant its removal from campus."

Chick-fil-A's presence at Elon became a divisive issue in September 2012 when Spectrum drafted legislation calling for the franchise's removal. Spectrum did not take issue with COO Dan Cathy's support for "the biblical definition of a family unit," but rather the franchise's donations to organizations such as the Family Research Council and Exodus International through the WinShape Foundation, its charitable arm. The SGA first voted on the legislation Oct. 12.

"These groups cause direct harm to LGBTQ people and contribute to an environment that is unhealthy, discriminatory, hostile and offensive to the entire LGBTQ community," said senior Lauren Clapp, an advocacy and education chair for Spectrum, during an SGA open forum prior to the vote. "Exodus International is an advocate of conversion therapy, despite the fact that it has been denounced by at least 15 reputable medical societies."

The legislation against Chick-fil-A passed in the SGA Senate that night in a 35-11 vote, but Flowers vetoed the bill Oct. 21.

"We are here to permit the free flowing exchange of ideas," Flowers said in a statement. "If we ask the administration to remove an institution because of its ideas, we are setting a precedent that is dangerous because it stops the free flow of ideas."

The SGA Senate voted 21-20 to uphold Flowers' veto Oct. 24, following a day of protests on campus. Several students organized "Chick-fil-A Appreciation Day" to show support for the veto, while other students gathered to oppose those who patronized the restaurant.

"There are people who have been saying, 'I don't have any problem with the LGBTQ community, I just really like this chicken

sandwich,'" said Kirstin Ringelberg, the LGBTQ office coordinator and associate professor of art history, on the day of the protests. "I think if you can say that when you know how much our students, faculty and staff have been hurt by the symbolic representation of Chick-fil-A on campus, then it is not entirely honest to say that you care about us."

But some students purchased Chick-fil-A that day simply because they wanted it for lunch.

"I don't necessarily agree with the politics that are behind this whole Chick-fil-A fiasco, but I don't think it is worth not eating food I like," said freshman Harris Fishman.

The university recognized the tensions caused by Chick-fil-A and announced its intention to appoint a 15-member Vendor Policy Study Committee to investigate the issue and recommend an appropriate course of action to Elon's Board of Trustees.

"This doesn't mean we're going to start running every business relationship by this committee," said President Leo Lambert at the time of the announcement. "The university already has several processes or

Elon Reacts

@xoGossipSquirrel

We all need that moment of quiet to deal with the grief of keeping Chick-fil-A after not discussing it for months. See you in the center. XO

@MichelleAlf

Just heard about Elon's Chick-fil-A decision and now I feel sick to my stomach.

@katiee_jackson

D--n, Elon. It took this long to make a decision about Chick fil A? At least you had enough sanity to make the right one. FREEDOM OF SPEECH.

@STaranto59

In light of today's decision on Chick-fil-a, anyone who wants to give any LGBT students at #elon grief will have me to answer to. #ally



President Leo Lambert addressed the Student Government Association April 25 during its weekly Senate meeting. He praised the work of the Vendor Policy Study Committee and reiterated his belief that the Board of Trustees' decision to keep Chick-fil-A on campus was neither a win nor a loss for Elon University students.

screens in place to ensure we behave as a responsible enterprise, but there are exceptional times when someone says, 'I'm concerned about this,' and there needs to be a process by which that concern would be evaluated."

As the committee began to form, Spectrum redrafted and resubmitted legislation to the SGA as a resolution, rather than a bill. A bill encourages a specific course of action, while a resolution is an affirmation of a belief or sentiment, according to Connor O'Donnell, senior class president. The revised resolution asserted Chick-fil-A had become a "symbol on Elon's campus of intolerance and discrimination toward members of the LGBTQIA community" and opposed the continuation of Elon's relationship with the franchise.

"The core of the legislation is still there," Kane said at the time of the proposal. "We still want Chick-fil-A off campus, but the way we are going about it is no longer the financial argument, but rather the climate that has been created because of this controversy."

The revised legislation passed in a 30-8-2 vote Nov. 30, signaling a win for Spectrum and others after nearly two months of controversy. Regardless, the Board of Trustees was tasked with making the final decision.

In the wake of the announcement, Lambert acknowledged the university's responsibility to handle future issues in a respectful and comprehensive manner.

"This will not be the last controversial issue the university will face," he said. "We want to have more constructive forums in the future. Most importantly of all, the report calls on the university to be very proactive moving forward."

Lambert reiterated his desire to foster a more inclusive campus environment that supports diversity and the free exchange of ideas.

"Every action that each of us takes as an individual creates a stronger community on campus," he said. "When we see acts that tear at the fabric of community, all of us feel them, and we have individual responsibility to confront them and to let people know this is not behavior that we stand for. The Board's report calls on all of us to be our best selves."§

CHICK-FIL-A TIMELINE

Sept. 2012

Spectrum submits legislation to the Student Government Association calling from Chick-fil-A's removal from campus. Spectrum argues Chick-fil-A's donations to anti-gay organizations do not align with the university's nondiscrimination policy.

Sept. 20

Spectrum suspends its legislation after Chick-fil-A announces its intention to reevaluate its contributions with "political agendas."

Sept. 27

Spectrum renews its legislation upon finding Chick-fil-A does not intend to cease donations to anti-gay organizations.

Oct. 12

The legislation calling for Chick-fil-A's removal passes in a 35-11 vote by the SGA Senate.

Oct. 18

The executive committee of Elon's Board of Trustees is elected to create a study committee to research the university's procurement policies and business relationships with external vendors.

Oct. 21

SGA Executive President Darien Flowers vetoes the legislation calling for Chick-fil-A's removal.

Oct. 23

Several students organize "Chick-fil-A Appreciation Day," which was met with protests by Spectrum and other students opposed to the franchise's presence on campus. The protests preceded the SGA's consideration of Flowers' veto, which was upheld in a 21-20 vote.

Oct. 30

President Leo Lambert announces the members of the Vendor Policy Study Committee which is formed to examine the university's business partnerships.

Nov. 6

Spectrum revisits and resubmits its legislation in the form of a resolution, rather than a bill. The resolution asserts Chick-fil-A has become a "symbol on Elon's campus of intolerance and discrimination toward members of the LGBTQIA community" and opposes the continuation of Elon's relationship with the franchise.

Nov. 26

The Vendor Policy Study Committee holds its first meeting.

Nov. 30

The revised resolution passes in a 30-8-2 vote by the SGA Senate.

March 2013

The Vendor Policy Study Committee completes its work and delivers its findings to the Board of Trustees.

April 25

After considering the recommendations of the Vendor Policy Study Committee, Elon's Board of Trustees votes to keep Chick-fil-A on campus.

SGA looks ahead after Chick-fil-A controversy

Katherine Blunt
News Editor

The 2012-2013 legislative year was largely unprecedented for Elon University's Student Government Association. The Senate came under heavy scrutiny as it debated a controversial piece of legislation that called for Chick-fil-A's removal from campus, and several members of SGA hope to apply what they learned from the experience in the new legislative year.

"I think that in the fall, there was a lot of large, open group dialogue, and there is a place for that, but most of the progress on this issue has been made in small groups where people can express themselves," said SGA Executive President Welsford Bishopric. "I think there's a lot to be said for small groups where students feel safe enough to say the things they want to say. I know that

from an SGA perspective, should a similar situation arise again, we would get together with the people who felt most strongly about the issue and discuss it in a more intimate setting."

Bishopric said the Vendor Policy Study Committee's activities and the Board of Trustees' decision-making process helped him understand how to find the middle ground of a polarized issue.

"Hearing the different ways in which committee members would talk to me about it was the most powerful thing for me," he said. "In the beginning, there were two very specific opinions about it, and by the end of it, both sides told me that they left understanding the other side of the issue. They looked at every aspect of it and that's the way they came to see eye to eye. I think Elon is growing toward that."

Bishopric said he saw evidence of a

greater understanding of the issue in the way some students responded to the Board of Trustees' decision.

"I was worried we'd have students who were responding aggressively, but I've had people text me and say they're upset, but they're willing to explore the other side of the issue," he said. "We are 5,000 students who are inextricably bound to each other. People really want to understand the other side of the issue, and that's the most emotive thing about it. I think if you look at it from a more qualitative perspective, you can't have that win versus lose mentality. That was the one big lesson I learned."

Junior Ricky Rosati, SGA executive treasurer and member of the Vendor Policy Study Committee, expressed a similar sentiment.

"We want to have more conversations about these types of issues before the Sen-

ate meetings," he said. "If an issue like this comes up, we will have informal conversations and senators will be there. It's important that we have informal discussions where students can intelligently argue their points and talk about it openly. That way, people will feel more represented when the meeting comes around. There will be less tension that way."

Rosati said the Senate must be entrusted with more power when controversial issues are brought before the SGA.

"Historically, the Senate has not been as involved as we want them to be," he said. "We want them to have more power. Last semester, the executives felt it was all on them to handle the issue, and as we've witnessed, the power is in the Senate. They represent the students. We don't want any surprises at Senate meetings, and we don't want spectators to feel their voices haven't been heard."

Elon holds forum to discuss moving forward after Board of Trustees' decision

Ethan Smith
News Editor

Members of the Elon community met April 25 to discuss concerns students had about the Board of Trustees' announcement that Chick-fil-A will remain on campus amid controversy surrounding the company's political stances on gay rights.

"I don't think the headline here is that Chick-fil-A will stay on campus," said Leo Lambert, president of Elon University. "I think the main headline here is that Elon University has spent a year revising its non-discrimination policy."

According to Lambert, because of the campus reaction to the controversy surrounding Chick-fil-A, future vendors wishing to sell products at Elon must fully agree to the school's revised non-discrimination policy before they are allowed on campus. This consists of making Elon's non-discrimination policy more visible on the university's purchasing site, on signage around campus and on vendor registration forms.

Included in the announcement was a notice stating Chick-fil-A will be removed from Octagon Cafe and relocated to downstairs McEwen Dining Hall. According to Lambert, this will allow the vendor to remain

on campus but remove it from the immediate visible eye of visitors.

One of the main concerns raised at the meeting was how Chick-fil-A could be allowed to stay on campus while the university wishes to create a more open and welcoming atmosphere to students of all backgrounds.

"I think there are a lot of students that are hurt and will continue to be hurt by this decision," said sophomore Hampton Smith, president of Student Atheists and Non-Religious at Elon (SANE).

Lambert said he felt as though Elon had never encountered an issue as divisive as Chick-fil-A, and the student reaction throughout the course of this year was simply the collective university going through what he called "growing pains" of talking about difficult issues.

"When we sat down and talked to students that had concerns about these issues, there was a deep sense of regret from both sides about exchanges that had happened between groups," said Connie Book, associate provost for academic affairs and co-chair of the Vendor Policy Study Committee.

Smith Jackson, vice president and dean of Student Life, agreed with Book's sentiment.

"There have always been certain issues and tensions on campus, and Chick-fil-A was the



A forum was held in the Numen Lumen Sacred Space in the wake of the Board of Trustees' decision.

AL DRAGO | Photo Editor

boiling point that sent all of them spilling over," Jackson said.

The discussion covered the best means of dealing with tensions on campus and how to create a comfortable environment to talk about contentious issues.

According to chaplain Jan Fuller, the best method is to continue discussion in safe spaces where students feel comfortable coming forward with any concerns they might have about difficult issues.

"Change starts with the self, and we have to become a place where respect is a core value," Lambert said. "When one person doesn't feel accepted, we've all lost."

Lambert added he felt there is a silent majority on campus allowing discrimination to happen, and he said that's the best place for culture change to start.

"Purchasing power is speech," he said. "Where you choose to spend your dollars is ultimately up to you."



(and its symbolism) to remain on campus

Last Thursday, Jeff Stein, senior adviser to the president, sent out an email containing Elon University's Board of Trustees' statement regarding Chick-fil-A's presence on campus. The Board explained how Elon's response to the controversy was to create a 15-member Vendor Policy Study Committee. The Board studied the committee's findings and considered all stakeholders before coming to a well-thought-out decision. They assured the student body of their pledge to dig deeper into the facts, their respect for human differences and their commitment to understanding different points of view. Their final decision is that Chick-fil-A will remain on our campus.

While we applaud our administration for the creation of this committee, the extensive dialogue that was held and the new response system that has been put in place to confront incidents of discrimination, what this argument is missing is acknowledgment of the symbolic nature of Chick-fil-A on Elon's campus.

The Board listed three primary factors for its decision. The first one specified, "There is no actionable cause to remove Chick-fil-A from campus," clarifying there is no evidence of discrimination regarding Chick-fil-A services.

According to the Board, since the vendor does not actively discriminate against its employees or its customers, its removal is not warranted. This deeply discredits members of the Elon community who spent this school year professing to the committee and to Board members how the mere presence of Chick-fil-A represents hate, exclusion and humiliation. The LGBTQ community's issue was not that Chick-fil-A actively discriminated on this campus. The email from the Board made it seem as if they had accused the vendor of this. The real issue is symbolic and more pervasive. For some students, seeing people eating Chick-fil-A around campus is a constant reminder that the university has chosen political interests over the dignity of some of its students. The Board clearly ignored this fact and framed the debate in such a way that the symbolic nature of Chick-fil-A was never even addressed.

This is the civil rights issue of our time. Arguments for keeping Chick-fil-A claim Elon



AL DRAGO | Photo Editor

should not be a place that restricts freedom of speech. They argue we can't give in to the political beliefs of every person in our community. The Board's email specifies it is "reluctant to put the University in a position of monitoring or making value judgments about the lawful philanthropic giving of vendor." The letter went on to say, "Removing Chick-fil-A solely on the basis of the owners' stated views or their lawful philanthropic choices would stand in opposition to Elon's mission statement, which encourages freedom of thought and liberty of conscience."

Removing Chick-fil-A would not restrict freedom of speech and doesn't advocate giving in to the political beliefs of every person in our community. What it does advocate is a campus that will not stand for inequality.

Our Board likely wouldn't host a vendor that donated to a campaign whose aim was to eliminate women's suffrage or a vendor that allocated a part of its profits to promote Jim Crow laws that mandated segregation. So why are we OK with a vendor that has supported organizations that believe being gay is a sin and have funded conversion therapy?

These are all instances of discrimination. The only difference is our university and our country haven't yet determined this is a type of discrimination for which we will not stand. The Supreme Court is currently deliberating on two pieces of legislation that will determine the fate

of marriage equality in this country. Our country hasn't advanced enough to see that discrimination is discrimination whether it's because of the color of one's skin, the number of one's X chromosomes or one's sexuality. Discrimination should not be supported on this campus or in this country.

Where is the value in our university hosting a vendor whose presence symbolizes exclusion and discrimination for a portion of our community? Yes, everyone is welcome to their opinions, beliefs, philosophies and judgments. This is a university where we fully promote the free flow of ideas on our campus. What we should not promote are ideas that serve to discriminate against members of our community. We must draw the line somewhere and that line ought to be drawn at discrimination.

A statement from the members of the Board claims they "desire that Elon be a safe and respectful environment for every member of the community." The reality is the decision announced last week does not create this environment for the LGBTQ community and its allies. In fact, it doesn't create this environment for any of us.

If our university had chosen to remove Chick-fil-A, it would have made a statement that we are ahead of the times because we won't stand for a type of discrimination that will one day be seen as unacceptable as racial segregation or the denial of women's suffrage.

THE PENDULUM

Established 1974

The Pendulum is a daily operation that includes a newspaper, website, magazine and web show. Letters to the editor are welcome and should be typed, signed and emailed to pendulum@elon.edu as Word documents. The Pendulum reserves the right to edit obscene and potentially libelous material. Lengthy letters may be trimmed to fit. All submissions become the property of The Pendulum and will not be returned. The Pendulum is located on the third floor of the Elon Town Center on Williamson Avenue.

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For a complete list of our staff, please visit ElonPendulum.com/staff.

THE DEBATE CONTINUES

A new slogan: On our campus Discrimination still tastes bitter

It's a win.

After eight months of heated debate, the Elon University Board of Trustees, under guidance from the Vendor Policy Study Committee, has decided to keep Chick-fil-A as a university-affiliated food vendor. I commend them for their decision and strong leadership on this matter.



Rob Orr
Guest Columnist

Let me be clear: This is a win for the entire Elon community and

the idea of diversity universally. Through this decision, Elon and its leadership have decided to stand on the side of diversity, tolerance and long-term success.

Institutions of higher education within our country have the simple expectation to provide a safe environment where the opportunity to learn exists. At liberal arts universities like Elon, all students are required to engage in an extensive study of wide-ranging subject matters prior to focusing on their subject of choice.

There are more than 200 student organizations on our campus representing a wide variety of ideas, beliefs and goals. These are key reasons students travel from across the globe to study in the United States and, specifically, at Elon. Why should this opportunity to learn be limited to clubs and classes? The university should teach its students to continue learning beyond the walls of the classroom and outside the "Elon bubble" to the world in which we live and work.

The presence of both Starbucks and Chick-fil-A is the perfect example of such an opportunity.

The senior leadership for both of these companies has been on the record expressing opposing views on the subject of same-sex marriage, among other things.

There are recognized religious organizations and individuals on campus whose sponsoring bodies oppose the stance Starbucks has taken, just as there are those organizations and individuals opposing the stance Chick-fil-A has taken.

Does this mean we should remove them both? I do not think those differences warrant the removal of either, but instead provide us with a glimpse of the world we are expected to face after graduation and an opportunity for positive learning. Through the decision to keep Chick-fil-A on campus and the encouragement of respectful dialogue on the subject, our university's leadership has promoted an environment of respectful tolerance. They have done their job in creating opportunity through the preservation of difference and tolerance. It is now up to the student body to embrace these ideals and realize their potential.

So how do we realize this potential after such a seemingly divisive period? I would propose starting with a slogan. But before proceeding, I would like to be clear on one topic: I completely agree there are certain ideas and acts of hate that should be condemned by Elon, such as acts of violence and the racial slurs that inspired the "Not On Our Campus" campaign.

That fitting slogan represents those things we do not want on our campus. Today I propose a new slogan representing those things we do want "On Our Campus."

On our campus, we will respect those unique characteristics and beliefs that explain us as individuals and use them to facilitate a synergistic result. On our campus, we believe through our collective vision and committed action a brighter future is possible. On our campus, we seek a respectful environment where the opportunity to find Numen Lumen through our differences is ever present.

And yes, thanks to a difficult decision by our courageous leaders, we will have Chick-fil-A on our campus.

"There is no actionable cause to remove Chick-fil-A from campus." As an openly lesbian student who has spent the last year dealing with the issue of removing Chick-fil-A, this statement is a kick in the face. To me, this says we have reviewed all of the facts, analyzed the policies and found no valid reason to remove this fast food establishment. This says your feelings, identity and comfort on this campus are not enough



Emily Kane
Guest Columnist

of an "actionable cause." Because of the visible stand Chick-fil-A has made about its opinions of the LGBTQ community through financial donations and other statements, they have become a global symbol of anti-LGBTQ sentiment and discrimination. Chick-fil-A means different things to everyone in the LGBTQ community, but I'd wager almost all of them are negative. For me, Chick-fil-A is a symbol of the conversion therapy and rejection I was subjected to as a teenager.

Most LGBTQ people have stories of estranged family members, lost friendships, judgment, abandonment and, in some cases, violence perpetrated against us as a result of our sexuality. Unlike our straight peers, we don't have the privilege of our sexual identity being seen as the norm. We know for the rest of our lives we will be expected to come out to family members, friends, co-workers and even acquaintances. Coming out can be especially traumatic if it occurs in an unsupportive environment — for example, if it occurs at an institution with a campus climate that is hostile toward LGBTQ students, as Elon University has more evidently become in the past months of the Chick-fil-A controversy.

The Board of Trustees has said they "desire that Elon be a safe and respectful

environment for every member of the community." Yet, through this deliberate action of choosing to keep Chick-fil-A, they are sending a message. While the LGBTQ community has a room on campus and a full-time staff member, we aren't fully accepted and protected at Elon. Chick-fil-A is still more important than we are. The Board has created an environment saying a chicken sandwich is more valuable than the rights and feelings of LGBTQ students, faculty and allies on this campus. Their statement says on an even more structural level that we are lesser than our heterosexual peers, for whom there is no blatant symbol of discrimination on campus — even our LGBTQ office welcomes them.

This action will have many implications. Despite Chick-fil-A being moved to a slightly less visible location, its existence on campus will deter LGBTQ students from attending Elon. The mere symbolic presence of Chick-fil-A on campus can make LGBTQ students feel intimidated, uncomfortable and unwelcome. So long as Chick-fil-A remains here, many members of the Elon community will feel they cannot express their true and authentic selves with dignity and safety.

Everyone knows the emphasis and value Elon places upon diversity. I wholeheartedly agree with this need for a more varied student body. We learn and grow by discovering each other's differences and experiences.

Without students who have unique experiences and varying sexual and gender identities, Elon won't be able to produce students who are fully inclusive and globally engaged because of that missing perspective. Our straight peers will never know what it's like to feel targeted and devalued by an organization's presence on campus. We don't have the privilege of simply "getting over it" as many have suggested we do, because for us, Chick-fil-A's presence on campus will always be a deeply hurtful symbol of anti-LGBTQ sentiment.

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