



FACT SHEET

DeJohn v. Temple University

ABOUT DeJohn v. Temple University

Christian DeJohn, a graduate student at Temple University and a sergeant in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, was repeatedly thwarted by school officials in his attempt to earn a master's degree in Military and American History after expressing his conservative political views. DeJohn had been deployed to Bosnia shortly after 9/11 and started to receive anti-war e-mails from members (defendants) of the Temple faculty. When DeJohn asked that he stop receiving the e-mails, the defendants allegedly engaged in a series of unlawful, retaliatory acts including:

- failing to grant him military leave guaranteed by federal and state law
- dismissing him from the school
- refusing to advise him during his thesis completion
- professionally denigrated him and his thesis
- rejecting his thesis without legitimate academic grounds
- delaying his graduation three times, causing him to default on student loans
- conspiring to deny him the same rights as other graduate students.

CURRENT STATUS of DeJohn v. Temple University

In March 2007, a federal judge issued a permanent injunction against the school's speech code, while also rejecting Temple's efforts to dismiss DeJohn's claims that the school withheld his master's degree because of his political and ideological viewpoint. Temple appealed the court's speech code ruling to the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit.

Background: Part of the initial lawsuit dealt with Temple University's "speech code," which ADF attorneys successfully argued was in violation of the free speech rights of Temple students. The code, according to ADF attorneys, was vague, overbroad, and suppressed the discussion of controversial viewpoints.

FOCUS OF TRIAL - WHAT IS AT STAKE?

Jury to decide if Temple University's actions prevented DeJohn from graduating from the school's master's degree program and if his ability to obtain employment had been significantly damaged. The freedom for all students to express their views, without fear of academic retaliation, is at stake in this trial. DeJohn is seeking compensatory and punitive damages for the Defendants' actions of retaliation and discrimination.

CONTACT

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ABOUT ADF

The Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) is legal alliance defending the right to hear and speak the Truth through strategy, training, funding, and litigation. ADF has nearly 1,000 allied attorneys who are dedicated to defending and protecting religious freedom, the sanctity of life, marriage, and the family.

ABOUT ADF CENTER FOR ACADEMIC FREEDOM

ADF launched the Center for Academic Freedom in January 2006, and appointed **David French**, Senior Counsel and Director, to spearhead its efforts. CAF defends the constitutional rights of students and student organizations who wish to engage in free speech, expression, and association, as well as the free exercise of religion on campus.

Visit www.centerforacademicfreedom.org

ABOUT DAVID FRENCH

David French serves as Senior Legal Counsel at the Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) and Director of the ADF Center for Academic Freedom. Previous to coming to ADF, David served as president of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE). A graduate of Lipscomb University and Harvard Law School, David has taught at Cornell Law School and served as a partner in a large law firm. He is a regular contributor to National Review Online's *Phi Beta Cons* blog.