



November 8, 2017

Dear Students, Faculty and Staff:

As President, it is my responsibility to ensure that Kennesaw State University remains committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment and that our actions ensure this charge.

While I believe there are more effective ways to initiate an exchange of ideas on issues of national concern, the right to exercise one's freedom of speech under the First Amendment must be protected.

After much reflection, I have decided that at Kennesaw State's next home game on November 11, the pre-game program will be restored to its original format, with the cheerleaders taking the field before the singing of the National Anthem. I will stand during the National Anthem to honor the women and men who have served in our nation's armed forces. While I choose this action, I do not believe that this debate has to be a choice between honoring our veterans and protecting the freedom of speech. We must be able to do both.

It is my hope that the engagement with students that has begun on campus will produce a constructive dialogue that leads to a greater recognition of and respect for all opinions.

Sincerely,

Samuel S. Olens
President

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