

LC'S RESPONSE TO ETHAN FRANCOIS COMMENTS AND STATEMENTS

While Louisiana College ("LC") cannot comment on student disciplinary matters due to student privacy laws, LC denies Ethan Francois's false, defamatory allegations. Winston Churchill stated the following: The truth is heavy; therefore, few choose to carry it. As you will see, on the basis of recorded conversations between Ethan Francois ("Francois") and Dr. Cheryl Clark ("Dr. Clark") and undisputed documented evidence, Francois's account of his experiences at LC with Lamar White, Jr. ("White") is fabricated, inaccurate, and patently untruthful.

On August 27, 2019, Francois requested a meeting with Dr. Clark, and Dr. Clark agreed to meet with Francois (the "Meeting"). During Francois's interview with White, Francois references the Meeting with Dr. Clark, which can be found between around 25:50 and 29:00 on the White interview tape. Below, I list Francois statements to White about what happened at the Meeting – all of which Francois fabricated. I am attaching an audio copy of the Meeting for your review; you already have a copy of Whites interview of Francois:

White Interview Lies

25:50 – 26:54 Francois stated Dr. Clark told Francois to leave his backpack outside her office because she did not like people recording what Dr. Clark said and preferred her comments to be off the record;

26:55 – 27:27 Francois stated Dr. Clark told him, he was fired from his writing position because Francois commented on areas outside his expertise, and Francois would suffer dire consequences for commenting on things he doesn't know anything about;

27:27 – 27:54 Francois stated Dr. Clark called Francois arrogant, childish, unintelligent, misogynistic, prideful, and a number of other epithets;

28:10 – 28:32 Francois stated Dr. Clark told Francois the following, verbatim: "If you want forgiveness, go to church; there is not forgiveness at this school;"

28:33 – 28:41 Francois stated Dr. Clark told Francois, if Francois did not curb his social media habits, Francois would be expelled from LC, and Dr. Clark would see to it personally.

I ask you to listen to the entirety of the audio tape of the 8/27/19, meeting between Dr. Clark and Francois. By listening to the complete audiotape, you will see the following: the truth does not get in the way of what Francois told White. Simply put, Francois's statements to White are untrue and not credible. I address other issues, where Francois lied, below:

First, during the Student Government Association (SGA) 2019-2020 spring election, Ms. Makayla Anderson defeated Francois through a regular and fair vote of the student body by winning 53.50% of the vote. Francois served by appointment on the SGA during the 2019-2020 as the Parliamentarian. In the spring of 2020, all on-campus classes and activities were

suspended in March due to COVID-19. Contrary to Francois's claims, no elections were held until the fall of 2020.

The election guidelines are below, and none of these occurred during the spring of 2020 due to COVID -19. The student body has the privilege of electing the president of the SGA, and contrary to Francois's claims, the student body did not vote electronically via email and elect him as the president. Furthermore, the process for election did not occur until students returned to campus in the fall of 2020. In the fall of 2020, by his own choice, Francois was ineligible to hold office or any other leadership position on campus. Furthermore, the following SGA's Bylaws and Constitution have not been changed or amended since 2017.

- A. The date of the election shall be posted at least 14 days before the election.
- B. All students registered for classes are allowed one vote each, excluding those graduating during the current semester.
- C. No campaigning within 25 feet of the voting booth shall be permitted. Any SGA member has the right to have someone removed who insists on campaigning in the prohibited area. No candidate shall be eligible to moderate the election, save those running unopposed.
- D. A majority vote shall be required for the election of the SGA President and the SGA Vice President.
- E. The SGA President shall not be eligible to serve more than one term as President. However, this shall not prevent someone who serves one semester or less to which someone else was elected President from running.
- F. The three students with the most votes, or plurality, from their class shall be elected as class delegates. The person with the most votes of the three shall be the class president. The two students with the most votes, or plurality, shall be elected as commuter delegates and delegates at large. The person with the most votes, or plurality, shall be elected as the SGA Chaplain.
- G. Run-off elections are to be held the following week of the election, if required.
- H. All run-off elections shall be determined by plurality. The candidate with the most votes wins.
- I. No write-in candidates shall be allowed.
- J. Absentee voting is allowed in conjunction with the SGA committee and/or members responsible for the election.
- K. The campaign period shall begin 7 days before the election.
- L. If multiple vacancies exist after elections are held, SGA can hold elections for the vacant positions with the freshman elections.

Second, Francois claims to have been a "contracted worker" as a "writing instructor" for the College and that was this was his sole source of income. Instead, Francois was hired as a student worker and served as a tutor in the Writing Center. Student workers are employed on a semester-by-semester basis as needed. A contracted writing instructor is a faculty member who has the credentials and qualifications to teach classes at the institution. Further, Dr. Clark addressed the issue of Francois's writing position during the 8/27/19, Meeting, which shows Francois lied to White.

Third, LC's Social Media Policy was created to provide guidance for the appropriate use of social media for Louisiana College employees and students of record and to ensure that these are used in an appropriate, productive, and lawful manner in accordance with all other Louisiana College policies. Additionally, this policy seeks to ensure accuracy, consistency, integrity, and protection of the identity and image of the College, its employees, and its students. At the heart of LC's vision and mission is the responsibility to prepare graduates and transform lives that our includes spiritual formation, discipleship, and career readiness. The Social Media Policy was created to help students understand that when they leave LC and seek work in the job market, they are accountable for their posts on social media and that social media posts can impact their ability to find and retain gainful employment. Posting disparaging and demeaning remarks about employers and companies is typically not tolerated.

Importantly, the Bill of Rights is a limitation on governmental action only, including the First Amendment. The First Amendment does not prohibit private, religious institutions, like LC, from enacting restrictive social media policies. Moreover, as a private institution, Louisiana College may restrict free expression if it deems that the speech is detrimental or harmful to LC's core values and mission. Employees and students of the institution who voluntarily choose to work for and/or to attend the institution voluntarily give their informed consent to waive their right to unfettered free speech.

Fourth, as noted on the recording of the conversation on August 27, 2019, between Francois and Dr. Clark, Francois admits to making disparaging and condescending remarks on social media concerning the female leadership at LC. Disciplinary action could have been taken at that time, but LC was hopeful that Francois's stated remorse was sincere, and Francois would learn from the incident.

Fifth, LC has instituted policies and procedures to address student conduct and student concerns and complaints that follow best practices. In every freshman orientation, all students are apprised of the Student Code of Conduct and asked to acknowledge it by signing it. If a student violates the Student Code of Conduct or any other LC policy that results in a student a disciplinary action, LC's policy gives every student the right to appeal the disciplinary action through successive levels of administration. These processes and procedures are detailed in the Student Handbook that is available to all students.

Likewise, LC also has a robust Student Complaint Policy located in the Student Handbook. When a student has a complaint, resolution should be sought through informal communication with the appropriate instructor, dean, staff member, or administrative officer who may be able to help rectify or clarify the situation before a written complaint is initiated. Students are encouraged to follow biblical standards by meeting with an individual in private to resolve concerns and issues Every student at Louisiana College has the right to voice opinions and concerns and to have them addressed; however, every student is expected to follow the established policies and procedures of the institution.

In sum, by listening to the audio of the 8/27/19, meeting between Francois and Dr. Clark, you have first-hand knowledge of Francois's untruths – nothing Francois told White is true, and

you should not publish Francois's fabrications. Publishing knowingly false statements is neither proper or legal.