



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on January 31, 2012

## Calif. University Stands Its Ground Against Homosexual Onslaught

According to the [Sacramento Bee](#), the school's dean of students, Mark Davis, explained that the club's mission did not line up with the university's belief that sexual relations should be limited to a man and woman who are married to one another.

"Pepperdine seeks to be faithful to this teaching because we believe it is God's will," Davis told the university's student newspaper, the [Pepperdine Graphic](#), "and therefore we cannot endorse another view or take a neutral position on sexual morality. Although Reach OUT stated in its application that it has no position on sexual activity, we do not believe it is possible for a LGBT student organization to maintain a neutral position."



The [Pepperdine website](#) states that the school is "a Christian university committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and Christian values, where students are strengthened for lives of purpose, service, and leadership."

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In response to the university's decision, two of the homosexual club's members, students Alexander Cooper and Lindsay Jakows, launched a petition drive on the pro-homosexual website [Change.org](#), insisting that university officials overturn the ban. "Pepperdine students often struggle to be honest about their sexual orientation because they fear rejection from their peers as well as the risk of losing their scholarships and leadership opportunities," the petition reads in part. "Moreover, professors do not feel comfortable speaking on the issue, worrying that they will be denied tenure or research grants."

Pepperdine's president, Andrew Benton, told the [Graphic](#): "It hurts me to think that we've got students who are struggling with these issues, who are questioning, and they feel like they don't have an outlet. I don't want this to be a place where people can't find a voice."

According to the [Sacramento Bee](#), thus far the petition drive has gotten nearly 4,000 signatures of individuals who want the university to rescind its ban of the homosexual group. "We think Pepperdine overestimates the number of people who would be against a club," said Jakows.

Among those supporting the Reach OUT group are faculty members such as professor Robert Williams, who signed the petition and declared: "I believe that universities ought to be leaders in the effort to end discrimination. And Christian universities ought to lead the effort with grace and humility."

Similarly, [Robert Cargill](#), a professor of religious studies at the University of Iowa and a former



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professor at Pepperdine, signed the petition with an expression of sadness that the university's administration "has chosen to take a fundamentalist Church of Christ position on this issue, one that is radically different from the position held by many of its faculty. Unfortunately, Pepperdine is moving in the wrong direction as an institution seeking to be considered among the nation's best universities, particularly on social issues."

But the school's dean, Mark Davis, pointed out that Pepperdine is not a democracy and "when it comes to issues related to the sexual relationships statement, those decisions aren't made based upon a popular vote. Those decisions are made based upon principles and values the university decides are important."

Nonetheless, homosexual activists from outside Pepperdine felt compelled to cluck their collective tongues over the university's commitment to Christian standards. Sermonizing on [HuffingtonPost.com](#), Shane Windmeyer of the organization [Campus Pride](#) declared that institutions such as Pepperdine and Notre Dame, the Catholic university that has steadfastly held the line against homosexual student groups for the past five years, have a "moral responsibility" to acknowledge LGBT students and make it safe for them to openly acknowledge their lifestyle. "Public and private colleges are held responsible for the safety of all their students," declared Windmeyer, implying that the only way to ensure the safety of homosexual students is to provide a university-sanctioned vehicle for others to endorse their lifestyle.

Meanwhile, Pepperdine's president, Andrew Benton, explained that the university's decision not to allow the Reach OUT club does not mean that the school does not have compassion for those struggling with homosexuality. "The only thing that we're not able to do is what looks like endorsement," he told the *Pepperdine Graphic*. "I'd like to get beyond that to get to the deeper issue: What do you really need, and how can we be encouraging to you without compromising and without walking away from our mission and those who have been so good to us for so many years?"



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